Trauma, Tension, And Turbulence In Websites' Editorial Political Cartoons: A Case Study Of Muhammad Zahoor

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Abstract

Modern societies everywhere, are becoming progressive and want to see development in every aspect of life. Same is the case with Pakistani society. It conceived the accomplishment of its ideals with PTI government whom they had elected with a heavy mandate but due to numerous socio-political and economic crises, the government could not abide by their aspirations due to which they became frustrated as a result of the unclear and uncertain policies of the government and hence became deviant. The present study, in the form of 4editorial political cartoons selected through purposive and simple random sampling techniques from the former data of MPhil thesis (Mussarat Jabeen, 2022), is an attempt to uncover the flux, annoyance, and frustration of Pakistani public, caused by the demagogic concerns of the ruling party. Theory of 'Deviance' i.e.,1890 anomie theory of Émile Durkheim (cited in Jón Bernburg, 2019) and 1960 anomie theory of Robert Merton (cited in "Theories of Deviance", n.d.)provided the necessary theoretical framework for the current study. Catherine Belsey's (2005) model of textual analysis was used for the purpose of analysis and interpretation of cartoons data. It was found that different factors like foreign debts, inflation, taxes, soaring oil prices, pandemics, terrorism, and false promises of the government do have a strong impact on the mindset of the Pakistani public. It was concluded that Muhammad Zahoorin his cartoons, has given a very true and realistic depiction to the status quo in Pakistan and that public's deviant behavior is the result of their confused position in such a status quo.

Keywords: Political; Tension; Trauma; Turbulence; Websites

Background of the Study

Muhammad Zahoor is a leading Pakistani cartoonist who publishes daily onhttps://www.dawn.com/newspaper/cartoon. His cartoons have a wide variety of themes and an array of issues. Since independence in 1947, Pakistan has been ruled by different political parties who introduced different policies and ordinances in different times concerning their own benefit and welfare. Imran Khan came with a new vision and laid the foundations of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on April 25, 1996, announcing his discomfort and annoyance with the other political parties which according to him, have bankrupted Pakistan. His catchword slogan 'Tabdeeli' i.e. CHANGE, attracted thousands of thousands of people who, on account of the corruption, joblessness, inflation, and injustice of the previous governments, had become averse and tired of the false promises of development of the former political leaders. Searching their true leader and ideal in the person of Imran Khan, they finally elected Imran Khan as Prime Minister of Pakistan in the general elections of 2018 with heavy mandate. But, due to the corruption of the previous governments, the government treasury was empty and the country was bankrupted. Imran Khan, though had high hopes of developing the country and making it a welfare state of the world within no time and had made promises to achieve these ideals, could not keep these promises. He had tough time to see but people had hopes to be fulfilled. In such diverse and adverse circumstances, it was not within his powers to do whatever he and his party had declared before the general elections of 2018. The people of Pakistan faced a different kind of tension as they observed the political upheavals in the country. They were greatly shocked to see that none of the promises was going to be fulfilled and became enigmatic. Muhammad Zahoor has given a realistic touch to these fluxes and tensions of the people through his cartoons.

Rationale of the Study

Cartoons and caricatures are a different way of narration the facts as compared to the traditional ways. They work in different dimensions like persuasion, irony, satire, and allegory. It is very rare that analysts see some of their other dimensions as well beyond the mentioned ones. The present data (cartoons) are analyzed with reference to the 'antithesis' dimension of narration i.e., how do they present realities through skepticism. People of Pakistan due to different social and economic issues have become skeptic and cannot believe so easily in whatever is told to them. They anticipate the opposite outcome of everything and are often in flux. Thus, the study can prove a vital help for social welfare agencies in the country to devise such mechanisms that can mitigate peoples' concerns for dealing with the crises with ease, comfort, and cool-mindedness.

Statement of the Research Problem

Depression, anxiety, and fluxes are bound to occur when the achievement of ideals stops. People frustrate and become averse to others and the phenomena. The cartoons and caricatures of Zahoor are passing through trauma, tension, and fluxes due to the adverse political situation in Pakistan and the inflation caused by it. The present study is an attempt to reveal the turbulence and analyze its root causes through the analysis of the selected cartoons.

Research Objectives

Following are objectives of the present research:

1. To analyze the causes creating confusion among Pakistani public with reference to the selected cartoons.
2. To explore the effects of inflation, foreign loans, terrorism, diseases, and price hiking on Pakistani public in view of the selected cartoons.
3. To investigate the ways in which trauma and turbulence cause tension for Pakistani public in the context of the selected cartoons.

Research Questions

The following research questions are answered during the analysis and interpretation of data:

1. What are the different causes of the confusion of Pakistani people in context of the selected cartoons?
2. What are the effects of inflation, foreign loans, terrorism, diseases, and price hiking on the masses of Pakistan with reference to the selected cartoons?
3. How do trauma and turbulence make people tense in the context of the selected cartoons?

Critical Review of Related Literature

Every government has two basic elements i.e., the binary of agreement and conflict. No regime, anywhere, seems free from this binary. The public vote different parties and want their actual representation in true spirit in the affairs of the state. The political party achieving the highest mandate becomes the ruling party. In constructive and welfare societies like those of the West, the public demand the achievement of their ideals for which they cast ballot. If the elected government becomes unable to fulfill the public ideals, disagreement is bound to occur. Jack Citrin (2001) explains that it is often the distribution of valued social good over which the consensus or conflict centers and that in every aspect of life (of course not only government) they both go hand in hand. For governmental and other social institutions to be effective, legitimate and powerful, a need is always felt to achieve the degree to which consensus can minimize the conflict and this is possible only when the true ideals of social good are achieved by the ruling party (Citrin, 2001). On the other hand, disturbance is bound to occur when understanding between the masses and political leaders disrupts. Most often, this disruption arises due to the high claims of the political leaders to solve the problems and their inability to abide by their tall claims. This renders political leaders as demagogues. In the view of Randall Calvert (1992), political leaders are elected with their efficiency by the public and the public rear high hopes of social welfare from them. But due to numerous and huge problems (usually) faced by the political leaders, the good social ends cannot be easily achieved which lead to the frustration of the public and their distrust. If political leaders become unable to act according to the wishes of the public and do not solve social problems for them, they are not liked and accepted, i.e., "Solution of such overarching problems makes leadership possible in the basic problems in which social gains are available" (Calvert, 1992: 7). Those leaders are thought to be powerful and supposed to be elected for the next time as well, who are stable enough to work for the betterment of the public in the form of general public good.In

the perspective of Louis Wirth (1945), truly democratic societies believe in the consensus and mutual consultation between the opposition and ruling party or between the leftists and the rightists. In such societies the central goal of each group is the achievement of the ends. The tension and flux are minimized in one way or the other and the sole motto is always the peaceful settlement of trifles. But this is possible only when the both the sides i.e., the ruling party and the opposition are not in favor of corruption and despotism. Corruption, despotism, craze for regime control etc., are some of the key features of an undemocratic country and unsuccessful government. In nondemocratic societies, the minimization of internal tensions and conflicts is not thought to be of extreme importance as it can forever be achieved easily through consensus which is not often seen (Wirth, 1945).Commenting on the nature of these tensions and conflicts creating to turbulences and traumas among public, Doug Bond, Craig Jenkins, Charles Taylor and Kurt Schock (1997) opine that the internal conflicts sometimes lead towards political crises and for the control of such conflicts, the government (ruling party) necessitates the use of power to end or minimize the conflict. This aggravates the tensions between the rightists and the leftists even more. It is always the resources such as money and power which prove the basic cause of the arising conflict as the public demand them and the government (due to lack of resources and other political challenges) becomes unable to meet their ends (Bond et al., 1997). Relating his study to the value of promises made during the election campaigns in democratic societies, Fraser McMillan (2019) asserts that such boosting promises are not only important for political parties in individual capacity in order to get the desired vote margin but also for the solidarity and integrity of the state. His study proves that in Britain and other democratic societies pledges made during the election campaigns were actually fulfilled by the succeeding parties. He is also of the view that of course, at times, if government does not become able to fulfill the once proclaimed promises, it is because of the factors like inflation, inter-party tussles, less economic growth in the country, and the malpractices and corruptions done by the previous governments (McMillan, 2019). Different factors like inflation, joblessness, soaring prices, and the like, produce the shortage of resources which in turn accelerates the competition among the masses for personal interest and benefit. In this race, every member tries to achieve the desired goals in personal capacity without thinking about the general goal. Veronique de Rugy (2013) is of the opinion that in such a situation, there is the extreme need on part of the government to supervise such personal interests through certain policy. But, having no policy for the overall management of the risk control, the problem aggravates and the public loses its interest in the government and renders government to be incapable of keeping the promise of the general and clean management.

In a nutshell, the fulfilment of a 'promise' made by a politician, in the truest sense of the term is not possible. Promises change with changing times and people. The fulfilment of a certain problem by one member (of ruling party) may be given the status of pride by the other member (the leftist). Promises are therefore idiosyncratic and there is no true sense available in which one can tangibly understand the nature and character of a promise and its subsequent fulfilment (Ben Oquist, 2017). It is a rhetoric of politics and it will not be an exaggeration to say that in a country like Pakistan, keeping of a promise by politicians is no more than a joke. Although, certain factors like lack of

resources, jobs, inflation, previous corruption, bankrupted treasury etc., can be enumerated as some of basic reasons which hinder in the fulfilment of the pre-election promises by the politicians; yet, it is not always the case. Party mottos and future policies should be vehemently thought out before election campaigns and only those problems should be highlighted about which the solutions may be possible.
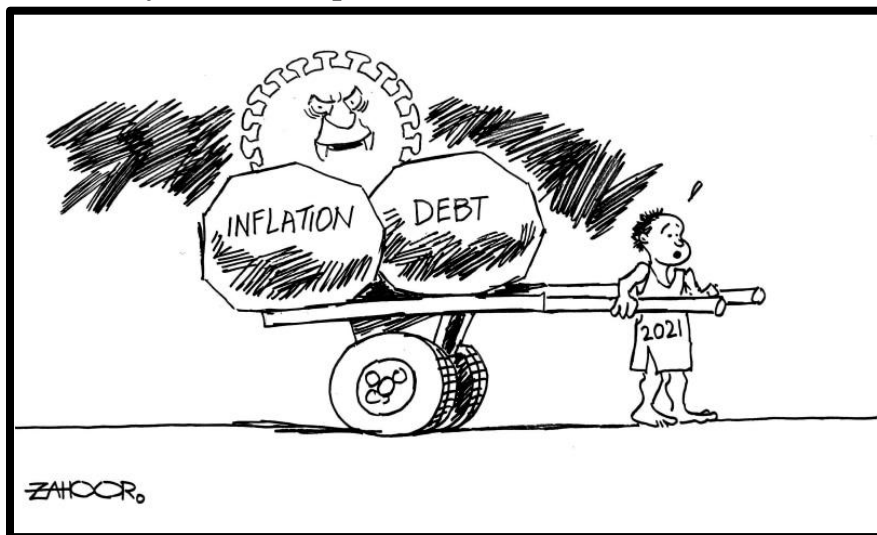
Theoretical Perspective

The cartoons under analysis portray a kind of internal flux and confusion among the public of Pakistan regarding the unfulfillment of their ideals. Although, people gave heavy mandate to PTI in the general elections of 2018, hoping for any positive change to take place against the traditional corrupt practices of the previous governments, yet the disillusion that they felt at the end of the day, was a horrible one. All the positive and formidable things in the country seemed impossible due to the economic and political situation in the country. The PTI government's claim of housing scheme, providing employment, rendering transparency, ending corruption, and organizational reforms etc.,— all became a nightmare for the hopeful citizens of Pakistan; their true ideals, in a sense, shattered and they became deviant in as far as their sociological concerns were related. 'Deviance' theory in general, therefore, is used as conceptual framework for the present research since it is usually referred to as harsh behavior of dislike from great number of members in a society and its nature can also be noncriminal like nudity in public, tricks with fire, unusual dressing, and being dirty in America are referred as deviant behaviors and the people doing it are called deviants ("Theories of Deviance", n.d.). As a particular theoretical perspective, 'Anomie Theory' of deviance is used as it is "referred to the confusion that arises when social norms conflict or don't even exist" ("Theories of Deviance", n.d.: para. 6). Anomie is when people see the chaos in society, it affects their behavior and they feel themselves to be in difficult situations and become deviant (anomic) i.e., anomie according to Durkheim, 1890 "refers to a widespread lack of commitment to shared values, standards, and rules needed to regulate the behaviors and aspirations of individuals, is an intermediate condition by which social (dis)organization impacts individual distress and deviant behavior" (cited in Bernburg, 2019). In the same way, the 1960s anomie of Merton (cited in "Theories of Deviance", n.d.) is when people become frustrated and deviant when they see differences between the socially acceptable and good ends and the availability of means present for them to achieve those ends. In the present data, the Pakistani public is in extreme flux as they do not see any future for the attainment of their true and possible ideals. This makes them deviant and their anomie is seen in the frustration caused by uncertainty.

Research Methodology and Delimitation of Data

The data for the current study was selected from https://www.dawn.com/newspaper/cartoon—the editorial cartoon website. These cartoons are drawn by Muhammad Zahoor, a leading Pakistani cartoonist and they ranged from January 1, 2021 to April 20, 2021. As an extension of the previous MPhil research, where 10 (ten) cartoons were selected for the purpose of analysis, for the present study (keeping in view the time and space issues), only 4 (four) cartoons were selected. In order

to avoid sampling bias, two sampling techniques were used respectively i.e., purposive sampling and simple random sampling. As the aim of the present research was to see the flux, trauma, and tensions in cartoons, therefore, it was preplanned to search for such cartoons that had the dim traces of some kind of inherent confusion. Having this purpose in mind, first those cartoons were opted among the available 10 which were thought to be apt. By skimming and scanning, a vague and general idea of different cartoons under study as vehicles containing confusion was got. As, in both skimming and scanning purpose allocation is there, therefore, purposive sampling was used first to allocate data. During this sampling, 4 cartoons out of 10 were selected. In order to avoid the selection of any specific cartoon having traces of specific theme, the 10cartoons through simple random sample technique were coded in the form of tokens with numbers written on them, ranging from 1 to 10; were put in a bowl, mixed several times; and only 4 of them were picked as the data for analysis. These 04 tokens comprising of cartoons were then analyzed in detail. Belsey's (2005) model of textual analysis (semiotic analysis here) is used for the analysis and interpretation of the selected data with a special focus on the context, historical background, minute details, tensions and flux, and themes in the cartoons.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Cartoon 1. ("Pains ahead"). Reprinted from "Dawn", by Muhammad Zahoor, 2021

Analysis and Interpretation
The year 2021 approached with bad news for the world in general and Pakistan in particular as it was already passing through an age of extreme inflation and internal political strife between the establishment and opposition. Pakistan was already seeing the pressure of heavy debts in the form of interest that multiplied every year. In such dire circumstances, the approach of Covid-19 proved to be a blow on Pakistani economy as everything stopped and major cities and markets observed lockdown. In order to fight the disease, Pakistan had to close all the business hubs which resulted in inflation. The whole year passed with extreme difficulty and uncertainty.

According to "Pakistan agrees to swallow bitter IMF pill", (2021), IMF agreed to sanction $6 billion as bailout package for Pakistan to stabilize its rupee value in response to the hiking of US dollar as a result of the inflation in the country due to corrupt practices of the previous governments and heavy debts. This sanction was tied with strict conditions for Pakistan by IMF like: the bailout amount will not be paid in lump sum, Pakistani government will increase taxes, it will raise oil prices monthly etc. This was not an easy task to do for Pakistan as the masses were already under the stress of heavy taxes. By increasing taxes and oil prices more and more was like fanning the fire of inflation. On finding no other alternative, finally Pakistan agreed to these conditions of IMF and the taxes grew higher and higher on monthly basis. Such a situation added to the miseries of the poor class who were already living from hands to mouth. Due to IMF's crude policies and difficult conditions, the government had to raise the ratio as compared to the previous statistics. Oil, medicine, edibles, vegetables and fruit were no more in the grasp of the common people who worked on daily wages. The rise in fuel prices was extremely disliked and criticized by the public as it created inflation in the country. In the same way, the outbreak of Covid-19 also left Pakistan in a miserable situation. The cases arose higher and higher since February 26, 2020 when a resident of Karachi came from Iran and the other was spotted in Islamabad. According to a report:

> Daily maximum cases in Pakistan were reported on June 14, 2020, i.e., 6,825 cases. 213 cases were the lowest official number that were reported on August 30, 2020. Second wave was started in the second week of October, reached 3,795 official case on December 6; maximum in the second wave. Although the cases started increasing the maximum number remained close to 1,000 cases till February 2021. The ongoing third wave in Pakistan was officially recognized to have started in the second week of March 2021. The number of cases (on March 18, 2021) are increasing at 8 percent infection rate and CFR is 1.2 percent. Total cases are more than 600 thousand and are expected to increase due to increase in infection rate as well as outbreak of new variant of virus. ("Impact of COVID-19", n.d.: p. 349)

The caricature pulling the cart is a stereotype representing the whole Pakistani population who belong to the poor class. His rugged clothes and a little hair are the symbol of his poverty and misery. In the same way, he is not wearing any trousers/shalwar which also alludes to his miserable condition. He is also not in the position to have any shirt/kameez and is just wearing a simple jacket. All this gives a clear picture of his plight; he seems extremely depressed which is shown from his wrinkled forehead. He is also anticipating something very dire which is evident from a small bubble over his head. The empty bubble is suggestive of the hollowness that 2021 has. The written tag **"2021"** on his jacket is remarkable in the sense that it refers to the year 2021, as taking with it Coronavirus, inflation, and debt, represented respectively by the symbol of Coronavirus, **"INFLATION"**, and **"DEBT"**. The possible reason of the cartoonist not using name for Coronavirus and instead representing it through an ogre emoji, may be the severity and deadliness of the disease. Moreover, the road under the tires of the cart is pressed down which alludes to the weight of the cart having the heaps of Coronavirus, **"INFLATION"**, and **"DEBT"**. The 'heap' shape suggests the large quantity of the stuff that the cart is carrying.

A poor Pakistani person, representing the whole community looks to be in great flux and does not know the situation ahead. He, while drawing the cart, anticipates the consequences that the year 2021 will take with it. His grim face is the identification of his shattered mind and worrying temper. In the same way, his size, as compared to the size of the cart having 3 heaps of the biggest issues, is not less important which shows his incapacity to deal with these kinds of diverse situations in 2021. The tag '2021' makes this year a very vicious and ominous. Among the three heaps, the one representing Coronavirus, has been drawn with a very drastic, dangerous, and fearful way to refer to its fatal and deadly consequences; if it is not controlled in time, it may spread globally and can cause genocide. These three issues are the most serious and greatest, which will be confronted by Pakistan in 2021. The cartoon can be regarded as a precautionary tool for the government of Pakistan to think in advance and devise strategies to tackle the social, economic, and health issues impending to be faced by it in 2021.

The dominant theme is the incapability of Pakistani public to deal with diverse situation like ailments, pandemics, economic crises, and poverty. The downgrading of Pakistani economy as a result of the hiking of dollar, also finds its place in the image. In the same way, the poor quality of the road construction, mismanagement of the governmental organizations, increasing poverty level, lowest standard of life, and shortage of the necessities of life etc. are some of the themes which are evident in the image.

Cartoon 2. ("You must not fear"). Reprinted from "Dawn", by Muhammad Zahoor, 2021

Analysis and Interpretation

Imran Khan won the 2018 general election with heavy mandate. It was such a time that was full of crises and the country was going through extreme difficult conditions. There was poverty, joblessness, corruption, inflation, malpractices in organizations etc. in the country. He came with a new vision to end all the mischief from Pakistan and to make it the visionary state of the world. Also, the heavy debts that encircled Pakistan, are not less to mention. In such crises, where everything was in flux and organizational mismanagement was at the peak, he pacified the people

by asking them to be patient and that he will get everything right. He also did many tall claims and promises which were not in his capacity to achieve. Due to these reasons, people became averse to him and his government and were at discomfort. They lost hope of any positive change taking place and became extremely critical.

PTI government was elected with heavy mandate in the general election of 2018. The elections were heavily criticized by other parties in Pakistan who considered election commission to be partial having supported Imran Khan. The leadership of PML (N) and PDM asserted in their viewpoints time and again that army was responsible for the winning of PTI in the present election wherein "the military and intelligence agency of being behind his outer as premier and installing their "puppet government" by bringing Imran Khan into power" (para. 1) and that the present government of PTI is not elected but a "selected" (para. 14) one (The Hindu, 2020). Imran Khan, being staunchly critical of the corruption done by the previous governments and political parties for throwing Pakistan into bad debts, was determined to take revenge from them by coming into power. He was enthusiastic to make Pakistan a corruption-free country and welfare and visionary state of the world. Before the general elections of 2018, PTI announced the first 100 days plan after gaining the government. This plan was:

> The creation of a new province in Southern Punjab, reconciliation with alienated Baloch leaders, development of Karachi, poverty alleviation, and betterment of the economy overall. The plan included a jumbo development package for FATA to which other provinces will contribute three per cent of their share … The promise was made to implement the job quota reserved for Balochistan. The federal government would announce a development package for Karachi after the completion of six-point agenda … To improve the overall economy of the country, it was promised that 10 million jobs will be created, the manufacturing sector will be resuscitated, small and medium-sized businesses will be developed fast, and the private sector will be assisted in building five million houses. Reformation of tax administration, increase in tourism, the transformation of state-owned enterprises, and overcoming of the energy challenges was also promised … Through this plan, it was promised that national security would be revamped by creation of four national security organizations. ("First 100 days of Imran Khan's prime ministership", n.d.).

Unluckily and up till now, the plan did not prove successful due to plethora of economic challenges faced by Imran Khan. This greatly disturbed the public who through different means like social and print media shared their feelings of disgust with the present government of PTI on the basis of its false promises and inability. The disgust and unrest of the public aggravated as soon as the government hiked the diesel and petrol prices. The sudden and huge rise in the prices of diesel and petrol was in response to the reservations made by the IMF as Imran Khan resorted to IMF for loan to run the affairs of the state because the government treasury was empty. IMF already the creditor, agreed to sanction $6 billion more loan for Pakistan in installments on the conditions: if it "raises the taxes before the final approval" (para. 6) and "increase revenue by increasing a fuel tax by 4 rupees (0.02 cents) a liter every month till it reaches 30 rupees a liter" (para. 7) (Faseeh

Mangi & Ismail Dilawar, 2021). This raised the amount of the previous taxes in comparatively higher ratio for the already burdened average industry owners and in the highest ratio for the poor who were living from hands to mouth. Oil, medicine, edibles, vegetables and fruit were no more in the grasp of the common people who worked on daily wages. The rise in fuel prices was extremely disliked and criticized by the public as it created inflation in the country. People suffered economically but Imran Khan would just pacify them but proclaiming that 'do not panic' and that have patience. The fuel prices rose even higher and higher and he retained the same view and stuck to the same statement of 'do not panic' and that things will be better soon. The prices hiked, inflation rose, taxes doubled but the Prime Minister solicited the people with the words 'you are not to worry'.

The image has two caricatures. The first caricature that is coiled around is that of a poor person. He is a stereotype who represents the common public of Pakistan who are living in extreme difficult conditions. His miserable condition is evident from his bare feet, thin body, and squeezed face. His disarrayed hair which are not combed properly add to his misery and tough time. His teeth are evident and represent the stress under which he is going. He is so strongly pinched by the coil that he seems breathless. He seems to be struggling hard to be free from the grip of the coil but in vain as the force of the coil is much greater than that of the person. The rope-like material that is coiling him is the flexible hose/product hose or pipe of the fuel dispenser or fuel unit. It has been represented like an anaconda coiling around the prey and going to devour it. The nozzle of the flexible hose is represented like the head of the anaconda who seems very angry. The oil pouring down from the nozzle is represented like the forked tongue of the anaconda sensing the condition of the prey. The second caricature is that of the Prime Minister Imran Khan. His spiky nose with oblong face, small eyes, peculiar hair style, and the black waistcoat do necessitate him to be Imran Khan. The fact that he is Imran Khan is strengthened by the statement **"GHABRANA NAHI…"** which is proclaimed by him and refers to his idiolect and catchword. His mocking is evident from his sprawling jaws which shows his laughing over the situation of the person coiled by flexible hose of the fuel dispenser.
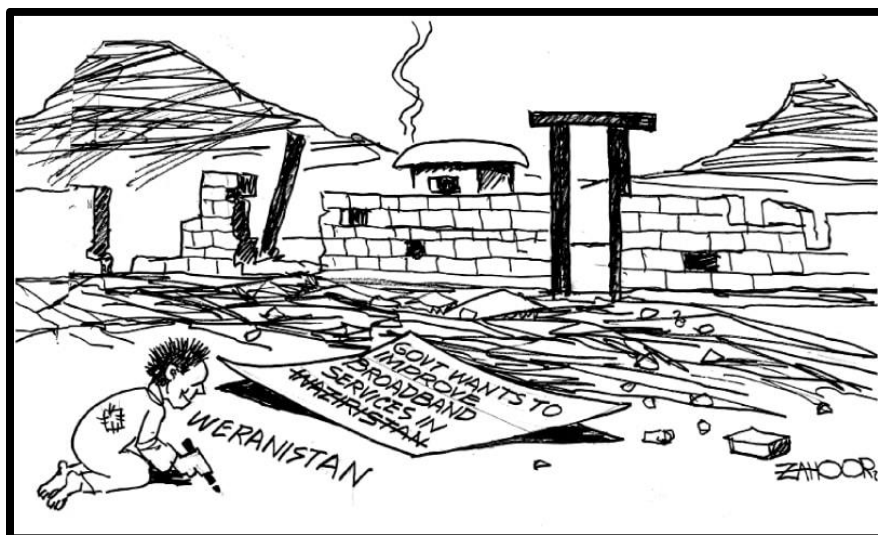
The whole contention is based upon the analogy of 'Ghabrana Nahi Hai', proclaimed by Imran Khan in August, 2018 when he became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. During his era inflation increased with the soaring prices of many food items like chicken; petrol, electricity bills, taxes, and medicine etc. that extremely shocked the lower class of Pakistan and those working on daily wages. According to Imran Khan, whatever the case may be, and how much the inflation increases, do not matter. What matters, is paying of the taxes by the public. According to Naila Inayat (2021), an artist gave a musical touch to the catchword slogan of Imran Khan:

> Pakistani musician Saad Alavi's satirical cover of PM Khan's slogan would resonate with anyone who splurges on a bath soap, eats more than one roti, or thinks they can spend on medicine and also pay their children's school fees. Wake up y'all, collect all that money and only pay your taxes. Or better yet, let quom remain in deep slumber, they don't need to know what happens in the real world. Beda gark ho jaye, aap ne pachhtana nahin — the raft may sink but you shouldn't regret. Aap ne ghabrana nahin is PM Imran Khan's vain

message for the Pakistanis. But the magic of Alavi transcends it beyond borders. Many Indians might think he was singing for them too in these times of inflation. (para. 4)

The flexible hose of the diesel/petrol dispenser represents the anaconda that has coiled/entangled the public of Pakistan in its clutches. How steadily they try to free from the soaring prices of the fuel, it is of no use and that it will destroy them by taking away from them even their meals. They are already under the heavy burden of taxes and the rising prices of diesel and petrol even more, will add to their further embarrassment as the delivery of goods necessary for life is based upon transportation which is again directly affected by the soaring prices of diesel and petrol. But the Prime Minister is still not aware of these facts. He does not want to know about the plight of the poor people. The only thing that he needs is to pay the taxes by the people. He does not care a fig for the poor people of Pakistan and is active behind just hoarding money in government treasury even if it is at the risk of snatching the livelihood of the people and leaving them to diseases, hunger, inflation, joblessness, and homelessness. People cannot afford the expenses of everyday life but he is still in jolly mood telling people that everything will get right and that 'you must not worry'. This is like a joke that he is playing on the poor people of Pakistan as he has badly failed to keep any promise that he has done.

The image is important in as far as the Socialist ideology is concerned. Unless and until the resources are owned by all the members of a community alike, no true progress can be achieved and that the rich will grow richer and the poor, poorer. It also has the ideology of anti-Riyasat-e-Madina which was proclaimed by Imran Khan. The vision of such a 'Riyasat' or state seems dreamy. In the same way, the inability of Imran Khan as the Prime Minister also finds place in the image. Despite being the strongest of the Prime Ministers in the history of Pakistan, he is not able to achieve something availing for Pakistan.

Cartoon 3. ("Rehabilitation in Waziristan"). Reprinted from "Dawn", by Muhammad Zahoor, 2021

Analysis and Interpretation

Pakistan army launched operation Zarb-e-Azb against various militant groups like Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Haqqani Network, Al-Qaeda, and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi etc. on June 15, 2014. The purpose of this major military operation was to uproot these groups that had strong roots in Afghanistan since Russian invasion of Afghanistan. As a result of the US invasion of Afghanistan, these groups fled to Pakistan to seek hideouts and made numerous terrorist attacks inside Pakistan to pressurize Pakistani agencies and administration to stop assisting the US in Afghanistan. Seeking their hideouts across the whole FATA in general and NWA in particular, they had the secure abodes in NWA. As a result of the terrorist activities of these groups, public and private property, organizations, infrastructure, institutes, and ideology of the tribal people was sabotaged by them. Compensating the tribal people of NWA, the government of Pakistan on the successful completion of operation Zarb-e-Azb, did many reforms across the NWA.

After the US invasion of Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 as a result of the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan suffered alike. North Waziristan Agency (NWA) forming the FATA region of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan, shares its boundaries with Afghanistan through Ghulam Khan Border. With the advent of huge Afghan diaspora as a result of the pro-US invasion of Afghanistan, NWA was also affected by this migration of the Afghans. The terrorists, on knowing the impending action against them in Afghanistan by the US, disguised as refugees, left Afghanistan and entered NWA. On the basis of invincibility of NWA due to its vastness and high mountains like those of Shawal valley, it was supposed to be the safest hideout by the militants after Afghanistan. As a result of this, many terrorist groups entered NWA and made it their permanent abode as across the border in Afghanistan the US was extremely active against them. Pakistan being a close ally of the US on terrorism and apprehending the fatal effects of these terrorists groups on its political position in world community in general and its socioeconomic status in particular, initiated different military operations across the country as the militants carried on terrorist activities inside the country as well. The biggest military operation Zarb-e-Azb was initiated on June 15, 2014 in NWA in response to the 8th June 2014 terrorist attack on Jinnah International Airport for which Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan claimed the responsibility. Up to July 14, 2014, this operation internally displaced about 929,859 people from NWA ("Operation Zarb-e-Azb", n.d.). Telling about the consequences of Zarb-e-Azb, Fakhar Kakakhel and Umar Farooq (2015) assert: "Thousands of homes and businesses have been levelled by air strikes and bulldozers" (para. 4) and that "the entire bazaar was levelled, first by air strikes and then by bulldozers" (para. 11). After the success of Zarb-e-Azb on Aril 3, 2016, the government of Pakistan decided for the rehabilitation of the internally displaced people of NWA who had temporarily settled in the adjacent areas of Bannu, Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, and Peshawar. The resettlement and rehabilitation of these internally displaced people began in March 2015. According to a report:

> In order to meet the security and rehabilitation challenges, the government along with the military has taken several initiatives. The government has ensured strict regulation of international borders and sealed its Afghan border to prevent cross border infiltration of terrorists and smuggling. The Frontier Corps (FC) is deployed not only to train the Levies and the Khasadars but also to ensure law and order situation in the tribal region. The
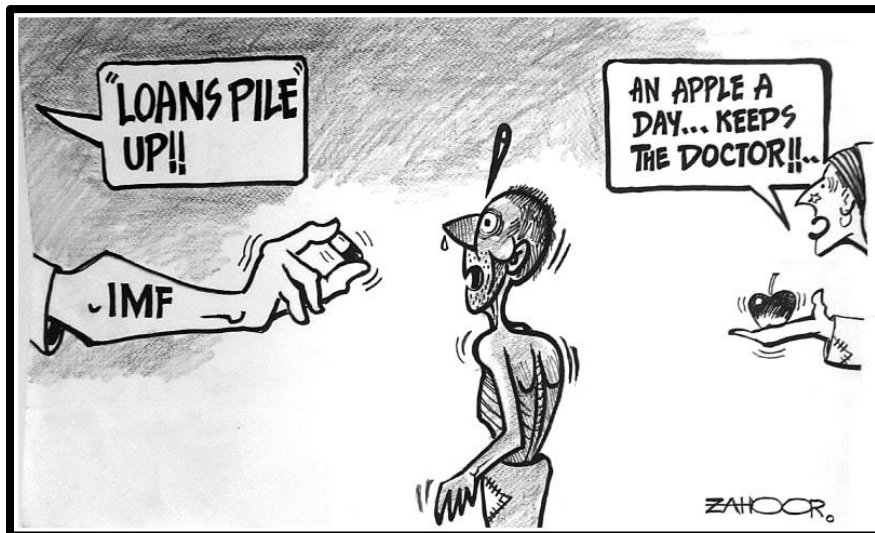
political administration has been restructured with gradual incorporation of amendments in the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). FATA reforms have been introduced at rapid pace that include development of infrastructure, re-opening of schools and educational institutes, building up of hospitals, restoration if livelihood and revival of economic activity. Many de-radicalization centers have been opened at places such as Bara, and another named as Sabaoon-II in NWA. (Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2015: para. 7)

As the internally displaced people suffered a lot, the government along with many other reforms, also paid great attention to broadband services like the fixation of mobile towers for the availability of internet facility to the people of NWA.

The picture presents a panorama of demolished homes. The background is necessarily NWA which is generally and simply referred to as Waziristan. The fallen sheet of paper on the ground necessitates its background in the NWA. In the same way, the mountains in the background also make the deserted scene from NWA. The falling bricks on the ground are proof of the demolition of homes of the internally displaced people. It is clear from the picture that the walls are destroyed and have holes in them which means that they have been heavily bombarded either with air strikes or with missiles and rocket launchers. It also makes the picture a war scenario in the present age and the action of bombardment seems taking place at this time since the smoke rising from the destroyed homes is visible even now and has not been extinguished yet. The door frame is very important in its meaning which metaphorically makes the scene a very miserable one. The bombardment is so heavily done that only the door frames of the homes are left. The sheet of paper fallen on the ground with the words **"GOVT WANTS TO IMPROVE BROADBAND SERVICES IN WAZIRISTAN"** alludes to the idea taken from the news of 12th February 2021 telling "government to improve internet services in Waziristan within 'next four weeks'" (Hamza Zakir, 2021). An internally displaced person is cutting the word **"WAZIRISTAN"** in the statement of the paper and is altering it with his own word **"WERANISTAN"** which he is writing on the ground. He is coining a new word **"WERANISTAN"** which means 'the land of demolished people' i.e., the internally displaced people of Waziristan or NWA. The miserable condition of the internally displaced person is evident from his thin figure, spiky hair, and patched clothes. The military operation of Zarb-e-Azb has so brutally affected them that they even do not have proper clothes to wear. Their houses have been destroyed, businesses ruined, schools have been demolished, and the ration given to them by the government is not sufficient to provide them with two full meals even. They also have no hope of going back to NWA (Kakakhel & Farooq, 2015). The picture under analysis presents a harsh satire on government of Pakistan who after the military operation of Zarb-e-Azb, is active in reformations and welfare activities for the rehabilitation of the internally displaced people. The person in the picture is a stereotype who represents all the internally displaced people of NWA. He seems in trauma and the cutting of the word **"WAZIRISTAN"** from the sheet of paper and changing it to **"WERANISTAN"** highlights this trauma. The biggest question in his mind is: What does it mean to have broadband facility and mobile technology in **"WAZIRISTAN"** if the people there have no clothes and shoes to wear?

Metaphorically, the coining of the word **"WERANISTAN"** means the land of the destroyed and demolished people. It is inferred from the Urdu word 'ویران' – 'weran' which means in Urdu the demolished. **"WERANISTAN"** then means the abode of those who are destroyed and demolished. The irony is that the government has allowed them to enter NWA but with no rehabilitation done. Things which should be done on priority basis like building homes, are put by the government aside, having secondary importance. In such a grim situation where people do not have homes and shelter, what will be advantage of using internet?

The picture demonstrates that the internally displaced people are poor and are in the severe need of help from the world community. It is also related to nostalgia and makes us understand the value of own home. In the same way, it is also related to patriarchy. Home means having your own land and home country without which we do not have any identity. The horrors of war and effects of terrorism also find their mention in the picture under analysis. Likewise, modern technology and heavy weapons and their use make us cautious here that they are inhuman and anti-humanity which cause severe disaster to people.

Cartoon 4. ("The poor perplexed"). Reprinted from "Dawn", by Muhammad Zahoor, 2021

Analysis and Interpretation

This cartoon has the background of severe economic crises faced by the PTI government after its coming into power in 2018. The soaring prices of goods and edibles for the poor people were adding to the problems of the pauper class. Bankruptcy, corruption, and hoarding were adding to the present problems of the poor people and the government apprehended inflation. In order to resist any inflation in future, the government decided to resort to IMF to get some bailout fund. Although IMF, on seeing the economic crises in Pakistan did not reject Pakistan's request, yet sanctioned the funds with tough conditions and in installments over three years of duration. This decision of IMF was based on its retrospective consideration of bailout fund to Pakistan by other countries like China, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and UAE and prospective apprehension of Pakistan not being able to refund the amount if it is provided without strict conditions. These conditions were

in the form of heavy taxes to be imposed over the public in corners of energy, medicine, and the purchase of electronic gadgets etc. The poor, already burdened with taxes, faced inflation.

Pakistan is a democratic country with a parliamentary system of government. After every 5 years, elections take place and new government is formed. PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) which means Pakistan Movement of Justice, the leading and ruling party of Pakistan today, was founded by Imran Khan on April 25th 1996. Imran Khan, disturbed with the corrupt previous governments of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz Group) and Pakistan Peoples Party and other political parties of Pakistan like JUI and ANP etc., rose against them to make Pakistan a corruption-free and welfare state of the world. After a long political endeavor of 22 years, finally he succeeded and became Prime Minister in the general elections of 2018. As the country was already going through severe economic crises of the previous governments, the situation for his newly established government was very dreary due to corruption, inflation, worse health conditions, poverty, illiteracy, and organizational conflicts etc. Pakistan, already under the burden of heavy debts of IMF, once again had to resort to IMF for bailout package in order to pull itself from the crises out. The total debt on Pakistan estimated for the year 2017 was $86,031,955,223. Although, taxes in the previous governments to pay for the interest on the external loan were not so much high, Imran Khan had no other option but resort once again to IMF to get the bailout package. IMF already the creditor, agreed to sanction $6 billion loan for Pakistan in installments on the conditions: if it "raises the taxes before the final approval" (para. 6) and "increase revenue by increasing a fuel tax by 4 rupees (0.02 cents) a liter every month till it reaches 30 rupees a liter" (para. 7) (Mangi & Dilawar, 2021). This raised the amount of the previous taxes in comparatively higher ratio for the already burdened average industry owners and the highest for the poor who were living from hands to mouth. Oil, medicine, edibles, vegetables and fruit were no more in the grasp of the common people who worked on daily wages.

The caricature standing in the middle of the image is the stereotype of the poor people of Pakistan. His blowing nose is the sign of his illness. He seems to be severely suffering from flue and temperature. In the same way, his naked body with the thin posture is the representation of the level of poverty to which the people of Pakistan have reached due to joblessness and inflation. Extremely important here is the condition of his pant that has been patched. In modern day world, where humanity has progressed in almost all respects and it seems imaginary to have someone with patched clothes; seeing someone in such a miserable situation indeed leads to the most miserable conditions of people. In such an advance age if one is not provided with the (unpatched) clothes even, one is supposed to mark such an age with extreme poverty and diversity. His thin body is also the indicator of improper, less, and unbalanced food. Necessarily, if one cannot buy new clothes for them, how can they take two full meals? He is stuck between two extremes. On the one hand, the lady offering him is one of his own class. Her spiky nose and patched sleeve are the indicators of her belonging to the same class (mother, sister, wife, daughter etc.) as that of the person standing in the middle. Her near relationship to him is shown by the care that she has for him i.e., offering him apple to make him gain certain strength. Her words **"AN APPLE A DAY … KEEPS THE DOCTOR!!.."** are amply used to describe their miserable situation. The

representation of a single apple through this proverb is not out of place. The meaning of this proverb is that if one eats healthy and diet-rich fruit, their heath will remain good and they will not have to visit the doctor so often. But here, the meaning is mystified through the sign of only one apple in the hand of a lady as compared to the established meaning i.e., a certain quantity of fruit (apples) which signifies that they are not able to get enough quantity of apples but somehow, she has managed this one apple due to the high prices. The choice of this specific fruit i.e. **"APPLE"** is also not out of purpose by the cartoonist. It has been used with a particular significance in mind. It has a two-fold significance: first, as fruit like 'apples' are common and easily available at grocery shops in Pakistan, costlier than other fruit, and secondly, as they are rich in iron which are advised even by doctors to be taken during illness. Image of only one apple so softly held by the lady does represent the extreme poor condition of them. Also, the thin wrist of the lady represents her lower economic status. On the other hand, International Monetary Fund is personified through a person. It has a hand with strong wrist which represents it as an agency that holds the money. The hand offering the patient a pill is tagged with **"IMF"** with the proclamation **"LOANS PILE UP!!"** which terrifies the patient. He is horrified. If he takes the pill, he may be cured but the potential threat by the person representing IMF forbids him to take it. If he takes the pill, the taxes will increase which will definitely be paid by him. The more the poor use medicine, the more taxes they will have to pay. So, he is stuck in between whether to take medicine or the fruit. Nowhere, he is secure. Neither he can purchase medicine nor fruit in such a time of inflation.

According to "Pakistan agrees to swallow bitter IMF pill", 2021, IMF agreed to sanction $6 billion as bailout package for Pakistan to stabilize its rupee value in response to the hiking of US dollar as a result of the inflation in the country due to corrupt practices of the previous governments and heavy debts. This sanction was tied with strict conditions for Pakistan by IMF like: the bailout amount will not be paid in lump sum, Pakistani government will increase taxes, it will raise oil prices monthly etc. This was not an easy task to do for Pakistan as the masses were already under the stress of heavy taxes. By increasing taxes and oil prices more and more was like fanning the fire of inflation. On finding no other alternative, finally Pakistan agreed to these conditions of IMF and the taxes grew higher and higher on monthly basis. Such a situation added to the miseries of the poor class who were already living from hands to mouth. The present image has this tussle of indecisiveness. This conflict of interest is represented through IMF i.e. the main stakeholder in the capital assets and the helpless masses of Pakistan who are not sure as what will happen if they swallow this bitter pill of IMF.

The image portrays different messages. Poverty level in Pakistan is exceeded as compared to the previous governments. Unemployment has left people on the verge of death. The rascal nature of IMF has also been highlighted. Upon knowing the dire situation of Pakistan's economy and instead of helping it out from the crises by providing easily manageable bailout fund, the IMF showed its dire intentions of actually collapsing its economy through the sanction of conditioned bailout package while overtly claiming its help in an hour of need. The grotesque situation that emerged in Pakistan after the release of 1st installment of the bailout fund, is indescribable. Taxes and oil prices grew higher that resulted in soaring the prices of everything due to which inflation also

raised to a higher degree. The image is also a representation of the public sense of Pakistani people in general and the poor class in particular. Despite having a little means of earning and their life being on stake, they are puzzled. If they take the pill, their lives may be saved but on the other hand, the loan will also increase.

Conclusion

Pakistani public, although liking PTI government, is but extremely frustrated over the false promises made by the government authorities in general and Imran Khan in particular. The data analysis shows that the present government is copying and implementing the policies of those previous governments whom it had declared corrupt, bankrupting Pakistani economy. Poverty ration is going higher and higher. Oil prices are soaring more and more. The government is taking debt after debt from the friend countries and IMF. These crises have made the situation worst for the Pakistani public and they do not know any solution. In the tug of war between the Government and the opposition for political power, it is them who are being ruined. They are frustrated and have become deviant. There seems no way out for them to get rid of the inflation and other socio-economic issues in the country. Zahoor has accurately depicted the scenario and his cartoons are the realistic representation of the traumas, tensions, and turbulences under which people are living their lives.

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