

## Democracy Only Serves the Ruling Elite At The Cost of Common People

### News:

Prime Minister Imran Khan on 18 March 2019, summoned the Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar to Islamabad. He reprimanded him for having allowed a bill to be passed that promises an exorbitant increase in the salaries and perks of provincial lawmakers.

### Comment:

The Punjab Assembly unanimously approved a private bill, by amendment to the Punjab Public Representatives Act, 2006. The approval provides for a raise in salaries and perks for the Chief Minister, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Provincial Assembly, as well as the Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) on 13th March 2019. According to the amendment bill, the Speaker's salary increased from Rs 37,000 to Rs 200,000 per month, that of the deputy speaker from Rs 35,000 to Rs 185,000, with similar provisions for cabinet members and advisers. According to the bill, the MPAs in Punjab are to be entitled to Rs 80,000 per month rather than Rs 18,000. The bill also provides for the salary of Chief Minister to be raised from Rs 59,000 to Rs 375,000.

This bill was passed when the people are heavily burdened by an increase in electricity and gas bills, as well as back breaking inflation due to a 30 percent devaluation of the Rupee in the initial first few months of the PTI rule. After the passage of this bill from Punjab assembly, there was a strong public backlash which forced Imran Khan to distance himself from this bill. He voiced his displeasure in a tweet the very next day, "I am extremely disappointed by decision of Punjab Assembly to raise pays and privileges of MPAs, Ministers & especially Chief Minister. Once prosperity returns to Pakistan such a move could be justified, but now, when we do not have resources to provide basic amenities to all our people, this is untenable"

Imran and his party had criticized previous ruling parties as being corrupt. Imran had said that he will never accept corrupt people in his party, otherwise his party will be more of the same. However, in order to win elections, Imran's party welcomed every potential candidate who could win an election in his constituency, no matter how bad a reputation he had. He was criticized for this U-Turn but he justified it by saying on 4 July 2018, "You contest elections to win. You don't contest elections to be a good boy. I want to win," and he added, "The political class here doesn't change that much." The immensely corrupt Musharraf even pointed out that many of Imran's leaders, were from his time in ruling! So how, really, can there be hope in any ruler that rules by Democracy to end corruption?!

It is clear that Democracy only produces a political class that has no regard for the masses, no matter which party comes in power. Therefore the problem is democracy itself. Democracy enables the ruling elite to seize maximum benefits for itself, as it holds the power to make laws. That is why we have always seen, and continue to see now, that as far as getting benefits and perks goes, both the opposition and ruling parties are on the same page, putting all differences aside. Facing strong public pressure, the PTI is forced to make some changes or may hold implementation for the time being. However, regardless, the democratic ruling elite will continue to secure their interests. In Democracy, politicians enter politics only to secure their benefits, as is seen the world over, where the wealthiest of the nation are found in assemblies.

The Muslims of Pakistan are disappointed at the conduct of the members of the PTI, as they are just like the previous rulers. Imran Khan claimed that he and his party will make Pakistan a state like Madina, providing relief for the masses. However, as the advocates of the Khilafah warned before PTI came to power, the advocates of Democracy will never be able to fulfill their promises as more Democracy means more of the same. Democracy is not a system for looking after the masses. It is a system for the ruling elite and their cronies. Democracy helps the ruling elite to fulfill their whims and desires as they have the power to legislate. So they can raise their salaries and perks whenever they want. They give lollypops to the masses, with the claims that change will come one day, a day that has yet to be seen in Democracy.

There is no doubt that the “regime of change” has also abandoned the people, as the previous regimes did. Democracy is deception and the Muslims must move past it. The Muslims of Pakistan will only get a sincere leadership when the Khilafah (Caliphate) on the Method of Prophethood is established in Pakistan. In the Khilafah, the ruler has to ensure that the people's needs are fulfilled, well before his own. RasulAllah (saaw) said, «الإِمَامُ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ وَمَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ» “**The Imam (ruler) is a guardian and he is responsible for his subjects**”. So we saw that our Khulafa'a Rashidun used to take only an amount which barely fulfilled the needs of their families, so their living standard was not even above that of the common man. We will only be able to see that golden age once again if we re-establish the ruling by all that Allah (swt) has revealed. It is time to bury Democracy and re-establish the Islamic Khilafah state.

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