

2. DYNASTIC POLITICS OR DEMOCRACY

TWO FAMILY-DYNASTIC POLITICS is the branded name of DEMOCRACY in Pakistan; poor populace is being fooled since five decades.

**THE PEOPLE KNOW IT...
SO WHETHER THERE IS MARTIAL LAW, COMMUNISM LIKE IN RUSSIA, SOCIALISM LIKE IN CHINA, KINGDOM LIKE IN SAUDIA, PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM LIKE IN THE US, NOTORIOUS DEMOCRACY LIKE IN HERE – THE GENERAL POPULACE IS CONTENTED SO LONG AS THEY GET 'daal-roti' FOR THEIR SURVIVAL – THEY LIVE ON DAILY BASIS.**

Pakistan had emerged as ideological democratic state to make progress towards the prosperity of the people like other nations then in row; BUT it fell prey in the hands of Landlords and feudal – mostly the opportunists in its beginning years.

In Pakistan clans & 'Brathery' play vital role in selection of Representatives. Lineage is always considered dominant factor in casting vote and this is the reason that local feudal elites dominate in rural areas in particular, to build dynasties and hegemonize political apparatus like political parties, local administrative departments, election-campaigns and state paraphernalia too; *see cases of Bhutto and Zardari clans.*

Marriage of convenience between these two clans, Sharifs & Bhutto-Zardaris brought HUGE CORRUPTION, ILLEGAL ACCUMULATION OF WEALTH, COMPETITION OF BUILDING THEIR EMPIRES IN PAKISTAN & ABROAD; thus, spoiling the basic purpose of DEMOCRACY in Pakistan.

The 'democratic (?) rule' of Sharifs (PMLN) and Bhuttos (PPP) dynasties in Pakistan centers on parliamentary politics, power-sharing, and patronage; ***historians view their brand of democracy as elite-driven and status-quo protecting each other***; see their mode of GOVERNANCE:

- **Power-Sharing and Alliances:** They frequently alternate between fierce electoral rivalry and strategic cooperation—most notably after signing the mutually coined Charter of Democracy in 2006 mainly to counter military intervention.
- **Constitutional Engineering:** The PPP-led government under ***Zardari invented the 18th Amendment in 2010***, which stripped presidential powers and transferred autonomy to the provinces mainly to get more share from FEDERAL FINANCES.
- **Economic and Infrastructure Focus:** The Sharifs (Nawaz & Shehbaz both) heavily prioritize large-scale infrastructure projects, such as motorways and Chinese-backed CPEC power initiatives, and economic policies mainly beneficial to their family businesses.
- **Patronage and Clienteles:** Both parties rely deeply on ***local clan networks***, tribal loyalties, and patronage systems; particularly the PPP's strong rural base in Sindh and PMLN's dominance in urban Punjab.

- **Dynastic Succession:** Leadership positions within both parties pass strictly through family lines (Sharifs and Zardaris); NO GRASSROOT INTERNAL DEMOCRACY the two families believe or practice.
- **Governance and Corruption:** Their tenures have frequently faced major CORRUPTION SCANDALS, INFLATION, MONEY-LAUNDERING, STASHING HUGE DOLLAR-MONEY ABROAD, and governance deficits, leading to INSTITUTIONAL DECAY, EROSION & CORRUPT PRACTICES.
- **...with the Establishment:** Despite rhetoric of civilian supremacy, both parties have often compromised or negotiated with Pakistan's powerful military establishment to secure or retain their powers. *At times and at their own conveniences, both they often curse the Pak-Army & GHQ in public and knee down before them in darkness after sun-set the same evening.*

Dynastic Control vs. Democracy

- The dominance of the Sharif and Bhutto-Zardari families reflects fixed dynastic politics. ***Intelligentsia argue this hereditary control functions as familial nepotism rather than meritocratic representation.***
- **Hereditary Succession:** Leadership positions within the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) ***pass predictably through family bloodlines rather than open intra-party elections.***

- **Feudal Patronage:** Electoral politics in Pakistan heavily rely on local land-owning, tribals, or industrial networks, ***making it difficult for non-dynastic outsiders to compete on a level playing field.***
- **Institutional Compromise:** Academics and the youngsters argue that ***power concentrated within the said TWO households undermines the growth of robust grassroots democratic institutions.***
- **Pragmatic Coalitions:** In a fragmented political landscape of Pakistan, the said TWO dynastic parties provide the organizational divides, rifts and gaps to manage complex ethnic and provincial set-ups.

FAMILY POLITICS MUST END; WHY

- Has become a **Hereditary Rule** - POWER stays inside the Sharif family's PMLN and Zardari family's PPP.
- **NEVER seen Internal Elections in their parties** - parties do not hold fair votes to choose their true leaders.
- **Always seen Family's Personal Control** - a few family members make all big decisions instead of party workers.
- **Always seen Focus on personal Business Protection** – both leaders often use power to save their family businesses.
- **Always seen** stopping their corruption cases through their toddy judges.
- **Military Interventions become inevitable** – when their corruption touches sky.

- **Judicial Overreach:** Courts often take political decisions FOR & AGAINST to please them.
- **Both family rulers made Institutions weak** – see Police, tax systems, and anti-corruption groups fail to stay neutral and strong.

RESULT: ***Dynastic politics stops new and honest people from rising***; thus, military has to fill the gaps and interference by the COURTS & CHOSEN JUDGES push back the country into STONE-AGE time and again.

THE FULL PICTURE...

The military has ruled Pakistan for extended periods through direct coups (under Ayub Khan, Zia-ul-Haq, and Pervez Musharraf) ***BUT No glaring pointing of Financial Corruption against any of the THREE GENERALS.*** Fact remains that the interrupting civilian CHANGEOVERS mostly brought instability.

- **Indirect Influence:** Due to bad governance, huge financial corruption and familial nepotism of the successive civilian governments, the military often retains dominant control over foreign policy, national security, and internal politics.
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- **Weak Judiciary:** Pakistani Courts have historically faced pressure to validate extra-constitutional steps or partisan interventions, undermining the rule of law.

Mostly JUDGES ON ROLE ARE SPINELESS, WITHOUT EGO & having ZERO SELF-RESPECT.

The general populace STILL WAIT JUDGES like ***J Rustam Kayani, J Cornelius, J Baghwan Das, and J Durab Patel*** – No Ruler, civil or military, ever dared to approach them.

- **Weak Political Parties:** Most mainstream parties operate as centralized personal fiefdoms or family dynasties (now JUI-F & NAP also) rather than institutionalized organizations with internal elections.
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- **Feudalism:** Rural electoral politics remains tied to powerful landowning elites who influence local voting behavior, bogus vote-cast and thus, block grassroots reform – the basic requirement of DEMOCRACY.
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- **Widespread systemic corruption**, invariably in all administrative hierarchy, Departments & Directorates and lack of institutional accountability have eroded public trust in civilian governance; ***Interior Minister Mr Naqvi's STANCES in August 2026*** are referred.
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- **Poverty and Illiteracy:** Low rates of literacy and high poverty leave populations vulnerable to support DYNASTICAL families-politics and less equipped to demand systemic accountability.
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- **Economic Crises:** ***Frequent reliance on international bailouts and severe inflation create conditions where civilian governments lose legitimacy***

inviting MILITARY interventions; AND foreign interference in the form their sponsored Economic Managers like Mr Qureshi Mr Shaukat Aziz.

INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY:

In Pakistan, ***political parties are personality-centric with weak intra-party organizational structure*** as opposed to the developed democracies, where political parties channelize upward mobility, resource distribution and inclusiveness.

Lacking the real democratic culture at intra-party level sparks factionalism and fragmentation within the party since the party workers are not provided any space for their proper elevation. Moreover, over-centralization of power in party leadership discourages the culture of internal debate and deliberation.

"Never have the Sharifs trusted any other political family of the province or any of the central figures of the PMLN to govern the Punjab when they had the power and privilege to do so. After 1980s, once again, the Sharifs, in 1990s, played a masterstroke in keeping the Punjab within the family with the next elections (of 1997) in mind, no matter what the critics said about the dynastic character of the dispensation",

Rasul Bukhsh Rais's *analysis* in **ARAB NEWS** dated 9th May 2022 is referred.

The two major political dynasties—the Zardaris and Sharifs-- have launched their second generation in the power game—Bilawal Zardari as the Foreign Minister since 2022 and Hamza

Sharif as the Chief Minister of the Punjab. [*In 2018, the PMLN had more party-based seats in the Punjab Assembly than the PTI – BUT didn't get the first call to form the government – simply bcz of PMLN's stinking reputation*].

The ouster of Imran Khan who ruled Punjab from Islamabad through an incompetent proxy chief minister, Usman Buzdar, had to return the Punjab back to the Sharif family.

In dysfunctional democracies*, elite-based and elite driven parties need family-heads to stay intact and coherent. ***But all power in the family does alienate some party workers and people, and work to the advantage of challenging a narrative of corrupt dynastic politics; it happened just in the near past.**

Dynastic parties like PMLN, PPP and JUI never tolerate dissident opinions and such workers are shown exit-doors.

Consequently, such parties which promote *over-centralization and personality-centric political culture* also face problems in proper instrumentation and appliance of an internally inclusive decision-making process.

The fact remains that majority of the political parties in Pakistan has nothing with internal democratic setup and intra party elections mean nothing for those but to consolidate & promote the dynastic politics.

International democracy watchdogs classify ***Pakistan's governance environment as fragile or authoritarian-leaning***, pointing to weaknesses in the rule of law, access to justice, and electoral fairness.

See **2025's REPORT** of '*Global State of Democracy Framework*' picked from <https://www.idea.int/democracytracker/>

"Pakistan ***performs*** in the low range in Representation, Rights and the Rule of Law, only attaining mid-range performance in Participation. ***It is amongst the bottom 25 per cent of countries*** at the factor level with regards to ***Access to Justice, Basic Welfare, and Personal Integrity & Security***.

Pakistan's ***lower middle-income economy*** reckons with ***unstable governance, high public, and external debt*** levels, and weak ***education access***. Climate change is also a significant underlying issue that has the potential to exacerbate existing challenges, with Pakistan ***highly vulnerable*** to the consequences of climate disasters of various kinds."