

By Dr Quratul Ain Malik (ITG)

Outline:

- . Introduction
- . Definition and concept of good governance
- . Pre requisites/ Essentials of good governance

Essentials of good governance:

- . Stable democracy/ political stability
- . Constitutional supremacy
- . Rule of law/ effective implementation of law
- . Independence of judiciary
- . Efficient administrative hierarchy
- . Vibrant foreign policy
- . Equality/ transparency
- . Equal distribution of resources
- . Public participation in all decision-making processes
- . Free and uniform education system
- . Financial satisfaction
- . Social security
- . Freedom of media

Status of good governance in Pakistan:

- . Poor scenario/ grim picture of governance
- . Political instability
- . Vacuum of leadership ever since Quaid's death
- . Vulnerable national integrity, piety, solidarity and sovereignty
- . Rampant corruption owing to vested interests of ruling elites
- . Lack of culture of accountability
- . Crippled economy
- . Poor law and order situation
- . Inefficient law enforcement agencies
- . Social insecurity and uncertainty
- . Socio economic backwardness of the masses

Suggestions for good governance:

- . Ensure stable democratic system
- . Supremacy of constitution
- . Rule of law
- . Efficient administrative system
- . Investment friendly environment

- . Public participation in policy-making
- . Education for all

**"Good governance is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance."
(Kofi Annan)**

Good governance is an indeterminate term used in development literature to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights. Furthermore, Governance describes the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. Good governance can also be termed as the effective use of power, legislation of policies, transparent accountability, and development of human resources and supremacy of constitution with the absolute rule of law.

**"Good government does not mean autocratic government. Good government does not mean despotic government. Good government means, a government that is responsible to the representative of people."
(Jinnah, the Quaid of Pakistan)**

Good governance is a continuous process that determines the fate of nation. It is a fundamental factor that is inevitable in taking the nation to the zenith of glory in the world community. Good governance is quite a wider term that encompasses within itself multiple factors that are considered inevitable for its proper implementation that includes democracy, rule of law, constitutional supremacy, accountability and public participation in decision-making.

Unfortunately, the situation of good governance in Pakistan is quite gloomy and grim due to weak leadership ever since independence, incompetent administrative hierarchy and weak accountability accompanied with poor law and order situation.

Democracy and good governance are interrelated to each other. In case there is no democracy, there can be no good governance. It is a matter of grave misfortune for the entire nation that ever since the birth of Pakistan, democracy could not flourish here due to frequent martial laws and unnecessary intervention of military dictators in the state affairs. It is a matter of serious concern that for more than three decades, the country has remained entangled in the oppressive clutches of dictatorship. In 1951, the country's first PM, Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated and in 1958, the first military coup was invoked. In 1971, the country went through the tragic episode of debacle of East Pakistan and in 1977 again Zia's martial law was imposed. The span of 1988 to 2000 saw acute political instability through dissolution of National assembly by another martial law. In the light of the up given picture of country's political situation, good governance seems a cry for the moon.

Corruption is another crucial factor that can prove to be a serious impediment in the way of good governance. Corruption perception index 2011 by Transparency International ranks Pakistan at 134th position out of 183 countries which is alarmingly bad. India's ranking is much better (95th out of 183). Good governance is a distinct reality when the process of accountability of the corruption ridden elements is either weak or missing. National accountability Bureau was formulated in 1999 after military coup by general Musharraf, but the sad fact is that the said body suffers from corrupt practices and lack of accountability within itself, making it a laughing stock in the eyes of other national institutions. Another jerk to the governance was NRO formulated in Musharraf's era in 2007 to secure his otherwise illegal and unconstitutional reelection as the president. Pakistan today happens to be the classic example of ingenuities for bribery and exchange of favors. More than 7000 beneficiaries of this defunct law had to face reopening of their cases in 2009. This was an open violation of the principle of good governance.

Effective and in time implementation of the law is another deciding factor in the process of good governance. Pakistan unfortunately has become a classic example of worst law and order situation. Every other day a substantial number of innocent citizens, who are just silent spectators, are targeted by the law enforcement agencies.

Flourishing economy is one of the major components of good governance as both are interrelated in one way or the other. In Pakistan, economic governance is the victim of political instability. Pakistan's commission for human rights stated that 208 people committed suicide in August 2011, predominantly out of economic crisis.

Good governance is pointed out as one of the largest goals in the Millennium development goals but in Pakistan nothing is realized on the ground except paper work. It must be remembered that economic prosperity and good governance are deeply interconnected. The alarming figures of crippled economy lead us to the prompt measures for ensuring good governance in the country.

Political stability and efficient administrative hierarchy are the vibrant components of good governance. Both political leaders and beurocracy go hand in hand for bringing about cult of good governance through effective implementation of public policies. The tradition of nepotism, lack of democratic norms and political recruitments on high government offices must be eliminated in order to promote transparency, accountability and supremacy of law at all levels.

Moreover, the government should create an investment-friendly environment in order to boost up the economy and industrial activity as raising the standard of living is the key component of good governance. Law and order situation should be made conducive and encouraging for the foreign investors so the FDI may be enhanced for the ultimate benefit of the nation and the country at large. Most importantly, the government must also try to bridge the gap between the demand and supply of

energy. New dams and barrages must be built without putting national and political stability at stake. Government should have control on the hoarding mafia, particularly those involved in the hoarding of eatable commodities. Having strict check on the inflation would increase the standard of living of the general masses at larger scale. Furthermore, imparting education and awareness to the common people is necessary to have good governance as the masses have to be the part of this process.

Media's role in the advent of true democracy and good governance is not stressed enough. Media is recognized as the fourth pillar of the state. Media can prove to a vibrant factor in motivating public participation in national decision-making processes and can also create the awareness of rights and duties among the general public. Media can also bring government authorities under accountability for their violations of power and bad governance.

To put in a nut shell, it may be stated that good governance is an inevitable phenomenon for the smooth working of any state machinery. Therefore, political stability, rule of law, constitutional supremacy and public participation in policy making and implementation must be ensured. The entire nation must think and act as one nation and collectively contribute for the prosperity of the country. Time is now ripe to come out of the false and baseless concepts of provincialism, sectarianism and nepotism. With all the leadership vacuum and political instability, the nation can still step ahead to create an environment, where good governance is not merely a dream

“You will have to be alert, very alert, for the time for relaxation is not yet there. With faith, disciplined and selfless devotion to duty, there is nothing worthwhile that you cannot achieve.”
(Jinnah, the Quaid of Pakistan.)