



Constitutionalisation of democracy

The founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah believed in constitutionalism, the doctrine that states that the power to govern should be limited by definite and enforceable principles of political organization and procedural regularity embodied in the fundamental law. This will ensure that the basic constitutional rights of individuals and groups will not be infringed.

Constitutional limitations are provisions and judicial interpretations of written constitutions, which restrict the powers of government, especially of the legislative branch. By implication all branches of national government are limited to the powers delegated to them by the constitution.

The rule of law is the central focal point in a democracy. The elected representatives are supposed to formulate policies for country. But those who cannot even decide regarding themselves cannot be expected to formulate the country's policies to meet the challenges of the day. If disarray and distasteful behaviours and confusion continue to be the characteristic of all political parties the state institutions become dysfunctional. Some kind of discipline is a must to let institutions function smoothly and without interference from those who do not even have the authority to challenge the constitutional bodies set up over time to meet the needs of the state and to ensure justice, equity, peace and security. Only those can be expected to run the country effectively who are elected on the basis of their ability and capacity to truly represent their constituencies with national spirit, over and above narrow personal agendas.

Terrorism and extremism must be cut at their roots. The parliament approved setting up of military courts across the country to hear terrorism cases after a Taliban massacre at a military-run school in Peshawar eight months ago. The decision on establishment of military courts prompted criticism from lawyers and activists. However the Supreme Court played its due role and rejected claims that establishment of military courts was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court also affirmed defendant's right to challenge sentences in civil courts.

Ethnic and political violence has been shattering all hopes of peace and security in Karachi for more than three decades. The government has launched a cleanup operation against criminals and terrorists in the port city, to the annoyance of some elements who are part of the mess and criminality. The power hungry warlords in Karachi have to be tackled firmly and taken to task. The chief of army staff has ordered more military courts for Karachi and has resolved to continue the operation in Karachi till the city is cleared of all criminals and terrorists. Regretfully the civilian constitutional authority of the province of Sindh has failed to deliver what it was supposed to according to aspiration of the people who want peace and glory in Karachi.

It is not only in Karachi but also everywhere else in Pakistan that we need to make the National Action Plan (NAP) succeed to eliminate criminals and terrorists. We have to ensure continuous review of our domestic and foreign measures to ensure our internal and external relations.

Enough is enough; Pakistan has finally taken a stand. Talking about terrorism without Kashmir will get India and Pakistan nowhere. Indian blame game against Pakistan is unending. Their treacherous and undemocratic approach towards Kashmiris is no secret. Pakistan could not allow India to unilaterally on agenda of NSA talks, which were scheduled on August 23, and 24. Nor was there any justification for India to dictate to keep the Kashmiri leaders to stay away from Mr. Sartaj Aziz, advisor to the Pakistan Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs. Sartaj Aziz had evidence of India's subversive efforts against Pakistan. But India would blame Pakistan in all circumstances rather than admitting going back on its promises.

Indian strategy is to malign Pakistan and to create misperceptions everywhere aiming to pressurizing and pushing Pakistan to stop thinking of Kashmir and ultimate freedom for Kashmiris. Despite its history of eroding the agreements and resorting to evasive tactics, India has not been able to alter the international opinion. It has failed to impact the legal status of any dispute, including Kashmir.

There is no reason and justification on the part of Pakistan's political leadership to cede space to India. Politicians who have misplaced obsession to have good relations with India must realize that it has to be a two-way traffic – that it takes two to tango. India cares only for its own hegemonic interests even at the cost of neighboring countries. Indian premier Modi is happy to make friendship with UAE because this opportunity for him was to exploit the recent incident of Saudi – Yemen clash in which Pakistan had stayed neutral. To deal with India on a more firm footing requires putting our own house in order and rethinking our foreign and domestic policies.

Indian forces were constantly violating the line of control and working boundary, killing innocent civilians in the border areas of Pakistan. India deliberately wants to keep the line of control hot. It has done so even since the partition of the sub-continent in 1947.

I would not hesitate to put the record straight and say that only the vested interests and the corrupt are inclined to malign the defenders and guardians of our nation. Only the corrupt and frustrated politicians are involved in the malicious and uncalled for campaign of hate against our own armed forces. Politicians who are themselves involved in multiple corruption and wrong doings cannot challenge the noble role of the armed forces fighting terrorism and clearing the backlog of mess and garbage of wrongs piled up for so long.

In view of the success of operation Zarb-e-Azb there was a need to strengthen National Action Plan to bring terrorism to zero level because extremism, ethnocentrism, sectarianism and terrorism could no longer be tolerated. Families of soldiers who embraced martyrdom need our special attention. The government has to provide for all their socio-psychological, physical and economic needs. Moreover, the whole nation should stand united to develop all areas of Pakistan with the benefit that are expected to accrue because of projects in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). National Security and Energy projects and linkages within and outside

Pakistan and the whole region are expected to open avenues for peace, progress and development.

It should be noted that crime flourishes because of failure of governance and distasteful behaviours of politicians. The lawmakers and those at the helm of affairs found negligent should be taken to task specially if they are found backing and supporting criminals and anti-Pakistan and anti-people elements.

The entire nation and the civil and military leadership has united for eliminating terrorism, extremism, corruption and nepotism to make a new beginning of justice, peace and an open culture for prosperity and strengthening Pakistan for its more positive and effective role in the regional and international peace. It would be worthwhile if efforts for peace and security and welfare of the people were supported by all elements instead of wasting energy and time on showing frustrations and anger. Experienced politicians need to learn from their mistakes for more meaningful and smart decisions now and in the future.

It is unfortunate that some politicians have still not understood the spirit and objectives of the China –Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that has the importance and significance of a game changer. It will benefit the entire Pakistan. India is showing extreme anger and threatening Pakistan because it understands that a huge opportunity has been provided to Pakistan by China for a multiple development programme, which gives connectivity and is going to take care of many of the serious crises that Pakistan faces today.

“Sacredcows” tend to get together to create trouble whenever the nation needs to unite in the face of crises that Pakistan is confronted with. When there is time to play constructive role the politicians from the opposition play politics to destroy peace and stability simply for their own selfish vested interests. What impression the enemy camps gather should not be difficult to understand. They must be feeling happy and fortified seeing us fighting within our own ranks. It is a matter of shame for our so-called leaders who always agree to disagree on things, which are in Pakistan’s interests. In spite of these misdeeds of the frustrated and disgruntled elements Pakistan’s campaign and fight against terrorism and crime will continue. Our Armed forces are determined to take operation clean up to its logical end to wipe out terrorists and criminals who are damaging the positive image of Pakistan.

No mischief from any quarters can damage us because the international community has acknowledged Pakistan’s effective role in regional and world peace. Pakistan wants peace within and peace without. Our fight for justice will continue in spite of all odds. We are prepared to fight all out war against internal and external challenges. We shall never be dictated by malice and hate. No one dares to treat nuclear power Pakistan with contempt and malice.

What has forced some political elements to react is all out support openly declared by all quarters for the military and rangers. The damage done is done until good sense prevails that brings fresh thanking to political parties that gives them a realization that the party is drifting away from the path that guarantees actualizing Pakistan’s national interests. The best strategy for a political party would be to revive itself to strengthen Pakistan and not to think of street politics and vandalism.