

Türkiye has missed its once-in-a-century opportunity

By Mehmet Gün / 05 June 2023, Monday / Published In Politics



“Opposition caused Türkiye miss opportunity to step into a new age, while Erdoğan has lost the chance to rectify the flaws of the presidential system.”

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has emerged as the winner of the second round of presidential elections, and the public as the loser to politicians as they were forced to choose between two autocratic leaders who dictated themselves as presidential candidates. Instead of change and an improved political arrangement they have been made hostage for another 5 years to the prevailing political establishment and its constituents. For one, we have seen again that the notion of the public’s self-rule is a delusion, and that democracy in Turkey is a hollow, hypocritical game.

Erdoğan, who would certainly have been chosen by the members of the AKP had they had the option to, and Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who’s chances were less assured to say the least, govern their parties by autocratic means. They both excluded their party’s membership base from the process of nominating a candidate, choosing instead to nominate themselves.

Erdoğan dominates the country and its politics

Erdogan dominates the entire country and its politics, crippling the nation's will through his use of the judiciary as a tool for his political engineering. While the nationalists could have become the main opposition party with the approximately 25 percent of the vote they captured this election, they have instead been splintered by judicial decisions into the National Movement Party (MHP), IYI Party, and Victory Party, deputising them to the larger parties. The conveniently timed conviction of Ekrem İmamoğlu, is the noose around his neck, but is in fact executing the public's right to choose a leader to replace Erdogan.

Erdogan, who's capacity to govern is greatly diminished, and who has succumbed to a blindness of governance, is preventing the emergence of leaders more capable than him, clinging to power through an unjust election in which the opposition was divided and ground into the dirt.

Türkiye missed its opportunity

And then there are those blind to the fact that Kilicdaroglu is also an autocrat. They fail to see how he became to be the leader to the Republican People's Party (CHP); that the executive committee isn't chosen by the party's membership, but determined by him; that his party is itself a one-man administration; that he chooses the delegates; that he imposed previous presidential candidates; and that if he were in rule, he would use its authority's and powers just as Erdogan does.

They caused Türkiye miss once-in-a-century chance to step into a new age had they reconciled The People's Alliance's presidential system and the strengthened parliamentary system pledged by the Nation Alliance and including the complete independence of the judiciary. Erdogan, who sees the presidency as his rightful inheritance, and Kilicdaroglu, who sees it as an opportunity to secure a memento to crown his career to able to enjoy long into his retirement, have both neglected structural issues in favour of their personal ambitions, competing instead in giving out election bribes.

While Erdogan, bound more tightly to his coalition partner, has lost the opportunity to rectify the flaws and deficiencies of the presidential system he brought about under a state of emergency, Kilicdaroglu has lost in its entirety not only the chance to realise his dream of a return to an enhanced parliamentary system, but also the chance to invite the People's Alliance to reconcile.

New civil constitution hope

The hope that a new and civil constitution might be made has been extinguished. Dreams of a fully independent and impartial judiciary that can uphold the rule of law and providing quality judicial services have been postponed by at least another 5 years. People's trust their savings and purchasing power will be protected, that equality of opportunity will be provided, income inequality done away with, and a meritocracy and justice be realised has become further malnourished.

These elections have proven once again that no headway can be made with leaders whose expiration date has long since passed. The emergence of new leadership candidates is dependent on the organisation of civil society above politics to democratise the Political Parties Law, create a code of political ethics and behaviour, and prevent corruption, bribery, and illegal financing in politics.