

# DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN PAKISTAN

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# Democratic Process in Pakistan

Review based on the book: *Proportional Representation and the Revival of Democratic Process in Pakistan*, by Prof. Khurshid Ahmed, published by Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad, 1983, pp. 84, price Rs.45.00 (Paper Back), Rs.70 (Hard Bound). Sole agents: Al-Faisal Book Palace, Islamabad.

In the study under review, Professor Khurshid Ahmed focuses on the issue of the revival of political process in the country. He deals exhaustively with the issue of the electoral system and brings out that the political stability of a country depends on its institutions, traditions and established political norms. In the context of our existing political stalemate, the only way out according to him is the revival of the political process, on the basis

of the Islamic and democratic values and traditions.

The author is of the view that

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constitutional issues settled in the past should not be subjected to any fresh debate. The 1973 Constitution should be adopted as the framework for the restoration of political process in the country. This means that the amendments to this Constitution arbitrarily introduced by the earlier regime, as well as the Provisional Constitutional Order introduced later should be disregarded. New con-

stitutional changes as and when required, should be introduced through the new national assembly chosen by the people.

Professor Khurshid is convinced that the challenge that confronts the people of Pakistan is not to delineate the Islamic political order but to institutionalise the principle of Shura in their political life. We must remember that there is nothing in the Shari'ah which runs counter

to the formation of political parties in an Islamic policy. These parties can be formed in the best interests of the Ummah. In the case of Pakistan, their importance further lies in being the only institution capable of transcending the boundaries of baradari, class, tribe and region and to bring about national cohesion among the people.

The other major issue that

the author tackles relates to the question of the system of election, best suited to the genius of the people and the demands of democracy. Here we have two options open before us.

The first major method of representation is known as majority system, where the country is divided into a number of single member constituencies. In this system, whoever gets the largest number of votes in his constituency is declared as representative to that constituency in the national forum.