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All That Glitters Is Not Democracy

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" Democracy is preferable to all other systems of government known to human history, and it should be flourished"

Democracy is not a perfect order or an ideal form of governance. It is the least corrupt system available as an alternate to governance and people's rule in human societies. Rectification to adopt a perfect democratic system is on the way since 1669 in United Kingdom, America since 1788, and Japan since 1868. Yet the issues continue to exist and people are striving hard to resolve them. Parliament is 'supreme' yet it is not perfect and flawless. Laws are introduced but many of them also backfire and invite crises. The controversy verves on between conservatives versus liberal's forces, establishments versus harbingers of change and vice versa. There is no end and the struggle goes on.

Pakistan's experiment to democracy is just not over half of its 70 years of independence. It adopted three constitutions — 1956, 1962, and 1973. Constitution is an evolving process and it cannot be static and unchangeable. Amendments are always inserted by undemocratic and democratic means. Criticism entails if passed by the military forces too. A complete consensus cannot be attained. The continuity of the historical process could only minimise rift within the civilian apparatus, and the civilian versus the military establishment.

We often wrongly read the history of the world democracy. We pick up only the things that suit us and leave the ones that do not fulfil our purpose. This is often done by our politicians. They paint the Western democracy as the final goal and never highlight its red handedness. They always think all is good with democracy and the rule of law in the West is absolute. They make faulty comparisons and the illiterate masses follow them.

A debate has been initiated in Pakistan over the past few days that a convicted person cannot lead as the head of a political party. The matter surfaced after the Supreme Court passed the verdict against Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on July 28, 2017. As per order of the Supreme Court, he stepped down as the Prime Minister, and left the seat of the president of his political party .

An amendment was passed on October 2 by the lower house of the parliament that a person disqualified by the Supreme Court can head a political party. Opposition parties challenged the amended law. Their main objection was that a convicted person cannot head a political party, which is the ultra-virus of the Constitution and the order of the Supreme Court.

They also raised the arguments that this never happened in Western democracy and no single instance could be given that a convicted person headed a party or became an important office bearer. This was their utter simplicity. History is full of such instances. Western democracy is not ruled by angels or incorruptible politicians either.

South African revolutionary leader Nelson Mandela was convicted by a court of law and led an anti-apartheid movement. Joseph Stalin was sent to jail in Siberia several times and he rose as a great leader of the Bolshevik revolution. Similarly, many labour union leaders were convicted who later became popular leaders.

Many revolutionaries were arrested, convicted, and sent to jails, but they became popular leaders and many of them led their people in their just struggle against exploiters. Mohandas Karam Chand Gandhi was jailed many times by British authorities. He is still a living idol for many Indians. Indian first Prime Minister

Jawaharlal Nehru was jailed many times by British authorities. Both of these leaders are considered as symbols of national unity in India.

Furthermore, Italy has many convicted leaders and gang leaders. Geert Wilders has held on to his supporters in the Netherlands despite a discriminated conviction. Former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was convicted by the Supreme Court and was hanged but he ruled the hearts of many people in Pakistan. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was convicted in plane hijacking case, but he became Prime Minister again. Pakistan Awami league leader Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed himself was convicted in a court of law and sentenced to jail. He is now an MNA. There are many other politicians in Pakistan who were convicted but performed and still execute great orders.

Therefore, this ongoing process towards a responsible and highly transparent democracy is a steady one, and it should not be preferred over other systems because it is the universal truth since 1669, that democracy is the last resort and it should be flourished in preferences to all other systems exercised in human history so far.

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