

**Lack of selection of bureaucratic team blamed, Govt failed to present workable strategy for 'new' Pakistan: survey**

ISLAMABAD: Lack of capacity and incompetence in the selection of the executive and bureaucratic team at the federal and Punjab/Khyber Pakhtunkhwa level accounts for failure to present a workable strategy for a new Pakistan seven and a half months after the Khan administration took over power.

This was revealed not only in an anecdotal survey of the public but also in background discussions with PTI parliamentarians.

The Cabinet sources revealed that the prime minister has expressed his dissatisfaction at the performance of various ministers and directed them, in writing, to complete their progress reports within two weeks for review on the basis of targets presented in the cabinet in November last year.

“But defending their performance on paper is easy and not to be mistaken for defending performance based on on-ground realities,” a cynical PTI member stated. When asked to clarify he shrugged and stated “if you can’t understand what I said you may as well forget I said anything.”

The prime minister is also extremely worried that the writing on the wall has changed seven and a half months down the line: now there is not only talk of relief being sought for the convicted and under investigation members of the Sharif family through back door meetings between the Sharif family and the establishment but actual relief has been given to them by the courts.

This relief many non-core PTI cabinet members argue, maybe due to the failure of the prime minister and his team to deliver on any target, and therefore alternate political options are being explored. “This happened in the past and has begun a bit early during the Khan administration,” another lawmaker, also a member of the Musharraf team, stated on condition of anonymity.

“No one, not even his critics doubt the prime minister’s honesty and commitment to change Pakistan for the better but that is clearly not sufficient for the government to start delivering. We must seriously look into the ministers and bureaucrats’ performance,” said an ideological PTI lawmaker on condition of anonymity.

“People voted us to power to bring about ‘change’, but that remains elusive with the economy in shambles, inflation continuing to rise with each passing week due to the rupee value eroding constantly both within and outside the country,” another PTI parliamentarian stated.

A PTI member from Punjab, on condition of anonymity acknowledged that the Punjab chief minister Usman Buzdar’s performance is not up to the mark and serious issues of governance in the province prevail. Buzdar’s decision to suspend 36 deputy superintendents of police (DSPs) was not according to procedure; and on March 28 the Lahore High Court forwarded the matter to Inspector General of Police Amjad Javed Saleemi by converting the application of the 36 DSPs into representation.

When asked what prompted Buzdar to suspend the 36 DSPs the PTI member stated, “Punjab politics revolves around the police and without police complicity many of the existing lawmakers may not have won the elections.”

Another PTI Punjab lawmaker stated that the Punjab government is a coalition government and the coalition partners support for the naya Pakistan does not extend to bringing about reforms in the police—those same police reforms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that were the major selling point of the PTI during the 2018 elections.

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