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GUEST COLUMN

'A lot has changed since the first rally'

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As a student of Indian politics, I can say that the movement has witnessed tremendous zeal and participation. For the first time, people saw an opportunity to ventilate their frustrations. But a lot has happened and changed since the first rally that Anna Hazare held, which explains the reduction in number of participants at his recent rally.

Firstly, while Anna is above board when it comes to honesty, the same cannot be said about all those who are part of Team Anna and speak on his behalf. After talking about greater democracy, transparency and accountability, the legitimacy of the team has been tainted in the last few months. This has definitely affected the support for the movement.

Moreover, the movement has taken a small political turn with the team campaigning in an election and claiming that it will have a particular party defeated. People who saw Anna's struggle as a popular movement began wondering if it was free of political bias.

Also, with the positive response from the government,

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they now realise they need to give it some time and not hold it at gunpoint.

We Indians can protest but we also have great resilience and patience. I don't mean to say that the movement should not continue to put pressure on the government, but the people do not generally like to see the government at somebody else's mercy as it represents their will. If you are talking about expanding democracy, you cannot tell the government "do as I say".

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