

Detailed SUMMARY of “Excluding Party Leaders,” Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, Dawn, October 1st, 2023

The recent statement by Pakistan’s caretaker prime minister suggesting that free and fair elections could proceed even if former Prime Minister Imran Khan and some of his party members were incarcerated has sparked controversy. While the prime minister later claimed his words were taken out of context, the reaction to his statement highlights Pakistan’s historical pattern of excluding popular political leaders and parties from the electoral process. This practice dates back to the 1970 election when Sheikh Mujibur Rehman was prevented from forming a government despite winning an outright majority. Subsequent elections were marred by rigging, military takeovers, and the exclusion of popular leaders like Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. The article emphasizes the recurrent nature of these events and their impact on political parties and leaders.

Easy/Short SUMMARY:

The caretaker prime minister’s recent statement suggesting elections could proceed even if Imran Khan and his party members were in jail has stirred controversy. Pakistan has a history of excluding popular political leaders and parties from elections. For example, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman was not allowed to form a government despite winning a majority in 1970. This pattern continued with rigged elections, military takeovers, and the exclusion of leaders like Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. The article highlights the repetitive nature of these events.



SOLUTIONS of The Problem:

Ensuring Fair Elections:

- **Independent Election Commission:** Strengthen the independence and integrity of the Election Commission to oversee and conduct free and fair elections without external interference.
- **Electoral Reforms:** Implement electoral reforms to address rigging and irregularities in the electoral process.
- **Transparent Delimitation:** Ensure a transparent and fair delimitation process to prevent gerrymandering and manipulation of electoral boundaries.

Political Accountability:

- **Judicial Independence:** Safeguard judicial independence to prevent the misuse of the legal system for political purposes.
- **Political Dialogue:** Encourage political dialogue and reconciliation to resolve disputes without resorting to exclusion or imprisonment.

IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the article:

- Pakistan has a history of excluding popular political leaders and parties from the electoral process.
- Several leaders, including Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, Benazir Bhutto, and Nawaz Sharif, faced imprisonment and exclusion from elections.
- Rigged elections, military takeovers, and fragmentation of political parties have been recurring themes in Pakistan’s political history.

IMPORTANT Facts and Figures out of the article:

- The article emphasizes the recurring pattern of excluding popular leaders from elections in Pakistan.
- It highlights the impact of this pattern on political parties and leaders over the years.

MCQs from the Article:

1. **What recent statement by Pakistan’s caretaker prime minister sparked controversy?**

- A. Election rigging
- B. Free and fair elections
- C. Imprisonment of party leaders
- D. Electoral reforms

Answer: C. Imprisonment of party leaders

2. **Which historical event in Pakistan’s electoral history involved the exclusion of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman from forming a government despite winning an outright majority?**

- A. 1970 election
- B. 1993 election
- C. 2008 election
- D. 2013 election

Answer: A. 1970 election

3. **What is one proposed solution to address the exclusion of popular leaders from elections in Pakistan?**

- A. Military takeovers
- B. Transparent delimitation
- C. Electoral rigging



D. Fragmentation of political parties

Answer: B. Transparent delimitation

4. **What recurring theme in Pakistan’s political history does the article emphasize?**

A. Economic development

B. Judicial independence

C. Exclusion of popular leaders from elections

D. Political reconciliation

Answer: C. Exclusion of popular leaders from elections

VOCABULARY:

1. **Caretaker** (noun) (قائم مقام): A person who takes care of a place or thing during the temporary absence of the usual owner or occupant.
2. **Controversy** (noun) (مناظرہ): A disagreement or argument, typically a public one.
3. **Rigging** (noun) (تعمیراتی ہتھکنڈ): The action of manipulating something in a dishonest way to produce a desired result.
4. **Interference** (noun) (مداخلت): The action of interfering or the process of being interfered with.
5. **Gerrymandering** (noun) (تعمیراتی ہتھکنڈ): Manipulating the boundaries of an electoral constituency to favor one party or class.
6. **Misuse** (noun) (غلط استعمال): Incorrect or inappropriate use.



7. **Reconciliation** (noun) (توافق): The restoration of friendly relations.
8. **Pattern** (noun) (نمط): A regular and intelligible form or sequence discernible in certain actions or situations.
9. **Exclusion** (noun) (استبعاد): The process or state of excluding or being excluded.
10. **Imprisonment** (noun) (سجن / سجناء / سجناء): The state of being confined in a prison; incarceration.
11. **Fragmentation** (noun) (تفتت): The process or state of breaking or being broken into small or separate parts.
12. **Safeguard** (verb) (حماية / حماية): Protect from harm or damage with an appropriate measure.
13. **Independence** (noun) (استقلال): The state or quality of being independent; freedom from external control or support.
14. **Recurrence** (noun) (تكرار): The fact or state of happening again.
15. **Mismanagement** (noun) (إدارة سيئة / إدارة سيئة): The act or process of handling something inefficiently or incompetently.
16. **Reforms** (noun) (إصلاحات): The action or process of making changes to something in order to improve it.
17. **Rhetoric** (noun) (خطبة / خطبة): The art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the use of figures of speech and other compositional



techniques.

18. **Perpetual** (adjective) (مستمر): Never ending or changing; occurring repeatedly.
19. **Uniformity** (noun) (تساوي): The quality or state of being uniform.
20. **Legacy** (noun) (تراث): Something handed down from one generation to the next, especially a tradition or cultural practice.