

## Present Government Brings Turnaround in Pakistan

By Cllr Dr James Shera, SP, MBE



*(Councillor Dr James Shera Sitara-e Pakistan and MBE, is Pakistani Christian based in the UK. He was first-ever Asian to become Mayor of Rugby and has been elected councillor for the last 36 years)*

I would like to extend my greetings and felicitations on March 23 Pakistan Day. Today reminds us of the great Quaid i Azam who created Pakistan. The Quaid gave us the vision of a modern democratic nation which promised human rights, women's rights and minority rights to every citizen. I have been heartened to note that Prime Minister Imran Khan who is an enthusiastic supporter of the Quaid is vigorously trying to follow in his footsteps. In this he faces many challenges but he is moving in the right direction. He deserves our support.

This year the nation would be celebrating 23rd March with new zeal and fervour as there is new government in power with greater commitment and dedication to give a turnaround to nation. 23rd March reminds us of a day when foundation of a country was laid which could provide egalitarian living conditions to its people. The present government came into power nearly 7 months ago. It's too short a time to achieve any national target in any country and more so in a country like Pakistan with back log of systemic stagnation for decades but we have seen that this government has been able to initiate a turnaround in the mind sets of people as well as regarding priorities of the government . Now we can see that important issues for people like health, education, environment and human rights rank among the higher priorities of the government.

For me the biggest achievement of this government is giving a turnaround to mind set of the nation as whole by setting the agenda in right direction, re-setting the priority ranking of issues and above all turning the psychology of nation to one of self - respect and receptive to its strengths. Now the issues of concern to a common man and those of future generations are right at the table of Prime Minister and solutions right in his mind. The use of Pakistan Citizen's Portal in this regard, which recently came second best out of 4646 mobile applications of various categories from 87 countries at the World Government Summit in the UAE, certainly cannot be discounted.

Today an ordinary Pakistani also feels that the matters people used to discuss with their families and friends thinking that how to bring those concerns in the knowledge of top man are now raised by the Prime Minister himself. People feel respected by those at the helm of power as the government has set the focus of each and every programme for the benefit of common man. In his speeches the

Prime Minister has clearly spelled out minute details of causes of poverty, the problems of small farmers, the strengths of our resources and the specific programmes to solve the problems in the vital areas like climate, education, health, economy and so on. His in-depth knowledge of issues would definitely serve as a strong check on implementers both bureaucrats and elected representatives alike.

This is the first-ever government in Pakistan that has brought lurking challenges of climate change and water shortage into spot light and has initiated actions like plantation and construction of dams. Never in the past had these vital issues ever found even an iota of attention. The lives of people of Pakistan were pushed into hazardous situation by sheer negligence of these important issues.

The present government is also gearing up the nation for solution oriented actions. Measures are actually being adopted by the government to solve many problems. Till now people of Pakistan were led to believe in being poor and weak. Prime Minister has made us realize that our country is rich with wealth of resources and has talked about various ways to tap and optimize them. Prime Minister has made us perceive strength of our geopolitical situation and the potential of our demography with young and vibrant population. Tourism, which has been one of the most neglected sector since independence is a major untapped area where this Government is again taking a lead and in this regard the inauguration of e-visa services for majority of the countries in the world will significantly aid in ushering a new era of tourism that will help in generating revenue and positive propagation of the warmth of this lands people. No doubt this is psychology of strength that helps people sail through the crises. I am glad to note that the diplomatic staff of Pakistan around the world, especially in places like the UK are taking a proactive approach in line with the PM's vision.

A vast range of programmes are in pipeline to address the needs of down trodden and weaker segments of society which clearly indicate the element of compassion, a hall mark of all the past projects executed by PM Khan in his personal capacity. The actions of current government have manifested that it is responsive to the people as today we hear government talk about the needs of poorest of poor. Prime Minister in his speech on the occasion of completion of 100 Days of Government , very well marked out the difference between the animal kingdom where the rule is survival of fittest and the human society where compassion for weaker comes first. These values of governance are respected not only by the Muslims for their association with the city state of Madina but also by the most democratic and social – welfare states of the West in modern times.

Under the present government direction has been set, the issues concerning common man ranked in right order and above all a transformation of mind set and psychology of the nation has started. The turnaround is for ordinary people, the weak the down trodden. I, a common man, can now feel things are being initiated for me and my future generations. But I also have some responsibility to make it happen. It's up to me to help the government. Each one of us will have to make our contribution by showing patience and supporting the good effort of government and reporting to

right quarters where we see anything wrong. Our Prime Minister has proved that when you raise your voice you are heard and you can get things moving in the right direction. I would like to raise a few points which I hope the Prime Minister will consider sympathetically, every efforts should be made to unite the country and justice should be carried out irrespective of one's religious, economic or political status, minority communities of Pakistan must be treated equally and fairly and empowered to live and work freely in all walks of life, religious freedom should be guaranteed and nobody should be forced to change their religion. The cost of living relief must be granted to be considered to ordinary people. We are going through a very difficult period we should try to unite the country and fight against poverty, and extremism. All politicians should be equally respected and treated justly and fairly. The government, the Prime Minister, the armed forces and the people are to be congratulated on the way they dealt with the confrontation with India and the whole world will witness that Pakistan is pleading for meaningful dialogue with India to resolve the outstanding issues by talking and not fighting. Long live Pakistan