

MAJOR POLITICAL FAULTINESS AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF PAKISTAN

Dr. Kishwar Naheed

Assistant Professor, Foundation University School of Science and
Technology Islamabad.

Email: Kishwar.naheed@fui.edu.pk

Abstract

Numerous faultlines and complexity that have forever altered Pakistan's history influenced its political destiny. These faultlines, which have their origins in racial and geographic differences fueled conflicts over the allocation of resources, representation, and autonomy. Power confrontations between civilian administration and the powerful military institution have been sparked by the ebb and flow of civil-military relations, which have been defined by military interventions and coups. The threat of terrorism and religious fanaticism coexist, necessitating a careful balance between security precautions and addressing the root causes. Pakistan has endured serious crises amid these faultlines, including democratic transitions that were overshadowed by military operations. A cycle of credibility issues for political leaders and institutions has been maintained by issues with corruption and poor governance. Another layer of difficulty is added by the province of Balochistan and its uprising for independence and the respect of linguistic rights. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, focuses on social justice and anti-corruption measures, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, is well-known in Punjab, and the Pakistan Peoples Party, which supports the weak and marginalized, are important groups that shape the political landscape. These parties express the need for representative government amid the intricate interaction of faultlines. The path to democracy in Pakistan is robust in the face of obstacles. Despite the hiccups, electoral power shifts reflect the public's desire for democratic representation. Persistent economic issues poverty, inflation, shoddy infrastructure need for all-encompassing remedies. This article provides a view into Pakistan's complex political environment, which marked by rifts and changing dynamics.

Keywords. Fundamentalism, Jihadism, Judiciary, Feudalism, Inflation.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan, a country known for its rich history and diversified cultural fabric,

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has had to negotiate a difficult political environment characterized by significant faultlines and crises. These subtleties have significantly influenced the destiny of the country and still have an impact on it today. Pakistan's political narrative has been influenced by the interaction of ethnic divisions, civil-military ties, religious extremism, and governance issues. Pakistan's complex social fabric is highlighted by ethnic and regional faultlines. Issues of resource distribution, representation, and autonomy have been at the center of disputes between provinces like Balochistan, Sindh, Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These strains have brought attention to the necessity of a just allocation of resources as well as the nation's different linguistic and cultural identities. The area of civil-military relations is one of the most important faultlines. Military interventions and coups have plagued the nation in the past, highlighting the conflict between civil government and influential military institutions. This struggle for power has frequently hampered political stability and advancement throughout the country. The scourge of terrorism and religious extremism has long overshadowed Pakistan's political scene. In addition to posing domestic security issues, the existence of extremist groups within its borders has strained international relations, especially with countries like the United States. In order to solve this problem, deliberate efforts must be made to find a balance between security precautions and addressing the underlying roots of extremism. Pakistan has endured various political crises throughout its history. Instability and disruptions in the democratic process have resulted from the shift between democratic rule and military coups. The fight against corruption and poor governance has also been a recurrent crisis, affecting the trustworthiness of political figures and institutions in Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

After 75 years of its establishment, Pakistan is still in the stage of emergent political foundations, and in the truancy of these organizations, Pakistan could not develop politically. The meaning of political development is every institution of state for example executive, legislature, judiciary, media, bureaucracy, and even the public needs to develop itself. For the growth of the political structure in the country, Pakistan needs each institution to be in harmony and never overlap each other in any way. The Constitution is very important to keep the country on the road of federalism and democracy.

In every political era, political development has consisted of institutional relationships, especially the relation of civil elected executive, legislature, and establishment. In the political history of Pakistan army played a key role because

of its organized and disciplined institution of the country due to its inherited pattern from Great Britain. After the creation of the Pakistan army took advantage of its institution and interfered in state affairs and state power-sharing structure which weakened the political system and made the country vulnerable. Many political experts and analysts stressed that the political system failed to deliver the state due to the involvement of extra political hands. For example, the judiciary and railway were well established at the time of independence but after certain years both lost their inherited values. If we talk about politicians they were feudal or maverick political families that became puppets in the hands of the establishment so that the army ruled the country under martial law in the political and democratic history of Pakistan. The clientelistic nature of Pakistani politics has allowed a small, feudal or tribal-based political elite to maintain its dominance throughout the country's history. Their patronage focuses mostly on enlisting and administering kin and clan connections and is more benefit-oriented than policy (Lohdi, 2011). The literature has been examining a broad range of scholarly research papers, books, articles, and analyses is necessary for a thorough literature assessment of Pakistan's main political faultlines, crises, and political environment. An overview of what might be covered in such a literature review is given below:

Following the Pervez Musharraf administration, political parties began to gain ground once more and fought to maintain control of the military forces by a civilian government. In certain cases, the parliament has demonstrated maturity and foiled the establishment's attempt to install its hand-picked citizens under Imran Khan's Darna. But the struggle continues, and the establishment continues to dominate many areas of politics, including foreign policy and the management of non-state players (Ahmed, 2019). The 2008 elections signaled the start of a new era of Pakistani government. In order to form the government, the Pakistan People's Party shared power with its coalitions. There were concerns about its ability to rule at this pivotal time in history as it rose to power. Following Nawaz Sharif's threat of a Long March, judges were reinstalled. Although General Kayani, the current Chief of Army Staff, has removed about 300 active-duty soldiers from civilian positions, this is a positive development because many soldiers are still in civil administration, particularly the Ministry of Defense, where they continue to exercise authority (Kalia, 2013). But the good thing is these political parties created conciliation and passed the 18th amendment in the constitution. After the 18th amendment political parties not only voted for the local body election but also established consensus on the NFC award. It was a great political achievement. However, the judiciary had the main entitlement in this respect (Adeney, 2012). "Presently in each province, AJK and Gilgit Baltistan

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a different political party is in Government, and not a major crisis has developed. This is a leapfrog from the political era of the 80s and 90s and this means that politics is evolving but slowly” (Abbasi, 2015).

Adil Khan talked on the subject of the expansion of the Gwadar Port and the growth of minor provinces that were also under the influence of political forces. One of the biggest problems Balochistan has with the expansion of Gwadar is that the already sparsely populated Baloch nation could become a minority, which would be bad for the federalism there (Khan, 2009). According the Muhammad Zaheer, the Baloch nation is already considering itself a subjugated nation. The problem behind this is that the Baloch nation is very sensitive and has carried out 6 insurgencies against the provincial and national governments specifically against the Punjabis(Zaheer, 2021). The political development of a country is also conditional which is associated with the development of Balochistan. Balochistan has a 750-kilometre coastline with one major natural deep-sea port and UAE has much less coastline but has many key seaports(Boni, 2016).

Pakistan needs to overcome all of these difficulties as quickly as possible; else, the state won't be able to run the country and a genuine democratic society will become subservient to the disadvantaged group. Another catastrophe is the one brought on by corruption and poor governance, which is slowly engulfing the nation. The only way to deal with this is to strengthen the judiciary and, to some extent, organize the media in Europe (Asad et al, 2014).

A thorough review of the literature on Pakistan's main political faultlines, crises, and political environment would include a wide range of research, interpretations, and viewpoints. The nation's political trajectory is shaped by the intricate interactions between civil-military ties, religious extremism, governance issues, and economic problems. In order to develop a comprehensive grasp of this complex and changing landscape, it is crucial to reference a number of sources.

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology for studying major political faultlines, crises, and the political landscape of Pakistan involves primary and secondary data collection, qualitative analysis, and ethical considerations. It ensures a systematic exploration of the topic's complexity and potential impact on academic and policy debates. In order to understand major political faultlines, crises, and the political landscape of Pakistan, a systematic and comprehensive research methodology is necessary. As it aims to understand complex political phenomena through in-depth analysis and interpretation, this study would likely be classified as qualitative research. In order to gain a deeper understanding of Pakistan's

political challenges, the research approach will be exploratory. Key secondary sources include academic articles, reports, policy papers, and news articles. These sources can provide historical context, empirical data, and analytical perspectives on political faultlines and crises. An examination of historical documents, official records, and public speeches can provide a chronological narrative of key events in Pakistan's political history.

HISTORY

After independence, Pakistan took on the 'Government of India Act 1935' for a temporary setup with some simple and required modifications. Over the years the setup of Pakistan nation was centred on two state institutions first was the bureaucracy and on second was the army. In the beginning, the base of parliamentary arrangements of the state depended upon the bureaucracy. The power of leading the state by the assembly was also shifted to some top bureaucrats. These bureaucrats not individual prepared the state strategy but also ruled Pakistan as well. (Naheed and Shah 2020) In this respect, the part of the army is too very important and discussable. Bureaucrats use the institution of an army for alternation and confiscation of Presidents or Prime Ministers(Naheed and Shah 2020).

The establishment exploited Urdu versus Sindhi and Pashto versus Balochi controversies as a divide-and-rule strategy. Subsequently, the Muslim League after the creation of Pakistan was not effective as Congress in India and the Muslim League failed to provide an effective government system in the country(Chandar,1987). The urgent task was to constitute the constitution after the independence of Pakistan and give a setup for free and fair general elections to promote and reflect democracy in the newly established country. The issue of the traumatic political situation and the problem of governability Pakistan has been faced due to interference of establishment which resulted in short elected interregna as well as the reason for the constant imbalance in Pakistan's power-sharing structure. Pakistan reflected unstable due to the truancy of consensual political setup, fade or short-lived constitution, and improper mechanism of electoral transfer of power. All these flaws and irregular practices are the reason for multiple problems in Pakistan for example religious intolerance, jihadism, religious fundamentalism, ethno-regional polarization, political bigotry situation, sectarianism violation, and economic disaster. Unfortunately, all these are the burning issues that raised the question of Pakistan's survival as a state(Naheed and Shah 2020).

From 1999 to 2023 a number of influential figures have shaped Pakistan's political landscape in the area of political parties. Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has promoted social justice and anti-corruption programs. The

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Sharif family leads the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), which has enormous clout in Punjab and at the federal level. The marginalized have been the focus of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which is led by the Bhutto family, especially in Sindh. A number of regional political parties are part of the political system of Pakistan from KPK, Punjab, Balochistan, and Sindh(Naheed and Shah 2020).

Despite these difficulties, Pakistan's democratic development continues to be evidence of its people's tenacity. Despite the disruptions brought on by military interventions, elections have served as a reflection of the public's desire for representative government. But persistent economic problems like poverty, inflation, unemployment, and shoddy infrastructure still need to be addressed and solved. Due to preferences shaped into policy, good governance in Pakistan has been severely damaged. Pakistan's politics have mostly remained in the hands of interest groups, including a tiny number of politicians, powerful businesspeople, the military, government officials, and feudal lords.

As a result, governance has taken an interest-based approach, which has prevented the development of institutional capacities. Individual decision-making by those in positions of authority has replaced and influenced carefully considered institutionalized systems. Additionally, the process of developing policies has been seriously hampered by the constant change in political regimes. The programs and initiatives of the outgoing governments, particularly in the 1990s, were abruptly abandoned. Policies typically take longer to implement, therefore discontinuing them before they are fully developed creates more harm than good.

POLITICAL FAULTLINES OF PAKISTAN

A complicated network of faultlines with deep historical roots that continue to influence Pakistan's sociopolitical dynamics defines the country's political landscape. Within the political fabric of the country, these faultlines reflect places of dispute, division, and conflict. They frequently result from a variety of circumstances, including sectarian conflicts, regional imbalances, civil-military interactions, and ethnic diversity. Understanding these political faultlines is essential to understanding the obstacles Pakistan must overcome to achieve stability, good governance, and unification.

Regional and Ethnic Divisions: Numerous ethnic and linguistic groups, each with its own cultural identity and historical background, may be found in Pakistan. Due to this diversity, there are now ethnic faultlines where various communities compete for a legitimate position within the nation's sociopolitical system. Balochistan, Sindh, Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are just a few of

the places that have occasionally pushed for more autonomy, resource equity, and identity recognition(Waseem, 2011). The fight for equal representation and financial allocation frequently runs into calls for more cultural autonomy. The population of Pakistan is diverse, with many different ethnic and linguistic groups. Due to problems with resource distribution, representation, and autonomy, there have been tensions between several areas, including Balochistan(Grare, 2013), Sindh, Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Tensions have frequently existed between Pakistan's powerful military and its civilian rulers. The democratic process has been repeatedly disturbed by military incursions and coups, which has resulted in a power struggle between civilian politicians and the military establishment(Rizvi, 1998). The connection between the civilian administration and the military establishment is another important source of tension in Pakistan. Military coups and interventions have disturbed democratic administration throughout the country's history, leading to a fight for power between elected civilian leaders and the potent military institution(Shafiqat, 2019). The country's democratic stability is now threatened by the cyclical pattern of civilian control followed by military takeovers that have resulted from this.

Religious extremism and sectarian conflict: Another set of fault lines in Pakistan has been produced by the fusion of religion and politics. The fight against extremism and sectarian strife among various Muslim groups has made for a turbulent religious climate. These tensions have been exacerbated by terrorist acts that were motivated by extremist ideology, raising concerns about the state's capacity to maintain security and protect religious pluralism(Ahmer,2007). Religious extremism and terrorism have posed serious problems for Pakistan, which are frequently associated with terrorist organizations that operate within its borders. These problems affect both domestic and foreign policy, and they have strained ties with nations like the United States(Javaid, 2011).

One of the key economic factors in Pakistan is energy. The energy crisis that our nation is experiencing is also causing people's lives to be uneasy. There is a big gap in the development and research within this field that could guide our policy making in this area toward supplying sustainable energy sources, while initiatives like Rental Power Projects were not able to provide long-lasting solutions to the shortages.

NAVIGATING THE STORM: PAKISTAN'S POLITICAL CRISES

Throughout its history, Pakistan has seen a number of political crises, many of which have had a significant impact on the country's governance, stability, and democratic system. Power conflicts, military interventions, and violations of the rule of law have all been hallmarks of these crises. The following

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are some of Pakistan's most significant political crises.

MILITARY COUPS AND DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS

When President Iskander Mirza, along with the military under General Ayub Khan, proclaimed martial law and overthrew the civilian government in 1958, Pakistan experienced its first significant political crisis (Pardesi, 2011). This was the first military takeover of the nation, and it established a standard for subsequent operations. Another political setback was when Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was overthrown in a coup by General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq in 1977, and a significant political crisis resulted. Zia's military rule lasted for more than ten years and brought about a number of constitutional reforms that had a long-lasting effect on Pakistan's political climate (Raza, 1997). Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was deposed in a military coup led by General Pervez Musharraf in 1999 (Kumar, 2021).

A time of military control followed this crisis, which also generated discussions about the military's place in politics and the rule of law. The 2007 killing of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto sparked a serious political crisis that resulted in protracted demonstrations and unrest. Concerns about political violence, security, and Pakistan's transition to democracy were raised by the occurrence. A effort by Musharraf's administration to remove the chief justice of the Supreme Court, the nation's most senior judge, amid charges of misbehavior, including nepotism, set off the political crisis in March. Instead of humbly quitting, the judge, Iftikhar Chaudhry, launched a flashy national campaign to demand the creation of a truly independent court for the first time in Pakistan's chaotic 60-year history. A severe political crisis was caused by the Lawyers' Movement, which was started by President Pervez Musharraf's dismissal of the judiciary. Opposition parties, civil society, and attorneys joined together to demand the return of the legal system and the rule of law (Qureshi, 2009).

The military establishment and PTI Chairman Imran Khan have been embroiled in ongoing civil-military tensions that have heightened the Conflicts between the civilian administration and the military establishment has frequently been at the center of political crises in Pakistan (Ali, 2022). Allegations of military meddling and worries about the military's role in domestic and international policy decisions were evidence of these tensions during the terms of several governments. Several military coups, in which the military overthrew civilian administrations and assumed complete power, have occurred throughout Pakistan's political history. Political instability and

disruptions of the democratic process have resulted from these coups and interventions.

Unveiling the Veil: Pakistan's Challenges with Corruption and Governance: Pakistan's political landscape has long been plagued by corruption and governance issues, which present serious obstacles to the country's growth, stability, and democratic values. Corruption and ineffective government practices have hampered progress, damaged public confidence, and widened socioeconomic divides(Hassan, 2020). Pakistan's political environment has long been plagued by problems with corruption and governance. The legitimacy of political figures and institutions has been impacted by allegations of corruption and poor administration. The prevalence of corruption and issues with governance in Pakistan are caused by a number of reasons, including:

- Lackluster institutional setting ineffective accountability systems, weak institutions, and a lack of transparency have made it easy for corrupt behavior to flourish.*
- Political Party interference: The efficacy and impartiality of public institutions have been harmed by the politicization of administrative bodies and appointments made on the basis of party affiliations rather than merit.*
- Economic Disparities: Socio-economic inequality encourages corruption, nepotism, and favoritism as people try to get through red tape for their own advantage.*
- Mismanagement of Public Resources, Embezzlement, and Diversion of Public Funds: These actions put a further burden on the nation's economic stability(Imran, 2023).*
- Nepotism and patronage: Institutions' effectiveness and reputation have suffered as a result of appointments and promotions based on personal relationships rather than merit.*

UNTANGLING POLITICAL CRISES IN PAKISTAN'S PERIPHERY AND THE BALOCHISTAN INSURGENCY

The insurgency in Balochistan serves as a devastating reminder of the intricate political conflicts that have simmered in Pakistan's Balochistan province for decades(Franklin, 2018). The insurgency, which has its roots in historical grievances, racial tensions, and calls for more autonomy, has prompted discussions about governance, resource allocation, and the search for a more diverse national identity. The difficult incorporation of the Baloch ethnic minority into the newly created state of Pakistan in 1947 is thought to be the origin of the Balochistan conflict.

The Baloch population felt marginalized historically as a result of inequities in political representation, resource distribution, and cultural acknowledgment.

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Early in the new millennium, the insurgency picked up steam in response to demands for more autonomy and authority over the province's natural resources (Basit, 2023). The movement was sparked by allegations of political discrimination, human rights violations, and economic exploitation. An important Baloch leader named Nawab Akbar Bugti was assassinated in 2006, further inflaming tensions and escalating the rebellion (Naheed and Ali, 2023). There is a significant effect of the Balochistan insurgency on Pakistani stability and governance. Such as:

SECURITY ISSUES

The insurgency has put a strain on Pakistan's security system, resulting in military operations and counter-insurgency initiatives in the area.

- *Economic Development: The ongoing fighting in Balochistan has stymied infrastructural development and investment.*
- *democratic alienation: The conflict has made the Baloch populace feel even more excluded, which raises questions about how inclusive Pakistan's democratic system is.*
- *The political climate in Pakistan has been reevaluated in response to the Balochistan insurgency:*
- *Ethnic Diversity: The insurgency serves as a stark reminder of how crucial it is to manage ethnic diversity, provide balanced representation, and allocate resources appropriately (Naheed and Ali, 2023).*
- *Relations between the federal and provincial governments should be improved, especially in light of the dispute and the rights of the provinces.*
- *National Identity: The insurgency has sparked debates on how to develop a strong national identity that is inclusive of various cultural and ethnic groupings.*

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Pakistan's history, notably the effects of its 1947 separation from India, has had a significant impact on its political environment. Early years were characterized by parliamentary democracy establishment and constitutional innovation. Regular military interventions, however, hampered democratic procedures and fueled a cycle of political instability (Sohail, 2022). The political climate includes considerable governance issues. Effective governance has been hampered as public confidence in institutions has decreased due to corruption, a lack of accountability, subpar public services, and ineffective bureaucracy. The many ethnic and linguistic groups of Pakistan are a reflection of the country's diversity. Regional differences, calls for autonomy, and racial conflicts all have an

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impact on the political environment. Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, and Balochistan all have distinctive political dynamics(Von, 2015).

The political landscape of Pakistan has always been significantly influenced by the military. The balance between civilian and military authority has been influenced by military interventions, coups, and military engagement in governance. One of the most important factors affecting the political environment is the connection between the military and the civilian government(Vaughn, 2010). In Pakistan's political landscape, there are numerous religious parties and movements. These organizations influence policymaking, promote the application of Islamic ideas in government, and occasionally stage street demonstrations to further their objectives(Bano, 2009).The media and civil society play a vital part in influencing the political climate. While civil society organizations fight for human rights, accountability, and policy reform, media outlets offer forums for public conversation(Sadurddin et al, 2012).

PRINCIPAL POLITICAL PARTIES

A wide variety of political parties that represent different philosophies, ethnic groups, and interests make up Pakistan's political landscape. These parties have a significant impact on how the nation is governed, how policies are made, and how democracy works.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI): Led by Imran Khan, PTI has become a significant force, promising social justice, excellent governance, and anti-corruption measures.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N): The Sharif family is the leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), which has a considerable impact in Punjab and at the federal level(Naheed and Shah 2020).

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP): The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which is led by the Bhutto family, is well-known in Sindh and has a long history of supporting the rights of the working class and poor.

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM): MQM fights for the rights of urban Sindhis after first standing up for the Mohajir group (Indian immigrants during partition). Over the years, it has seen divisions and changes in leadership.

Awami National Party (ANP): An ethnic Pashtun party, ANP concentrates on issues pertaining to the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It promotes Pashtun rights, educational opportunities, and regional growth.

NATIONAL PARTY(NP)

This was founded in October 2003 when Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch's non-tribal, middle-class Balochistan National Movement (BNM) and Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo's non-tribal, middle-class Balochistan National Democratic Party (BNDP) merged(Naheed and Ali, 2023).

Baloch National Party (BNP): This Baloch-based party fights for the Baloch

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people's increased autonomy, language rights, and resource control. It discusses the difficulties the province is having.

JAMIAT ULEMA-E-ISLAM (F) (JUI-F)

A conservative religious party, JUI-F places a strong emphasis on Sharia law, Islamic government, and religious instruction. In Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it is very prevalent.

PAK SARZAMEEN PARTY (PSP)

Founded by MQM defectors, PSP seeks to address urban problems in Sindh and Karachi. It promotes enhanced civic amenities and governance.

TEHREEK-E-LABBAIK PAKISTAN (TLP)

A religious organization renowned for upholding the prophetic status of the Prophet Muhammad and taking a hard line against blasphemy legislation. It has become more well-known recently.

These are just a few of the political organizations that influence Pakistan's political environment. Each party speaks for a specific philosophy, group of voters, or geographic area, which adds to the intricate dynamics of Pakistan's political system. The interactions between these parties, together with their ideology and leaders, have a great impact on the political direction and governance of the nation.

Democratic Progress: Pakistan has experienced periods of democratic government despite the disruptions brought on by military coups. Elections have been used to change the government, demonstrating the desire of the Pakistani people for a representative one. For succeeding governments, problems with the economy like poverty, inflation, unemployment, and a lack of infrastructure continue to be major concerns.

Many experts have referred to the political system of the nation as a hybrid regime as a result of ongoing concerns about domestic political legitimacy and nearly continual reports of the military's covert interference in politics and administration. The 2018 elections threw a shadow over the first three years, leading to a crisis of legitimacy for the PTI coalition government due to allegations that the military tipped the political scales in favor of the PTI. In what many in Pakistan referred to as the "same page" era between the military and civilian authority, the military-backed Khan after the election (Sadurddin et al, 2012). Pakistan continues to face significant domestic policy difficulties. Political turmoil, unstable majoritarian rule in parliament and government, and terrorist acts, particularly those carried out by the Islamist Pakistani Taliban, are a few of them. The nation is also dealing with lengthy financial and economic crises, significant levels of public debt, an energy problem, and pervasive poverty.

Pakistan's GDP per capita stagnated at \$1600 over the past five years; unemployment rose from 4% in 2018 to over 8% in 2023; inflation reached a 50-year high; and the nation's foreign exchange reserves also sharply decreased. Terrorism, political and religious extremism, and separatist movements all pose threats to the internal security of Pakistan. In the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, the security situation is continually tight. Terrorism has increased once more in Pakistan since the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan. Typically, terrorists attack police and military installations. However, they also target members of the media, political opponents, and religious minorities as victims. Pakistan continues to deal with numerous domestic and external sources of strife (Sadurddin et al, 2012) (Von, 2015). A limited conception of Pakistan's national identity has encouraged extremism and intolerance of diversity and dissent, endangering the possibilities for social cohesiveness and stability in the nation. Pakistan's democracy may still be threatened by underlying issues that democracy cannot resolve on its own, such as the rise in Islamist militancy, opposed to the government sentiment, and the deepening poverty experienced by large numbers of young people. The traditional "chicken-and-egg" conundrum of democratic progress now exists in Pakistan.

Because state institutions frequently fail to offer peaceful solutions to problems, some groups have turned to violence as a solution. Following the 2013 and 2018 elections, the nation saw peaceful political transitions. However, the nation continues to struggle with a shaky economy and widening domestic polarisation as it gets ready for expected elections in 2023. The country's agriculture and health sectors have been put under strain, and the terrible flooding that swept through Pakistan in 2022 exposed the country's vulnerability to climate disasters as well as serious flaws in governance and economic stability. Regional tensions between Pakistan and Taliban-ruled Afghanistan have increased due to a revival of terrorist groups along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan (Von, 2015). Although the Line of Control in Kashmir was proclaimed to be in a state of truce in 2021, relations with India are still stale and susceptible to crises that endanger regional and global security. As a major state and close friend of Pakistan, China's presence and influence in the region have the power to both ease and worsen a number of internal and international issues.

While discussing tug of war between establishments (military) versus politicians, let us not forget the often-understated crucial role played by politicians and the societal divide on the basis of the Sindhi-Urdu controversy in Sindh (Rahman, 1995), the Saraiki movement in Southern Punjab (Mughal, 2020) and conflict between Pashto-speaking influential

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Pashtuns(Hanifi, 2016) and marginalized Balochi-speaking locals in Balochistan(Jahani, 2005). The volatile political landscape of Pakistan is a testimony to the fact that several ethnolinguistic and ethno-nationalist movements have been encouraged, patronized, and exploited by the establishment to counter the increasing influence of political parties. One such classical example could be cited as pitching MQM against the Sindhi ethnic-nationalist party Jay Sindh and indirectly curtailing the influence of PPP in Sindh.

For the first time in Pakistan's history, political trends are being contested, and the country's political theater has been heating up just as the oppressive summer heat is starting to decrease. For all of the major political figures and their parties, it has proven to be challenging. Some of them find solace in the man on horseback while others suffer because of their inflated egos(Sadurddin et al, 2012). The Rangers' stroke had already bowdlerized the MQM to the point of scope. The massive lips of its Fuhrer had been zipped up, and the situation's fondness for hostility had been neutralized. That one capability, which frequently caused Pakistan's economic center to rust, has been significantly diminished but not completely eradicated(Von, 2015). The fake resignations essentially didn't improve its negotiating position with the establishment of the armed forces. The frenzied and wealthy of its super masters have failed to withstand the equipped rainstorm's weather conditions.

The PPP's accommodative display in response to the security forces' concerns about the co-chairman's foul speech provided a few breaks, but they seemed to last too briefly. Once more, the "Federal Investigative" and "Security Agencies" increased their bet against the local allies of the former president, Asif Ali Zardari. The practical cadres of the party remain already in the dejections(Sadurddin et al, 2012). They can neither shout effectively nor cause any risk of biting their own. The re-organization of the party in the period of Pakistan will trial the determination of its young leader, more than ever in Punjab where the PTI has emerged as a substitute choice. The fresh leader of the PPP has hereditary too many of the close buddies of his father but has hardly innate the magnetism and power of his grandfather and mother. However, he failed to formulate any significant impact on the slippery political landscape of Pakistan(Ahmad, 2022).

Imran Khan has regained some of his missing position with three successive decisions of the election tribunals in his favor. On the other hand, the PML-N's choice to contest the verdicts of the tribunals in the electoral

ground instead of high courts has put it in an uncomfortable situation. This must-winning condition of the mutual political party's determination to preserve the political indicator of the country high for the approaching year (Azeem, 2017). The political parties of Sindh are feeling the temperature but sooner or later the Crusaders had a hammer at the door of the ruling PML-N as well (Ahmad, 2023). The file of super scams had already been on hand in the Supreme Court (SC) by the 'National Accountability Bureau (NAB). (Khan, 2022).

To confer this war against the corruption-cum-militancy still an appearance of neutrality, it will be soon absolute to the largest province and then the Centre as well also on the hit point. Currently, the PML-N was humming hymns in support of the "Rangers" operation, but soon, the party's stalwarts began to feel the storm approaching deep within their hearts. Pakistan's political environment has undergone significant upheaval recently, and in the years to come, it may shift even more quickly. The political parties are having a hard time adjusting to the brand-new reality.

Politics in Pakistan has become a crime over time. The link between politics and crime has alienated the general public from the political system. On the other hand, the message is very clear this time around: either decriminalize politics or face the music. In more or less all political parties, the initial liability mechanisms are largely fictitious. Therefore, the chaos must be cleared by external forces. The political class cannot simply oppose this modernization of the political establishment because it must be in harmony with the general populace. It is a good time for the political establishment to offer an apology rather than fighting the popular backlash against corruption. The unstable political system and political parties may fare very poorly in the end. Political Parties advocate for political endurance or tolerance to maintain democracy's stability and maintain the proper balance between the state's organs, which are always pushing and tugging one another like stepbrothers. Even by the norms of its reputation as a nation that frequently experiences crises, Pakistan is currently experiencing a very difficult period. Political corruption is considered to be Pakistan's biggest issue, not its low literacy rate, insufficient tax collection, inadequate higher education standards, low agricultural and industrial productivity, or the country's severe reliance on aid from abroad and borrowing.

FINDINGS

- *In its internal discourse, Pakistan is portrayed as a bastion of Islam, a unique nation that God created and blessed with resources and productive people. The country's dismal economic performance is linked to looting by dishonest politicians, who are said to have hidden their cash in foreign bank accounts.*

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The collapse of the economy in Pakistan has numerous factors, despite the fact that many powerful Pakistanis, including politicians from all parties, have offshore firms and overseas bank accounts and occasionally conceal their income from corruption. Pakistan has one of the highest rates of defense spending in the world at about 4% of GDP, but it has poor tax collection. The corruption of politicians, however, is a simplified explanation for complicated economic issues.

- *The politicians had never been on the same side to strengthen the civilian state institutions, which affected democratic consolidation in Pakistan. The lack of legislative consensus-building capacity within the parliament never allowed the elected representatives to develop agreements. Politicians have always preferred street politics, politics of agitation and confrontation which led to political crises. The preference of politicians for their personal rather than national interest has not allowed them to truly collaborate on issues of national importance during a grave national crisis. The reliance of civilian governments on the military for handling political unrest has often jeopardized its popular support base. The involvement of the military in law and order issues not only threatened the cohesion of the military but also provoked it to intervene in politics.*
- *An other crises during Musharraf Era with the events of September 11, Pakistan's political climate underwent a significant transformation. It was rapidly established that al-Qaeda, a Muslim terrorist group operating within Afghanistan close to the Pakistani border and with the backing of the Taliban administration, was behind the attacks on the United States. Osama bin Laden's arrest would have improved Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan, but Musharraf was reluctant to exert pressure on the Taliban to do so. However, as it prepared to act militarily against both organizations, the US also wanted Pakistani help as al-Qaeda and the Taliban began to be seen as a unified entity. To fight the Taliban, Musharraf opted to support the coalition led by the United States.*
- *People are the ultimate source of political power and their opinion is very important not only for democracy but also for the supremacy of the constitution. In a democracy, people elect their representatives to govern them or citizens govern themselves. From 2002 to 2013 both political parties PMLN and PPP under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto and later on Asif Ali Zardari struggled hard for the restoration of democracy (Charter of democracy). However, both parties do not pay any attention to the*

civic, electoral, and political education or training of people.

- *Pakistan's third five-year parliamentary term since the country's 2008 transition from military control has just come to an end. Domestic political unrest and an excessive – at times decisive – military presence in politics have clouded the last five years. Pakistan experienced two different prime minister-led ruling coalitions during this time: Shehbaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and allies from April 2022 until this week, and Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from August 2018 to April 2022. Top political figures have also run into legal problems; most recently, Khan was found guilty of selling state gifts unlawfully and prohibited from running for office.*
- *In Pakistan, there are almost two-thirds of people under the age of 30. Higher-educated youth have a disproportionate influence in society. But Pakistan's compartmentalized educational system forbids connections between various groups or campuses, which breeds intolerance and, in some cases, radicalism.*
- *After the legislative session, it seems Pakistan will continue to have hybrid politics for some time to come: Elections will be held, and political parties will be significant, but the military will continue to have what political scientists refer to as high-authoritarian prerogatives in the nation's politics. However, there is a lot of uncertainty in the near future regarding three related matters: the date of the impending elections; the future of Imran Khan and his party; and Pakistan's capacity to manage its economic difficulties until a new elected administration is formed.*

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- *In conclusion, Pakistan's experience with significant political rifts and crises shows how a country must contend with its nuanced past, varied identities, and the difficulties of democratic government. The nation's political environment has been molded by the interaction of racial conflicts, civil-military interactions, religious influences, economic inequities, and governance concerns. The faultlines have occasionally resulted in moments of instability and unpredictability, but they have also inspired crucial discussions, reforms, and demands for greater accountability.*
- *The secret to moving on is realizing that these flaws present chances for development and transformation. Pakistan may find its way to a more united and prosperous future by addressing complaints, encouraging inclusivity, bolstering democratic institutions, and cultivating good governance. Charting a road that upholds individual rights, fosters economic prosperity, and preserves the democratic ambitions of its residents will depend in large part on embracing the variety of its population, placing a high priority on the*

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rule of law, and maintaining transparency in decision-making. In order to create a political landscape that reflects the aspirations and potential of its dynamic nation, Pakistan must consistently engage in open debate, collaboration, and reforms. A thorough and multifaceted strategy is needed to address Pakistan's major political faultlines, and crises, and create a more stable political environment. Here are a few suggestions:

- *Strengthen Democratic Institutions: Make investments to support the development of democratic institutions, the protection of the independence of the judiciary, and the encouragement of a strong, uncensored media that can hold the powerful accountable.*
- *Civil-Military Relations: Ensure that the military remains submissive to elected civilian leadership by defining and upholding the boundaries between the civilian government and the military.*
- *Regional and Ethnic Inclusivity: Encourage inclusivity by resolving ethnic and regional concerns. Empower local governments, devolve authority to the provinces, and make sure that resources are distributed fairly.*
- *Counter-Corruption Initiatives: Put in place effective anti-corruption measures and bolster accountability systems. Give anti-corruption organizations the authority to conduct transparent investigations and impartial prosecutions of corruption cases.*
- *Socio-Economic Development: Give socio-economic development a priority in order to combat inequality, unemployment, and poverty. To improve marginalized populations, make investments in education, healthcare, and job creation.*
- *Implement electoral reforms to make sure that elections are fair and free. Bolster the integrity and independence of the Election Commission, and improve oversight of campaign finance.*
- *Tolerance and Pluralism: Encourage tolerance, respect for variety, and interfaith harmony. Through community engagement, media efforts, and education, combat religious extremism and sectarianism.*
- *Balochistan and Other Marginalised Regions: Address the problems of marginalized regions, such as Balochistan, through engaging in political discussion, undertaking development initiatives, and allocating resources to local residents.*
- *Women's Empowerment: Encourage women's political engagement and empowerment by putting policies into place that guarantee equal representation and safeguard women's rights.*

- *Youth Engagement: Encourage youth participation in civic life by providing them with options for employment and education. Engaging youth in politics can introduce new viewpoints to the political conversation.*
- *Regional diplomacy: Enhance ties with neighbors, particularly India and Afghanistan, to promote regional stability and economic cooperation.*
- *Media and Civil Society: Ensure a free and accountable media while supporting civil society groups that promote openness, respect for human rights, and effective government. Encourage political parties, civil society, and other stakeholders to engage in a national dialogue to reach a consensus on important topics and the direction of policy.*
- *Constitutional study: To address ambiguities, clarify federal-provincial relations, and defend democratic ideals, conduct a thorough study of the Constitution.*
- *Economic Reforms: Implement economic changes to enhance the business environment, draw in capital, and generate employment. Politics can be more stable when economic policies are open and transparent.*
- *In conclusion, resolving Pakistan's most pressing political issues and crises would need a dedication to democratic principles, inclusion, good governance, and sustainable development. For the country to have a more stable, open, and prosperous political environment, political leaders, institutions, civil society, and citizens must work together. It's also important to improve the accountability as well as procedural control systems. Nowadays, accountability is used to exact revenge on rivals and penalize officials who don't follow the rules. Public Service Commission must have a good deal of independence. Separating the judiciary from the administration is a positive step toward greater transparency and accountability, but since it is clear that the locus of power has shifted in favor of powerful interest groups, it is critical to reverse this trend. This calls for the emergence of a bold political leadership that is serious in its pursuit of granting Pakistan's people their legal entitlements and is unaffected by electoral politics.*



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