

## *Book Review*

*Pakistan: Problems of Governance*, Mushahid Hussain and Akmal Hussain, published by Centre of Policy Research, 1993, New Delhi, pp.166. Rs. 195 (h.b).

This book attempts to examine governance in Pakistan from the perspective of the relationship between the development of state institutions and the decision-making of key individuals within the power structure. Three military coup d'état and frequent changes in constitutions have created instability in the relationship between various institutions of the state.

The book explains why Pakistan could not progress. The main reason is that Pakistan literacy rate is lowest in the world. People are deprived of basic necessities of life. The overall result of it is that Pakistan has a fragile democratic polity. This has increased number of ethnic and sub-national groups, because they feel deprived. This has also heightened the violence in the society. Rapid urbanization, government spending on non-productive purposes, rapid erosion of natural resources, depletion of forests, rise of toxic levels in rivers, and industrial waste all have detrimental effects on the society. Faced with this crisis, the ruling elite over the years has been unable to grasp the problem as essentially arising from a failure to either deliver the goods to the poor, or to involve them in economic and political decision-making.

The authors have dealt with the problems ailing the bureaucratic institutions and gradual process of decay within the system of bureaucracy. Intellectual caliber of civil servants

## **The American Connection**

Since the inception of Pakistan, Americans have been involved in Pakistan's politics. During the Zia regime, there was a good relationship with America. Though Pakistan's nuclear programme was an irritant factor recurring every now and then, both the countries collaborated on Afghan issue.

American worked hard to achieve the transition from pro-American dictatorship to a pro-American democracy in Pakistan. When Benazir Bhutto came in power after the elections of 1988, Assistant Defence Secretary Richard Armitage and Assistant Secretary of State Murphy Richard came to Pakistan to talk on following points:

1. Ghulam Ishaq Khan to remain President of Pakistan.
2. Continuation of Sahibzada Yakub Khan as Foreign Minister.
3. Pursuit of economic affair, to sign an agreement with IMF on 15 November 1988, that is, just a day before the elections.
4. No interference in army matters, such as posting, transfer, promotion and retirement.

It was during Benazir Bhutto's tenure of 1988-1990 that American Ambassador was given the title of "Viceroy" because of his interference in the internal and external affairs of Pakistan. President Zia-ul-Haq had met American Ambassador Arnold Raphael before announcing the dismissal of Prime Minister Junejo from his office. It is no accident that Pakistani elites apparently seems convinced "the road to Islamabad lies through Washington".

## **Changing Scenario**

Pakistan's politics is no longer limited to drawing-rooms due to Z.A. Bhutto factor. It is now entrenched among people. Politicians now have to step out from the comforts of drawing-

room and mingle with proletariats. The factors that are making Pakistan strong is its nuclear capability, national consensus on democracy and frequent balloting. The three institutions that have developed since Pakistan's inception are army, journalism and judiciary. (For details see paged 54-62 of the book).

The final chapter contains an interesting study on style of governance of key leaders to show how their propensities affected the state institutions. The leaders were Ayub Khan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Zia-ul-Haq, and Benazir Bhutto.

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is becoming low due to lack of reading, academic standard at colleges has deteriorated, in service training at different levels does not help them in tasks they are required to perform. Unlike bureaucracy, where there is deterioration at intellectual level, in the armed forces it has improved many folds, the army has its own military public schools, specialized training colleges in the fields of electronics, engineering, medicine, aeronautics, of high quality.

Though promotion and retirement in the armed forces is constitutionally in the hand of prime-minister or president, but practically armed forces resist their decisions as happened in the cases of Admiral Sirohey, General Shamim Alam Khan and Major General Pir Dad Khan.

The Pakistani military is also active in foreign affairs decisions and sometimes, it, without consulting the Foreign Office, takes its own decisions as happened during the Afghan War. The army prefers least interference from civilians. It is internally well-organized, integrated and disciplined. It looks after its own interests very well.

The absence of "rules of the game" has further amplified the problem of governance. For example 1956 Constitution sought federal parliamentary system, 1962 constitution reversed it and opted for presidential form of government. In 1973 Constitution, the structure of government was based on federal parliamentary form, vesting vast powers in the office of prime minister. In 1955 there was one-unit. In 1969 it was undone and the provinces were then restored.

The absence of democratic political culture has tragically manifested itself on key occasions in Pakistan to petty rivalries and infighting. The politicians have sought the army's intervention to oust political rivals rather than to achieve an accommodation with their political opponents. Political parties in Pakistan have revolved around the personality rather than the principles. Pakistani politics is of feudal nature in which the scions of leading families dominate.