**The Grand Agenda**

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April 2, 2022

There are different kinds of systems to run the country. Democracy is a type of government in which all citizens have equal rights, opportunities and equal say in creating and carrying out laws for their country and be a part of the system.

Many dictionaries have explained that the word “democracy” comes from the Greek words “demos” meaning people and “kratos” meaning power or rule. So democracy signifies the “rule of the people by the people for the people,” and more specifically it has come to mean a government in which a majority determines decisions.

The Rule of Law means that everybody, no matter how wealthy or powerful, is treated equally in the eyes of law. Trying its best, democracy enables citizens to participate in keeping their local, regional, and central governments responsive to issues most important to the people, but unfortunately, it is not actually in practice in many parts of the world.

There are two kinds of systems in democracy. One is the Presidential system like in the US, which is not a direct election. The other is the Parliamentary system, where the prime minister is the head of the government and the parliament makes all the decisions, like in Britain.

There are two major types of democracy. In a direct democracy, people vote directly on a decision, rule, or law. In a representative democracy, citizens vote for somebody to represent them, and this representative then proceeds to make laws and decisions on behalf of the voters, which is a practice in most countries in the world.

Every democratic government has been a victim of corruption and its main beneficiaries are those who have no participation in the struggle.

There is a lot of criticism of democracy as it also is feared that a people’s elected government could be overthrown during a crisis when difficult but quick decisions would be needed. Building a consensus, Discussing and debating with lots of people takes time therefore in such a case democracy can be slow and inefficient.  The question then comes to mind as to how successful would an army under attack be if soldiers stopped voting on every little military decision proposed by their commanding officers? Moving forward, another question springs in mind how successful would a  hockey, football or cricket team be if all players took the time to argue and vote on every play as the clock wound down? “

It might be slow in taking decisions but there are situations when democracy just won’t do. Another critique of democracy has been that the majority does not always make the best decisions but sometimes has to take harsh decisions which are not popular. In case there is a majority of one party in the parliament, which can’t be undone, democracy can lead to a tyranny of the majority at the expense of a minority.

The opposite of democracy is autocracy which can be a dictatorship or monocracy, a form of tyranny in which the supreme power of the state is concentrated in the hands of one person who is the sole decision-maker of the state. He has the final say in how laws are made, interpreted, and carried out. Autocracy comes from the Greek words ‘auto’ meaning self and ‘kratos’ meaning power or rule. Kings, queens, dictators, and tyrants are all single rulers. Perhaps this autocracy starts in every one of us when we as parents want to control the children.  This ingredient comes in all of the parents as well from time to time just imagine when your mother decides to send you to your room or not allow you to go out with your friends, those are autocratic moments. There is always some autocrat in all situations thinking of having one wise or dominating person decide something can be much more efficient than allowing the multitudes to debate.

This kind of autocratic government typically restricts or entirely prohibits political freedoms of speech, assembly, religion, and press.

In different parts of the world, there are different types of autocracies. Inherited monarchies, where a king or queen passes down the right to rule, are designed to create autocratic stability, especially at the time of succession. Monarchs can vary in terms of how much power they have. Supreme monarchs, such as Louis XIV in France, held almost absolute power and had the final word in every major decision of the government. Controlled monarchs have political restraints put upon them that check their power to ensure they do not become cruel. For example, the monarchs of England saw their authority gradually limited over the centuries by a democratically elected Parliament.

Dictators who seize power after revolutions or military coups are also autocrats. Cruel and self-serving dictators are called tyrants or despots.

There is another type of government seen in many societies, which is an oligarchy. It is government by a few. It refers to a group of distinguished people who are the decision-makers or close to them such as military generals, educated people, political or religious leaders, corporate or technocrats (the people who have expertise in their respective fields), feudal lords or wealthy people who are closer to the decision-makers, the people behind the curtains or the ones who really matter in political decision making, in the country.

In a real-life scenario, while working together to make decisions for a large family, parents might be considered oligarchs. A subset of oligarchy is plutocracy, a rule by the wealthy. Another type of oligarchy is gerontocracy which is a rule by elders and often controlled by families who pass their influence from one generation to the next, but inheritance is not a necessary condition of oligarchy. Rule by the elders was the tradition or norm of every joint family system there still are families who carry this legacy forward but unfortunately the influence of the soft power from the west has totally changed these norms and traditions. Values in people have mostly changed as per the changing world.

Most governments today use a mix of democratic, oligarchic, and autocratic forms to try to reap the particular advantages of each one of them.

In Pakistan, we practice the same democracy where all citizens are equal. I don’t know whether the people of Pakistan are victims of dictatorship or democracy. Both the systems have not given any fruits to the downtrodden people of this amazing country. Dictatorship has seen more time in power than democracy and during the time of autocracy, they tried to crush the natural leaders rising from the grass-root-level, standing and fighting for the restoration of democracy. On the contrary, many people have enjoyed the fruits of this system and thus they still remember the last tenure of dictatorship.

Democracy again has not given its fruits to the grass-root due to a number of major reasons including military intervention and judicial activism. Every democratic government has been a victim of corruption and its main beneficiaries are those who have no participation in the struggle and no other contribution to the overall movement for their political parties. They are the smart jugglers who know how to entertain and handle the cow to milk in all governments irrespective of who is in power.

The current government is the best example of the worst form of democracy where there has not been any direction or fixed goals to achieve. Common man, from all the political parties, was looking forward to a change. All had high hopes from the system so they could feel good to be in a country free of corruption and other devastating ailments but alas! now the common man has realized that honesty does not give you competency and adding value to that is lack of experience, irresponsible and corrupt team members, having no practical vision at all but theory.

Every system has its positive and negative impacts as I have heard many times that the worst form of democracy is better than the best form of autocracy. It does not matter what kind of system we have, but it has to be a direct democracy for a common man where every person can be benefited and can enjoy the fruits of the system, unlike the old times when only the top few ran away with the fruit.

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