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ABSENCE OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN PAKISTANI SOCIETY: LESSONS TO BE LEARNT BY MODEL OF GOVERNANCE BY HAZRAT UMAR R.A.

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**ABSENCE OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN PAKISTANI
SOCIETY: LESSONS TO BE LEARNT BY MODEL OF
GOVERNANCE BY HAZRAT UMAR R.A.**

Samia Jamshed, Bushra Tabassum

ABSTRACT:

The social setup of Pakistan is a mixture of Islamic, Hindu, and British patterns. Pakistani society has faced mismanagement in the provision of basic facilities due to unfavorable political conditions since independence 1947. Pakistan got independence on the name of Islam and Islam is considered as a model religion when it comes to basic human rights as it provides clarification of social norms either in private or practical lives. Allah has sent Prophets to rule over a group of people basically to teach them and guide them towards the purpose of life and manners to live it. The Prophets and Caliphs have been an example of dignity for their nations. This gives a clear example that how much importance Islam has given to social issues and how to resolve these to build an ethical society. One of the major issues faced by Pakistani society is the absence of good governance which ultimately becomes the reason of instability and bungling in almost every sector of development. Pakistan possesses a history of the bumpy democratic system of governments which results in the absence of an organized social setup even after 75 years of independence. The purpose of this paper is to conduct a research on social and political issues at the ground level of Pakistani society. It compares the reasons of the failure of the political system at the local level and lessons to be learnt by following the Islamic Model of governance by Hazrat Umar Farooq R.A.

KEYWORDS: Governance, Effective governance, Hazrat Umar R.A, Democracy, Islam, Pakistan

Introduction:

The concept of governance is as old as the human civilization. It describes the process of decision-making and how the decisions are implemented. Governance has some actors which affect its attribute among which the most important one is the Government. Whereas other are influential land lords, associations of peasant farmers, cooperatives, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), research institutes, religious leaders, finance institutions political parties, the military etc. However, they vary from rural to urban areas.¹

Literature Review:

Sharifah Hayaati Syed Ismail al-Qudsy and Asmak Ab Rahman in an article *Effective Governance from a Comparative Perspective and its Practice in the Era of Caliphate Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (634-644)* have provided a detailed comparison of governance and its practice in the era of Hazrat Umar R.A. The study provides an overview of important aspects of governance by world organizations and its characteristics. It highlights that Islamic Governance can be studied under the concept of most popular governing state in Islam which is *al-siasah al-shar'iyah*. The governance of Hazrat Umar R.A is measured under the fundamental principles of *al-siasah al-shar'iyah*.

The research work *Hazrat Umar RA as A Role Model for Modern Muslim Rulers* by Sohaib Ahmed, Muhammad Anas & Nasrullah Kabooro has

¹ What is Good Governance? *United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific*, 1

covered policies of Hazrat Umar R.A with practical examples from his reign. The study has discussed the effective measures taken by him in implementing laws and social principles according to Islam.

Dr. Ali Muhammad as-Sallabi's book, titled, *Umar Ibn Al-Khattab: His life and times*, is a detailed description of early life, events and situations faced by Hazrat Umar R.A. It has covered his life events which led towards the conversion of his religion and becoming a Muslim. His behavior with his family and lifestyle he adopted before and after becoming a Khalifah. It also has highlighted his governance models with explanation of his services in each department.

Mohamad Ismail bin Mohamad Yunus has related good governance with Islam in his article *Good Governance According to Islamic Perspective*. The research work is focused on laws, judicial and administrative powers of judiciary and its relevance with the Islamic Perspective based on the principles of Maqasid As Shariah (Objectives of Islamic Law). The study is based on the laws and policies of Malaysia.

Good Governance in Pakistan: Parameters, Causes and Measures article by Muhammad Mumtaz Ali Khan and Imran Alam have provided a relatable discussion on importance of good governance and its necessity in Pakistan. The research work is helpful in learning about the basic meaning of good governance, its important features and how it can be supportive in bringing stability in Pakistan. It has discussed the hindrances in implementing good governance with examples of social, political and financial issues of Pakistan.

Purpose of the Study:

The study relates the reasons of poor governance in Pakistan with the Governance model of Hazrat Umar R.A. If the governance system is in the continuous process specifically at local level, the masses will not be

disturbed in provision of basic needs and the institutions will also not be overlapped in their responsibilities. The purpose of the study is to relate the reasons of absence of effective governance in Pakistan and how it can be overcome by following the Governance Model used by Hazrat Umar R.A during his reign.

Contribution and Relevance of the Paper:

As Pakistan is in the continuous ups and downs of political shifts it directly distresses the governance system in the country and masses are badly affected. The sudden changes in the government left the system of governance ambiguous. The study relates the reasons of poor governance in Pakistan with the Governance model of Hazrat Umar R.A. If the governance system is in the continuous process specifically at local level, the masses will not be disturbed in provision of basic needs and the institutions will also not be overlapped in their responsibilities. The paper presents a comparison of the major characteristics of effective governance and policies of Governance model of Hazrat Umar R.A which can be easy to implement in Pakistan. It can be the most suitable model and easy to understand if implemented fairly.

Methodology:

The paper is compiled by using qualitative methodology. The research has been made both by primary and secondary sources. The data has been used to compare and relate the governance policies used by Hazrat Umar R.A and its outcomes in relevance with the solutions of poor governance in Pakistan. Mainly secondary sources are considered for data collection including relevant Books, Journals, Articles and Reports.

Introduction to Governance:

The word governance derives from Latin and ancient Greek which means control, guidance and manipulation. It is defined as:

“Governance is the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest”²

Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of United Nations Organization, observed that the success of a country can be measured by the quality of the governance it provides to its masses.³

Effective Governance:

Governance has to be measured in terms of some statistics or some settled parameters to measure its performance. It can be good or bad, affluent or poor, effective or ineffective. The term came into the highlight in early eighties. The World Bank was following a plan to promote economic assistance to third world countries. The countries reflecting poor economic structure were politically unstable and weak where it was advocated that economic development cannot be achieved until the countries are sustainable in Political, Social and cultural aspects.⁴ It might come in

² Sharifah Hayaati, Syed Ismail al-Qudsy and Asmak Ab Rahman, “Effective Governance from a Comparative Perspective and its Practice in the Era of Caliphate” Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (634-644)” *Journal of Development Studies* (May, 2010) : 5.

³ A.P. Singh, “Civil Society and Good Governance: Emerging Challenges” *Journal of the Indian Law Institute* 50, no. 1 (January-March 2008) : 83

⁴ Abdul Rahim, “Governance and Good Governance: A Conceptual Perspective”, *Journal of Public Administration and Governance* 9, no. 3 (2019) : 134

discussion in early eighties or specifically for the third world countries but the concept of Good Governance was introduced back in Muslim Caliphate which portrays as one of the best administration model of Governance for today's world which is the Governance Model by Hazrat Umar Farooq R.A.

Governance and Political Situation of Pakistan:

The governmental structure of Pakistan has faced haphazard shifts since independence 1947. The issues faced during the initial phase of partition resulted in the negligence in development of political and constitutional sector which deeply affected the mechanism of the government. Being a federation, Pakistan adopted parliamentary democracy and it is an important part of the parliamentary democracy to have organized system of local bodies. However, Pakistan has been weak when it comes to following the democratic norms. On the other hand, being independent on the name of Islam, it is the obligation of the government to provide basic facilities to its public as Islam considered as a model religion when it comes to basic human rights. Allah has guided mankind through His Prophets, their lives and holy books that how much importance Islam has given to social issues and how to resolve these to build an ethical society. Islam does not limit Good Governance merely to institutions or system, instead it emphasize on the faithfulness, personality and leadership skills of the person who governs the state.⁵

⁵ Imran Haider Naqvi, Shazia Aziz, Syed Abbas Haider Zaidi, Kashif-ur-Rehman, "The model of good governance in Islam", *African Journal of Business Management* 5(27), (November 2011), 10984

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Reasons of poor governance in Pakistan:

When the reasons of poor governance are out looked in detail, there have been certainly same reasons for the failure of effective governance in Pakistan. The most common of those are:



Other issues include Failure of democracy, Provision of basic facility, less ratio of tax payers, Scarcity of basic commodities etc.

All such issues are not only face at national or provincial level but also at local level which directly influence the standard of living of public. The people lack chances of development and live under poor standard of living because of the mismanagement in the system. For many years Pakistan has been unaware about the concept of local level of politics and its importance to build a stable society being a democratic country. The majority of governments ruled over Pakistan have always tried to strengthen democracy without the enactment of local government system or without even realizing the importance or need of its implementation.

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Verily, it was a military dictator who introduced the concept of local government to local masses of the country in 1958.

As soon as the local system of government would be effectively governed, the governments at other level can be organized.

Essential Characteristics of Effective Governance:

Effective/Good governance has eight essential characteristics which are:

- Participation
- Rule of Law
- Transparency
- Responsiveness
- Consensus Orientation
- Equality
- Effectiveness and Efficiency
- Accountability⁶

Governance in Islam

Islam is the staunch supporter of fulfillment of human rights. A ruler or a king is said to be a protector of his public. He is answerable for his services as a ruler. In the early years of Islamic civilization, the political, economic and social matters of the states were mingled up with religious affairs. The teachings of Islam covers major part about how one should deal his daily life matters including family, society, politics, finances under the guidance of Islam. However, the people ruling over the state are seen as the practicing examples of these teachings.

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) was a ruler as well as the administrator of Madinah and the Muslim nation. After his death the period of Khilafat was

⁶ Naqvi, Aziz, Zaidi, Kashif ur Rehman, “The model of”, 10984

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started from 11 Hijri to 41 Hijri, which turned out to be a superlative political institution.⁷ It constituted of thirty years starting from Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique R.A among which, Hazrat Umar R.A was the second Khalifah. The Khilafat was somehow a democratic form of government with different mode of electing the representatives as compared to the present system.⁸ The important principle looked at the time of appointment is truth, accountability and confidence of public from which the person is to be appointed.⁹

Appointment of Hazrat Umar Farooq R.A as Second Khalifah:

Hazrat Abu Bakar R.A consulted the members of government and close groups about the selection of next Khalifah. After the opinion and consultation, the appointment of Hazrat Umar R.A was the last advice by him after observing all attributes of wise leadership in him.

He was the person of whom Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) has made remarks:

“O’ son of al-Khattab, by the One in whose hand is my soul, the *Shayttan* never sees you coming on a path but he takes another path.”¹⁰

⁷ Maszlee Malik, “*Foundations of Islamic Governance: A Southeast Asian Perspective*”, (New York: Routledge , 2007), 116

⁸ Dr. Muhammad Umar Riaz Abbasi, Dr. Sohail Akhtar , Dr. Aurangzeb , Abdullah Saghir Aasi, Ayesha Iqbal , Dr. Naseem Mahmood, “Political System In Islam And The Concept Of Governance In The State; An Analysis Of Caliphate As Islamic Model Of Political Affairs”, *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 7 no. 3, (2023) : 1067

⁹ Mohamad Ismail bin Mohamad Yunus, “Good Governance According to Islamic Perspective”, *Fiat Justisia Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 11 no. 3, (July-September, 2017) : 217

¹⁰ Dr. Ali Muhammad as-Sallabi, “*Umar Ibn Al-Khattab : His life and times*” International Islamic publishing house I, (2009) , 156

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Upon his appointment he made clear towards the public that he would follow the rule of Islam and will try his best to serve the people according to the patterns set by Hazrat Muhammad (p.b.u.h). He expressed by saying:

“O’ Allah, I am harsh so make me softer; I am weak so make me strong, I am stingy so make me generous.”¹¹

At another place he said:

“Allah is testing you with me and testing me with you after my two companions. By Allah, I will not delegate to anyone else any of your affairs that I can deal with directly, and if there is anything that I cannot deal with directly, I will try to delegate it to people who are able to deal with it and are trustworthy. By Allah, if they (governors) do well, I will reward them, and if they do badly, I will punish them.”¹²

Characteristics of Governance Model by Hazrat Umar R.A:

All such characteristics essential for effective governance are seen in the governance model adopted by Hazrat Umar R.A which are discussed in the detail bellow

Islamic Democracy:

After assuming the power as Khalifah, Hazrat Umar R.A encouraged the participation of public. He always valued their opinion in governmental matters.¹³ It directly shows the importance of public opinion in our governmental decisions in Pakistan has least participation. Islam has considered and valued the opinion of masses so that they are not treated as slaves by any authority. Pakistan has been trying to be sustainable in

¹¹ as-Sallabi, “*Umar Ibn Al-Khattab*”, 172

¹² as-Sallabi, “*Umar Ibn Al-Khattab*”, 172

¹³ Yunus, “*Good Governance According*”, 172

achievement of western style democracy however, lack of awareness and consistency became on the reasons of its poor performance. With the passage of time, the democratic norms and being practiced in the country despite being slow in progress.

System of Shura- Advisory Council:

Islam provides an efficient way to govern the public which is to have consultation and advise while making any decision specially related to the people. Hazrat Umar R.A also followed same strategy of his predecessors. All sort of important matters regarding politics and economy were discussed in proceedings of Shura.

By adopting the principle of shura in the state he made people participate in decision making process. Any issue relevant to public affairs were not been held without discussing it with others. He said

“There is nothing good in a decision taken without consultation.”¹⁴

Creation of Judiciary Department:

Hazrat Umar R.A showed prudent decision of creating a separate department of judiciary. He was the first ruler who realized the importance of judicial matters and that these matters should be dealt separately. Earlier, administrative and judiciary departments were run by the same person but he created a new department by the name of Department of Judgment. The department was decentralized at provincial level and Courts were formed at district level. Also there were no jails or place to keep prisons, so he created all such relevant things to normalize the functioning of the department. Judges were appointed to deal the cases in the light of Quran and Sunnah. The judges were given a satisfactory

¹⁴ as-Sallabi, “*Umar Ibn Al-Khattab*”, 182

amount of monthly reward so that they are not influenced by anyone and biased in their decisions.¹⁵ This practice is considered as an important practice nowadays too as no one should be above rule of law. In a country, like Pakistan where people are victim of delayed cases and weak judicial system, the strategy followed by Hazrat Umar R.A should be adopted. Interestingly, Pakistan follows the concept of western terminologies when it comes to criminal rules however, Europe was also far away to be aware about the importance of judicial system. The concept was developed in eighteenth century but it did not come under practical implementation until the French Revolution.¹⁶

Transparency- Appointments on basis of merit:

Another important feature of good governance has been seen in the reign of Hazrat Umar R.A which was transparency in selection of representatives and officers of government. He was keen to transfer the specific department to those who are capable and on merit. Soon after his power, he well informed the public to seek help to those persons appointed by him as they are one of best among others. For example, he quoted that “Alī is our best judge and Uay b. Ka‘b is the best reciter of the Holy Qur’an.”¹⁷ During another sermon, he clarified that if any want to discuss matters relevant to the inheritance, he must contact Zayd b. Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him). Moreover, he also mentioned if anyone wants

¹⁵ Dr. Kulsoom Fatima, “The Leadership Traits of Hazrat Umar: A Beacon of Light for Contemporary Era”, *The Islamic Culture* 46 , (July-December, 2021) : 6

¹⁶ as-Sallabi, “*Umar Ibn Al-Khattab*”, 494

¹⁷ Sohaib Ahmed, Muhammad Anas, Nasrullah Kabooro, “Hazrat Umar Ra as A Role Model for Modern Muslim Rulers”, *Palarch’s Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology* 18(1) (2021) : 5233

wealth, he should consult and come to him as Allah has given him treasure made him the distributor of wealth.¹⁸ One of the best example for Pakistan, as the country experiences ministries and departments under the ineligible and inexperienced people whereas deserving people face unemployment.

Responsiveness & Check and Balance:

Hazrat Umar R.A actively took interest in taking in-person survey during his rule. The purpose behind this was to maintain check and balance on not only his public but also over the officers. He liked to take opinion from the masses so that they can be provided with more facilities. He is famous for his night patrolling in markets of capital Medina.¹⁹ It reflects the dedication and willingness of a ruler that how much he is involved into the issues of people. Nowadays we are living in the world of modern technology and development, it is not difficult to build a connection with public not just for power and political gains but also to address their problems which is required in a country like Pakistan. The government can build a trust based relationship with the masses by taking them in confidence and with an efficient response to their complaints.

Equality- Freedom to non-Muslims:

There was equality among Muslims and non-Muslims under the rule of Hazrat Umar R.A. Islam always encourages to provide security, freedom and basic rights to non-Muslims living in the territory. Hazrat Umar R.A also followed this thing. He encouraged the non-Muslims to participate to help the provinces grow economically and play their part. He make sure

¹⁸ Ahmed,Anas and Kabooro, “Hazrat Umar Ra as A Role”, 5233

¹⁹ Ahmed,Anas and Kabooro, “Hazrat Umar Ra as A Role”, 5237

that non-Muslims be provided justice same like Muslims. He wrote to Hazrat Abu Musa Al-Asha'ri who was governor of Basra:

"People will continue to offer their needs to you. Therefore, whoever comes to you for help, then respect him. For a weak Muslim, this is enough for justice to be with him in deciding and distributing."²⁰ Pakistan faces issues about minorities in terms of provision of security, jobs and other basic rights. For past few years the country has undergone some terrible experiences of minority rights which can easily be resolved through tolerance which our religion teaches us too.

Effectiveness and Efficiency:

A wise leader is someone who makes initiatives to bring out immediate solutions to any need or problem. Hazrat Umar R.A proved to be a wise leader by providing immediate solutions to the problems faced by public. Few Examples can be seen:

- **Formation of Water Canals:**

Hazrat Umar R.A is credited to form the first canal system of the world. The province of Basra was going through water scarcity, the people compliant to him and he sent a written order to the Governor after the complaint, to dig a nine mile long canal from Tigris to Basra. Three well known canals were built by the name of Mu'aqil Canal, Saad Canal and the Amir al-Momineen Canal which ultimately resulted in the increase in food production, agriculture development, livestock safety and safe water supply for the survival. The Nile was connected to the Red Sea by the Amir al- Momineen canal, covering length of 69 miles. The more

²⁰ Fatima, "The Leadership Traits", 11

interesting thing is the canal was built within the short time span of just six months.²¹

▪ **Infrastructure development:**

Hazrat Umar R.A constructed many new mosques in the cities. During his rule Masjid-al-Haram, the Mosque of Prophet (p.b.u.h) was expanded with incorporating the house of Al-Abbas Ibn Abdul Muttalib in it

In order to form a communication link between regions and cities he created certain modes of transportation like availability of large number of camels. All sort of means of communication of roads, land and sea were under high maintenance to avoid any issue.²²

No doubt, Pakistan has achieved some progress in infrastructure development by construction of new passes, highways, roads. Moreover, in recent years, services like metro buses, trains, railway routes but small cities and towns must also be considered for such facilities.

Financial Affairs:

Finances dealt wisely depict a sign of good governance specifically if the source of state income is clear and the wealth is distributed accordingly. In reign of Hazrat Umar R.A the income of the state began to increase so he decided to appoint special persons to supervise it and to maintain all records. At the time zakat, war booty, *al-fay*, *jizya*, *kharaj* and *ushoor* were important sources of income. To manage all sorts of finances, a *Bait-ul-mal* (Treasurer Office) was established in provinces and capital. He was the first to establish the *diwan* (official records) in the Islamic State.²³

²¹ Fatima, “The Leadership Traits” 13

²² as-Sallabi, “*Umar Ibn Al-Khattab*”, 388

²³ as-Sallabi, “*Umar Ibn Al-Khattab*”, 475

Pakistan can also seek guidance in balancing the financial issues faced by country. The annual income and funds should be entered in records of the government.

Creation of Police Department and Prisons:

In order to maintain law and order, Police department was created during rule of Hazrat Umar R.A. and to run the system efficiently, prisons were also required to keep people after being guilty of any misconduct. He established the prisons, which was a new concept and never practiced before. Initially, the residential place of Safwan bin Umayya in Makkah was bought and converted into a prison.²⁴ The Pakistani society faces political involvement and control in police department which is said to be a major hindrance in dealing with crime. The government should revive the ranking and mode of appointments in the department. Moreover, the policy makers should amend the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc) 1898 enforced in Pakistan with some of the rules adopted by Hazrat Umar R.A while creating this department.

Law and Order:

Hazrat Umar R.A is credited to introduce the proper institution of “*Hisabah*” during his rule. The purpose of that institution was to maintain law and order in specific jurisdiction like market places.²⁵ It was headed by an officer known as *muhtasib* which was also a new office. This office exist in Pakistan nowadays too, with the similar yet vast functions like investigation about maladministration, rule of law, corrupt practices etc .²⁶

²⁴ Fatima, “The Leadership Traits” , 13

²⁵ Hayaati, al-Qudsy, Rahman, “Effective Governance from”, 22

²⁶ Retrieved from Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Secretariat, Government of Pakistan: <https://www.mohtasib.gov.pk/>

Accountability:

In a successful and efficient system of governance, accountability must be ensured without making any differences of superior or inferior group of people. All of the persons living in a state should be made accountable for their practices. Hazrat Umar R.A provided an eminent example of practicing strict accountability during his rule where he made her own wife answerable for the gifts she received from the friendly state Syria. He clarified his wife by saying, ‘Although the perfume was yours, the messenger who carried it till evening was official. He was paid with government money. So you deposited those jewels in the treasury (*Bait-ul-mal*).²⁷ There are also other incidents in which he made his son and daughter answerable about certain things and also warned them. He believed that his family and close friends should be the ones who start following his rules first and threaten them if any sort of violation would happen from their sides. Moreover, he also set up a special office to investigate and hold the governor of the provinces accountable. Accountability is one of the major reasons of poor governance in Pakistan. The government should set some rules regarding the records and assets of the officers, politicians, governmental officials before and after their time of appointment and service. It will be helpful in finding the corrupt practices and misuse of power.

Consensus Orientation:

It was the farsightedness of Hazrat Umar R.A that he understood the importance of agriculture for the economic development of the provinces. He laid the foundation of creating a network of canals in such a short span

²⁷ Fatima, “The Leadership Traits” , 10

of time. Moreover, many lands for the agricultural activities were conquered. A department was built for the construction of dams, canals, excavating tanks and channels for distribution of water. All such facilities were beneficial for the agricultural development.²⁸ Being an agricultural country, Pakistan should learn the strategies to improve the agriculture and production of the country. For the past years, there has been a decline in our agricultural development and production which is alarming for the economic progress of the country.

Another important strategy adopted by him was the separation of judiciary from the administration department which ultimately provided helpful support and efficiency in performance of government as discussed above. There should be devolution and decentralization of power in Pakistan so that there can be balance in dealing with social, political and economic issues.

Implications:

The research can have social and political implications if followed at ground levels initially as Pakistan fails to bring effective governance when it comes to local government. It will have certain impacts, which are enlisted:

- Social welfare of the people
- Provision of basic facilities
- Organized political system.
- Less Urban Violence & Social Unrest
- Less Crime Rates due to Institutional Strengthening
- Improved Standard of living

²⁸ Hayaati, al-Qudsy, Rahman, “Effective Governance from”, 24

- Regulation of local bodies system
- Strengthen democracy
- Political training of the masses
- Citizen's Participation in the politics and government
- Easy Accountability of institutions
- Organized Social Setup

Conclusion:

The Governance model of Hazrat Umar R.A gives lessons through real life examples in which leadership and masses were equally responsible and answerable for the betterment of their society. These can be helpful for Pakistan in building organized and answerable society if governed fairly. Pakistani society faces the social issues which reflect the negligence and lack of interest to solve issues both by public and government. While the country always follow western style of democracy, tries to meet the parameters settled by world organizations it should give a chance to slightly amend the efforts and starting practicing the Governance model by Hazrat Umar R.A. It certainly will help the society in maintaining social justice, smooth functioning and responsible authorities on one hand and will develop a consistency in accountability and transparency on another.



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