

Webinar Brief: 44 2021



Republic, Social Contract, and Nation Building

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Republic, Social Contract & Nation Building

With

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Hosts



Dr. Salman Toor (Sweden)



Dr. Asim Aijaz (Sweden)

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Preamble

FARDA arranged a webinar on “Republic, Social Contract, and Nation Building” in which Dr. Nadeem ul Haque expressed his views as a speaker. The webinar is hosted by Dr. Salman Toor and Dr. Asim Ijaz. The primary aim of this webinar is to discuss

- What is a republic in the true sense?
- How should be the social contract between a state and its people? And
- How shall we approach nation-building to overcome the challenges of growing distrust in the functional processes of our domestic system?

Key Messages by Dr. Nadeem ul Haque

- Pakistan's history varies according to time, fluctuating on developing/Non-developing and prosperity/non-prosperity scenario. Development was made over time, but the targeted result was not achieved, moving backward instead of moving forward, and this problem is continuously happening.
- The significant problems behind this are; religion (sectarian country), unitary state, or federation. Lots of religious sects demanding and behaving according to their views. Provinces are not fully independent as the federal system is operating the policies in the whole country.
- Lack of effective leadership; most leaders follow the British colonial system and continue this British authoritarian system. Leaders are the reflection of society, but Pakistan lacks political leadership, and unfortunately, they don't want to establish a country.
- Leaders force youth to work under their influence and talk about infrastructure development but not willing to give them opportunities. Leaders love to be more authoritative with lots of benefits but don't want to provide opportunities to people.
- Civil service servants follow the same British colonial system and behave like trade unions with high monetary packages and other executive benefits, also interfering in the political system.
- Judiciary is under the British colonial system's influence, focusing on being more powerful rather than focusing on reforms. Hundred-thousand cases are pending, but the judiciary is enjoying three months' leaves every year. Instead of solving the problems of people, the judicial system is busy in humiliating the public.

- Leaders are making non-sense policies, building universities but no functional role of universities in nation-building. Focusing on urbanization and real estate development but not concentrating on vertical expansion for housing.
- Building a lot of sports complexes but no sports industry in the country. Investing a vast amount in the energy sector but no practical output. Constructing metros, orange lines, bridges, and many other infrastructures but Roads and infrastructure are not the sources of growth.
- The system was left over by the British, and all Institutions like establishment, civil services, judiciary, and parliament are blindly following this system. We didn't change the institutions positively. Instead, we are adding more power to these institutions. No thought process in Pakistan, intellectuals are considered nation-builders in the world, but in Pakistan, institutions are not considering the role of intellectuals.
- These situations are showing that there is a lack of a culture of growth in our country. Reconfiguration of institutions is necessary for economic growth, and there is a need to focus on thought processes because this has a strong connection with development.

Key Questions by host Dr. Asim Ijaz & Dr. Salman Toor and Response by Dr. Nadeem

- Moral character and ways of living are firmly connected, but no moral character building of the nation in Pakistan, not in the republic, not in democracy, and not in the dictatorship. How to revolutionize this process?
 - The fundamental problem is the colonial mindset, and public servants are not behaving like to serve the public; instead, they love to be authoritative. So first, there is a need to change this type of mindset, and secondly, it's a cultural problem—no thought-provoking situation in institutes and students. Students are not getting opportunities according to their skills; that's why they are shifting to other countries, this is the reason behind the brain drain in Pakistan. Intellectuals are not getting opportunities according to their knowledge and skills. People are forced to follow the authoritarian bodies and listen to the leaders, but leaders are under the influence of their donors; democracy ends here as leaders are not listening to their people. So there is a lack of thought processing culture, readings, and research is also awful in Pakistan. There is a need to changed such situations, but when and who will change this, don't know about this.
- Lack of debate in Pakistan, fear of criticism is a hurdle in the debate processing system. Will universities promote debate culture fearlessly?
 - Debate on domestic reforms is necessary, and there is no fear in this debate. There is a need to debate on VIP culture, colonial reforms, judiciary reforms, and civil services reform. There is no fear of discussion on these topics, and fear only prevails in national security, like debating some severe issues about India.
- There is a lack of capacity to deliver; why are universities facing leadership capacity problems and not preparing students according to their plan?
 - Pakistan has many universities but not independent as they work under some sectaries, and intellectuals are not on the universities' board. We have universities, but we have only land and infrastructure with a lack of professors. Universes are focusing on part-time lectureship then how can we produce an efficient student in these problems? We don't have independent professors, VC, and a board of universities that's why we can't prepare students effectively because of these problems.
- The same curriculum is developing in Pakistan for decreasing sectarian differences but also has strong criticism. Will this plan solve our issues?
 - The government is developing a uniform curriculum, but this is not of concern for politicians because the government consists of politicians, not intellectuals. A single national curriculum is not efficient because it is under the influence of bureaucrats & government officials, which is not of their concern. Only intellectuals/scholars can do this efficiently, but there is no praise for intellectuals; instead, we are sending our scholars out of the country. There is a need to fix this goal but let the professional bodies fix it.

- Success full models or indigenous model? What is the way forward for Pakistan?
 - No one can progress by copying others, and copying is necessary but only for learning, not for invention. Originality, inventions, and reinventions are the factors of progress, but bureaucrats force on copying they are saying that there is no need to reinvent the wheel. Think originally, capacity to think, independent universities, a new method of work, and commitment are necessary. In Pakistan, implementation is not the problem; the problem is a lack of practical thoughts, no capacity to think, and no patience to think.

Key Questions by the Audience

- Is rephrasing constitutions necessary for the minorities?
 - The problem is not in the constitution; actually, there is no culture of obeying the law in Pakistan. Passing the law or rephrasing the constitution is not enough because our culture is not following the law.
- Is economic independence a solution to these problems?
 - We are not independent; not even a single economy is independent because we are a globalized world. Independent thought is the solution to these problems. We need independence of thoughts, we don't need economic autonomy, and the necessary thing is respect for intellectuals, not for the authoritative.
- People don't trust politicians and give up. How can we change this and move towards nation-building?
 - First of all, there is a need to know the definition of a political party; the formation of a party depends on membership, ideology, talent, party heads, meetings, and feed the candidate. One hundred and fifty parties are registered in the election commission of Pakistan, but unfortunately, not a single political party in Pakistan is fulfilling this definition. The prevailing political party has the same problem of an authoritative culture of mindset, so the solution to this problem is to stop this authoritarian culture and talk about new ideas.
- What are your views on Pakistan's education system? What is the role of religious and cultural factors in the education system?
 - Cultural factors are very problematic, and our habit is not to considered the importance of intellectuals. Take the example of America, pick all the intellectuals, provide freedom of work to these intellectuals, and increase his research budget. Currently, the American research budget is 4% of total income. Take another example of China; they transform their culture; although this revolution cost twenty million lives, they continue to grow after this transformation. Now China is investing 3% of the budget on research having more patents than the USA and continuously developing. But in Pakistan, the situation is the opposite; we are the enemies of intellectuals and do not give them opportunities. The fundamental problem is traditional culture and not facilitating intellectuals in the education system.

Conclusion

According to Dr. Nadeem ul Haque, we have two fundamental issues, the first is the colonial mindset and the second is not considering the role of intellectuals. Economies should be like a sucking pump for talents, but we are the enemy of talent in Pakistan. The whole world acknowledges the scholars, but we are not doing this, not giving the opportunities to the talented people and not facilitating them. So there is a need to change this culture, stop authoritarian culture, and consider intellectuals' role.



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