



The Roots of Political Instability that Terminate the Elected Government of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi and Led Constitutional Crisis in Pakistan: A Historical Perspective

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ABSTRACT:

Pakistan's political history is a complex tapestry of democratic aspirations, military interventions, and constitutional crises. The 2022 Constitutional crisis in Pakistan is continuity and marked as a major political event that resulted in the ouster of elected Prime Minister, Mr. Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi with a single move of no-confidence motion and the potential beginning of a new era in Pakistani politics. Khan accused the United States of America in connivance with the support of the head of Military Establishment to remove him from the Public office. The crisis deepened when the Supreme Court of Pakistan ruled that the no-confidence motion had been valid, and Khan was forced to resign. This study explores the timeline events leading up to the crisis in Pakistan, identifying key factors, comparative analysis, and implications for the country's future. It reviews major political events, including military interventions, power struggles, and institutional dynamics, to understand their impact on elected governments and the constitutional framework. By examining historical precedents, it aims to deepen understanding of recurring challenges faced by elected governments and constitutional crises in Pakistan's political landscape. This research study examines foreign policy, political instability, economic challenges, ethnic tensions, institutional weaknesses, and regional security threats in Pakistan politics. It discusses the frustration of the people and the involvement of foreign establishments, military establishments, judiciary, media, and religion. The study explores legal frameworks and mechanisms to address these issues and ensure democratic governance continuity. The research methodology involves in-depth examination of primary and secondary sources. The research highlights the importance of understanding Pakistan's historical political developments to understand challenges and opportunities for a stable democratic framework. It also explores potential strategies to address political instability and constitutional crises in Pakistan, offering recommendations to mitigate these issues.

Keywords: Constitutional Crisis; Political Polarization; Military Interventions; Power dynamics; Foreign Intervention

1. INTRODUCTION

On August 14, 1947, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan became a sovereign state after the split of the erstwhile British India. It touches the Hindukush Mountains in the north and stretches from the Pamirs to the Arabian Sea. It is located between 23–35 and 37–05 North latitude and 60–50 and 77–50 East longitude³. Pakistan has an area of 796,096 Sq. Km with a population of 241.49 Million⁴. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan holds an extremely important geostrategic location. It can serve as a link between the West and Central Asia, the West and the Muslim world, and the United States and China. This is the reason Pakistan is a significant country. Since partition, Islamic Republic of Pakistan face a series of political crises led constitutional crises, with political instability, institutional weaknesses which is threat to the internal & external peace process. Concerns about a potential constitutional crisis in Pakistan have grown as former Prime Minister Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi visited Russia in 2022⁵, marking the first Pakistani premier to visit Russia in 23 years after the visit of former premier Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif amid rising tensions between Russia and Ukraine. Pakistan's Prime Minister, Khan, met with Russian President Vladimir Putin to discuss bilateral relations and cooperation on trade, energy, defense, and regional security. They signed agreements to enhance economic ties. The visit marked a shift from Pakistan's historically close relationship with America, as the country seeks to diversify its alliances and reduce dependence on any one country due to recent global power tensions. The visit aimed to maintain good relations with

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³ Embassy of Pakistan, Sweden. (2023, December 9). About Pakistan. Retrieved from <https://pakistanembassy.se/about-pakistan/>

⁴ Wikipedia. (n.d.). 2023 Pakistani census. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2023_Pakistani_census#:~:text=On%205%20August%202023%2C%20the,according%20to%20the%20census%20results

⁵ YouTube. (2022, February 23). PM Imran Khan Red Carpet welcome in Russia - 23 Feb 2022. Retrieved from link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXh-jzK9ils>

both countries. The U.S. State Department has observed with interest the visit of Pakistan's Prime Minister Mr. Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi to Russia and stated that it is "**disappointed**" by Khan's decision to visit Russia at this time, and that it believes the visit could "**undercut efforts to de-escalate the situation in Ukraine.**"⁶ Maria Vladimirovna Zakharova, Director of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation said, despite pressure from the US to cancel his visit to Moscow, Mr. Khan went ahead with his trip;

"Immediately after the announcement of the working visit of Imran Khan to Moscow on February 23-24 this year, the Americans and their Western associates began to exert rude pressure on the Prime Minister, demanding an ultimatum to cancel the trip,"⁷

Zakharova further argue on the controversy over Khan's allegation that the US was trying to effect a regime change in Islamabad.

"This is another attempt of shameless interference by the US in the internal affairs of an independent state for its own selfish purposes. The above facts eloquently testify to this,"⁸

The Pakistan Army spokesman said that the army was on board with the visit of the then Prime Minister Khan to Russia but termed it "**embarrassing**" when Russia launched an attack on Ukraine when Khan was in Moscow⁹. One of the major reasons of American interference in the Politics of Pakistan and influence on the Army of Pakistan is that the United States is the largest cumulative contributor to the IMF at \$155 Billion and the largest voting bloc—holding effective veto power for many decisions¹⁰. A General claim that the US has its largest interest in Afghanistan, Iran, China, Russia, Iraq, Pakistan etc. and therefore, it is alleged that America has investments in Billions of US\$ within the power blocks of Pakistan including but not limited to Political Parties, Religious Block, Military Establishment and Media as well.

2. HISTORY

Pakistan's political history has been marked by a tumultuous interplay of democratic aspirations, military interventions, foreign interference and constitutional crises. From the early struggles to define a national identity following independence from British rule to the ongoing challenges of balancing regional autonomy and central authority, Pakistan's political landscape has been shaped by a complex interplay of internal and external factors. In the early 20th Century, Sub Continent Pak-India faced rising nationalism and self-determination, leading to the British partition of India in 1947. Pakistan was envisioned as a homeland for Muslims, but the partition process was marred by violence and displacement¹¹. Pakistan's quest for democratic stability has been a long and arduous journey, marked by periods of democratic rule interspersed with military interventions.

One of the fundamental factors contributing to Pakistan's political instability is the legacy of military rule, which has punctuated the country's history since its independence in 1947¹². The military's perceived role as the ultimate guarantor of national security has often led to its direct involvement in politics, undermining civilian institutions and democratic processes. This pattern of military interference has bred a culture of political instability, where the threat of military coups looms large, discouraging long-term political stability and economic development. In addition to the enduring influence of the military, Pakistan's political landscape is characterized by a fragmented and fractious party system. The lack of a strong, cohesive political party has hindered the formation of stable governments and the implementation of consistent policies. The prevalence of personal loyalties and shifting alliances has further exacerbated political instability, making it difficult to forge lasting political coalitions and hindering effective governance. Furthermore, Pakistan's economic struggles have played a significant role in fueling political unrest. The country's history of economic mismanagement, corruption, and external debt burdens has led to widespread poverty, unemployment, and inflation. These economic hardships have eroded public trust in political institutions and fueled resentment towards the ruling elite, creating a fertile ground for political agitation and instability.

3. BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi visited Russia on February 23, 2022, amid rising tensions between Russia and Ukraine¹³. The visit was seen as a sign of Pakistan's desire to maintain good relations with both sides. During his visit, Khan met with Russian President Vladimir Putin and other high-level officials to discuss bilateral relations and cooperation on key issues such as trade, energy, defense, and regional security. They also signed several agreements aimed at enhancing economic ties between the two countries. The visit marked a significant shift from Pakistan's historically relationship with America. While still maintaining its strategic partnership with China, Pakistan has been looking for ways to diversify its alliances and

⁶ "US Disappointed by Imran Khan's Visit to Russia, Says Could Undercut Ukraine De-escalation Efforts." Dawn, 23 Feb. 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1670178>.

⁷ Dawn. (n.d.). US sought to punish 'disobedient' Imran Khan, says Russia. Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1683565>

⁸ "Pakistan PM Imran Khan Paying the Price for Being 'Disobedient' to Washington, Says Russia." NDTV, 8 Apr. 2022, <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/pakistan-pm-imran-khan-paying-the-price-for-being-disobedient-to-washington-says-russia-2863884>.

⁹ India Weekly. (n.d.). Pakistan Army chief to retire in November 'no matter what'. Retrieved from <https://www.indiaweekly.biz/pakistan-army-chief-to-retire-in-november-no-matter-what/>

¹⁰ "IMF Voting Power." International Monetary Fund, <https://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/memdir/members.aspx>.

¹¹ Khalidi, Omar. "The Partition of India." In *The Oxford History of Modern India*, edited by Judith M. Brown, pp. 365-401. Oxford University Press, 1993.

¹² Jalal, Ayesha. *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective*. Cambridge University Press, 1995.

¹³ Imran Khan Says Pakistan Won't Be a Party to Any Bloc." *The Hindu*, 24 Feb. 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/24/pakistan-considering-banning-imran-khans-party-defence-minister>. Accessed 9 Dec. 2023.

reduce dependence on any one country due to recent tensions among global powers. The U.S. State Department has observed with interest the visit of Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi to Russia and stated that it is "**disappointed**" by Khan's decision to visit Russia at this time, and that it believes the visit could "**undercut efforts to de-escalate the situation in Ukraine**"¹⁴. However, on the other hand the leaders of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) agreed to take steps to increase the use of national currencies in trade between their countries, according to a joint declaration adopted on Friday the 16th September, 2022¹⁵. The group comprises China, India, Russia and Pakistan alongside four Central Asian states - said "**interested SCO member states**" had agreed a "**roadmap for the gradual increase in the share of national currencies in mutual settlements**", and called for an expansion of the practice¹⁶. Russia is seen as the main driver of the push towards national currencies as it tries to reduce its reliance on the U.S. dollar and other Western currencies for trade following the imposition of sweeping new Western sanctions in response to its invasion of Ukraine in February, 2022¹⁷. The Pakistani military has denied any aggression in response to Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi's visit to Russia. They stated they were not consulted about the visit and did not endorse it. While the military expressed dissatisfaction with Khan's decision, it does not suggest aggression. It may have been concerned about the potential impact on Pakistan's relations with the US and other Western allies funded institutions, as the military has traditionally played a significant role in Pakistan's foreign policy. In 2022, Khan was ousted from power through a vote of no-confidence in the National Assembly, highlighting the fragility of the democratic system and the role of political maneuvering. The country continues to grapple with the legacy of constitutional crises and the quest for sustainable democratic governance, with ongoing political instability, economic challenges, and the military's role in politics.

4. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The aim of this research study is to conduct a critical study on the political events lead Constitutional crises in the history of Pakistan since its independent, examine the legal and political implications, and assess the role of various stakeholders such as government institutions, political parties, judiciary, civil society organizations, media as well as foreign governments. It will also evaluate the responses and reactions from different segments of society towards these events, identify systemic weaknesses or gaps within existing constitutional provisions, and highlight recurring patterns and underlying factors contributing to constitutional crises.

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Q1) What were the key events that led to the Constitutional crisis in Pakistan?
- Q2) What were the different perspectives on the crisis, from the government, the opposition, the media and the international observers?
- Q3) How did the crisis impact the country's political, economic, and social stability?
- Q4) What are the long-term implications of the crisis for Pakistan's democracy?
- Q5) How did the military and other state institutions play a role in the crisis?
- Q6) What was the role of foreign powers in the inside politics of Pakistan and how did the crisis affect Pakistan's relations with other countries?
- Q7) What lessons can be drawn from Pakistan's history of constitutional crises to inform the development of more resilient and sustainable democratic institutions in the future?

6. SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The scope of this research study is to examine the power dynamics between the civilian government, the military establishment and foreign countries, examining how their interactions have influenced the stability of elected governments. The research study holds significant scope for analysis and exploration. The study can delve into various dimensions to provide a comprehensive understanding of the historical, political, and socio-economic factors contributing to the recurrent political instability in Pakistan, with a specific focus on the termination of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi's elected government.

➤ **Historical Analysis:**

¹⁴ U.S. Department of State. "Daily Press Briefing." February 23, 2022. <https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-february-23-2022/>

¹⁵ "Samarkand Declaration of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 16 September 2022, <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/35724/Samarkand+Declaration+of+the+Council+of+Heads+of+State+of+Shanghai+Cooperation+Organization>. Accessed 9 December 2023.

¹⁶ Reuters. (2022, September 16). China-led SCO bloc agrees to expand trade in national currencies. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/china-led-sco-bloc-agrees-expand-trade-national-currencies-2022-09-16/>

¹⁷ "Russia and China have been teaming up to reduce reliance on the dollar. Here's how it's going." Atlantic Council, February 22, 2023, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/econographics/russia-and-china-partners-in-dedollarization/>

Conducting a detailed historical analysis will be crucial to trace the roots of political instability in Pakistan. Exploring key events, such as military coups, martial law, and the dissolution of elected governments in the past, will help establish patterns and identify recurring themes in the nation's political history.

➤ **Economic and Socio-Political Factors:**

Investigating the economic and socio-political factors that have historically played a role in destabilizing elected governments can provide valuable insights. Issues such as corruption, economic mismanagement, regional disparities, and social unrest need to be examined to understand their impact on political stability.

➤ **Role of Institutions:**

A thorough examination of the role played by various institutions, including the military, judiciary, and bureaucracy, in the termination of elected governments will be essential. Analyzing their historical involvement and influence on political transitions can shed light on the dynamics of power in Pakistan.

➤ **Leadership and Governance:**

Evaluating the leadership style of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi and his government's governance strategies will be a critical aspect of the research. Assessing the effectiveness of policies, decision-making processes, and their implications on political stability can offer valuable insights.

➤ **Public Opinion and Mass Mobilization:**

Examining public opinion and mass mobilization can provide a perspective on how the general populace perceives political instability and its underlying causes. Understanding the role of civil society, media, and public discourse can contribute to a holistic analysis.

➤ **Comparative Studies:**

Comparing the current political situation with historical precedents and global instances of constitutional crises can enhance the research's depth. Identifying commonalities and differences will contribute to a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by Pakistan.

➤ **Policy Implications:**

The research can conclude by offering policy recommendations based on the historical perspective, aiming to address systemic issues that contribute to political instability in Pakistan. These recommendations can inform policymakers and stakeholders on potential strategies to foster political stability and democratic governance.

In summary, the scope of the research is extensive and requires a multi-dimensional approach to unravel the complex web of factors contributing to political instability and constitutional crises in Pakistan, with a focus on the termination of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi's elected government.

7. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of this research are to:

- Identify the historical patterns and factors that have contributed to political instability in Pakistan.
- Analyze the rise and fall of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party and its role in the recent political crisis.
- Examine the application of relevant political science theories to understand the dynamics of Imran Khan's rule and the factors that led to his ouster.
- Contextualize the political events within Pakistan's broader sociopolitical landscape, considering factors such as economic inequality, social divisions, religious extremism, and regional tensions.

The study examines the legal and socio-political contexts leading up to the 2022-2023 Constitutional crises in Pakistan, identifying patterns and factors contributing to these crises. It provides an objective analysis of the challenges facing Pakistani democracy and suggests potential solutions. This knowledge can inform future policy decisions, prevent future crises, enhance constitutional mechanisms' effectiveness, and safeguard against similar crises in the future.

8. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The significance of studying the political crises that led to constitutional crisis in Pakistan is threefold. First, it can help us to understand the dynamics of Pakistani politics and the factors that contribute to instability. Second, it can provide insights into the role of the military in Pakistani politics and the challenges of civilian control over the armed forces. Third, it can help us to identify potential solutions to the problems that plague Pakistani democracy.

A critical study of the case history of constitutional crisis in Pakistan can shed light on these issues in a number of ways. First, it can help us to identify the key players involved in the crisis and their motivations. Second, it can help us to understand the sequence of events that led to the crisis and the decisions that were made by key players at each stage. Third, it can help us to assess the role of external factors, such as the United States, in the crisis.

- a. **The crisis had a significant impact on Pakistan's domestic politics and international relations.** The crisis led to the ousting of the democratically elected government of Imran Khan, and it also strained relations between Pakistan and the United States.
- b. **The crisis highlighted the deep divisions within Pakistani society.** The crisis was rooted in a number of different factors, including political, economic, and social problems. The crisis also revealed the deep divisions between different segments of Pakistani society, such as the military, the civilian government, and the religious establishment.
- c. **The crisis raised important questions about the future of Pakistani democracy.** The crisis showed that the Pakistani military is still a powerful force in Pakistani politics, and it also raised questions about the ability of civilian governments to govern effectively. The crisis also highlighted the need for political reforms in Pakistan.

9. METHODOLOGY:

The research methodology for this study is designed to systematically investigate the roots of political instability leading to the termination of the elected government of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi and the ensuing Constitutional crisis in Pakistan. This section outlines the overarching approach, research design, data collection methods, and analytical techniques employed to fulfill the research objectives.

9.1 Research Design:

A historical research design is adopted to trace the roots of political instability. The study involves a comprehensive examination of historical events, political transitions, and socio-economic factors that have contributed to Constitutional crises in Pakistan. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the research aims to analyze and interpret historical data to understand the contextual factors influencing political instability.

9.2 Data collection methods:

During research, the author preferred to collect the data by involving a variety of methods, including but not limited to:

Interviews: Interviewing key stakeholders, such as politicians, journalists, and academics, to get their perspectives on the crisis.

Documentary analysis: Examining a variety of documents, such as news articles, government reports, and political speeches, to identify key events and themes.

Participant observation: Observing political events and meetings, such as the no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan, to get a firsthand account of the events.

Content Analysis: Analyzing the content of Books, journal articles, newspaper articles, academic dissertations, media reports and social media posts.

Archival Materials: Papers, correspondence, and records from relevant institutions

Discourse Analysis: Analyzing the language used by politicians and other stakeholders to understand how they are framing the crisis.

Historical Analysis: A detailed historical analysis is conducted to identify patterns, key turning points, and causative factors contributing to political instability in Pakistan. The research examines specific events such as military coups, martial law declarations, and dissolutions of elected governments to establish a chronology of political developments.

Comparative Analysis: To enrich the historical perspective, a comparative analysis is undertaken by examining instances of political instability and constitutional crises in other countries. This comparative approach helps in identifying commonalities, differences, and lessons that can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the factors at play in Pakistan.

To proceed with the research, the author further selected relevant cases that represent significant events contributing to the Political and Constitutional crises of Pakistan included key incidents triggering power struggles or institutional challenges within Pakistani politics during this period.

9.3 Data analysis Procedure:

The data analysis procedure used in this critical study involves a number of different methods, including:-

- **Content analysis**
- **Narrative analysis**
- **Thematic analysis**

➤ **Comparative analysis**

9.4 Data Interpretation:

Qualitative data analysis techniques, including content analysis and thematic coding, are applied to interpret the historical data. The goal is to extract meaningful patterns and insights that shed light on the roots of political instability, leading to the termination of elected governments and constitutional crises in Pakistan.

9.5 Ethical Considerations:

The research adheres to ethical standards in data collection, analysis, and reporting. Respect for the privacy and confidentiality of individuals involved in the historical events is prioritized. All sources are cited accurately to ensure academic integrity and transparency.

9.6 Limitations:

Acknowledging the limitations of the research is crucial. Factors such as potential biases in historical records, limitations in data availability, and the subjective nature of historical interpretation may impact the scope and generalizability of the findings.

10. RESEARCH STUDY

10.1 Timeline history of the major political events happened in Pakistan from 1947 to 2023.

Pakistan has a long history of political instability, with frequent changes of government and military coups. In recent years, the country has been facing a number of challenges, including economic instability, political corruption, and terrorism. These challenges have contributed to a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the government, which has led to increased political tensions. Some of the most significant political crises in Pakistan's history include:

1951: Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated and Khawaja Nazim-ud-din becomes Prime Minister of Pakistan¹⁸.

1956: New Constitution of Pakistan introduced and the country was declared a republic, with President Iskander Mirza as head of state¹⁹.

1958: General Ayub Khan imposed Martial law in Pakistan. Mirza was deposed and replaced by G.A. Khan as President. General Ayub Khan first took the country knocking upon the IMF's door and signed an agreement to secure special drawing rights (SDR) 25 Million under a Standby Agreement²⁰.

1960: Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistani President Mohammad Ayub Khan signed the **Indus Waters Treaty** in September 1960 whereby agreed to allocate the Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) to Pakistan and the Eastern Rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) to India.²¹

1962: A new constitution is promulgated by General Ayub Khan and the country becomes a Presidential Republic, with Khan as President²².

1969: General Ayub Khan resigned and General Yahya Khan becomes the President of Pakistan.

1970: The third general election in Pakistan was held and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, wins a majority of seats in West Pakistan. The Awami League, led by Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman, wins a majority of seats in East Pakistan.

1971: The Bangladesh War was fought. East Pakistan secedes from Pakistan and becomes the independent country of Bangladesh.

1972: Zulfikar Ali Bhutto becomes Prime Minister of Pakistan.

1973: A new constitution was adopted for Pakistan and the country becomes a Parliamentary Republic, with Bhutto as Prime Minister.

1977: The fourth general election in Pakistan was held and the PPP wins a majority of seats, but the results are widely disputed²³.

¹⁸ "Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951, Asia and the Pacific, Volume VI, Part 2." Office of the Historian, U.S. Department of State, http://www.nihcr.edu.pk/Latest_English_Journal/4.%20THE%20ASSASSINATION.pdf.

¹⁹ Constitution of Pakistan (1956). National Assembly of Pakistan, <https://na.gov.pk/en/content.php?id=75>.

²⁰ 22 loans in 61 years: Pakistan's unwavering habit of going to the IMF." LinkedIn, April 21, 2023, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/22-loans-61-years-pakistans-unwavering-habit-going-imf-%D8%B2%D9%86%D8%AF%DB%81-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AF>

²¹ Indus Waters Treaty (1960), "Treaty between India and Pakistan on the Utilization of the Waters of the Indus System of Rivers." United Nations Treaty Collection, 1960, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20419/volume-419-I-6032-English.pdf>

²² National Assembly of Pakistan. (1962). Constitution of Pakistan (1962). Retrieved from <https://na.gov.pk/en/content.php?id=75>

²³ 1977 Pakistani general election." Wikipedia, 2023, Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1977_Pakistani_general_election

- 1977:** General Zia-ul-Haq overthrows the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in a military coup. Bhutto is arrested and later executed.
- 1980:** General Zia-ul-Haq introduces eighth amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan and the country becomes an Islamic Republic, with Zia as President²⁴.
- 1981:** The United States pledges military assistance to Pakistan following Soviet intervention in Afghanistan²⁵.
- 1985:** General Zia-ul-Haq lifts martial law, holds non-partisan elections and Muhammad Khan Junejo becomes Prime Minister of Pakistan.
- 1988:** General Zia-ul-Haq was assassinated in a plane crash and Benazir Bhutto becomes Prime Minister²⁶.
- 1990:** Benazir Bhutto was dismissed as Prime Minister by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan on charges of incompetence and corruption²⁷.
- 1991:** Nawaz Sharif becomes Prime Minister²⁸.
- 1993:** Nawaz Sharif was dismissed as Prime Minister by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan²⁹.
- 1993:** Benazir Bhutto returns to power as Prime Minister.
- 1996:** Benazir Bhutto was dismissed as Prime Minister and President Farooq Leghari dissolved the National Assembly on charges of corruption³⁰.
- 1997:** Nawaz and the PML-N won parliamentary elections, with an exclusive mandate from across Pakistan.
- 1999:** General Pervez Musharraf overthrows the government of Nawaz Sharif in a military coup³¹.
- 2000:** Musharraf dissolves the National Assembly and declares himself President³².
- 2002:** Musharraf wins a referendum that gives him sweeping powers.
- 2007:** Benazir Bhutto was assassinated.
- 2008:** Musharraf resigns as President and was replaced by Asif Ali Zardari.
- 2008:** The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) wins General election.
- 2010:** The PPP government introduces a number of reforms, including the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), which grants amnesty to politicians who were accused of corruption³³.
- 2013:** The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) wins the general election.
- 2013:** Musharraf convicted of high treason, sentenced to death by the Supreme Court of Pakistan on April 21, 2013, however, he was buried with Military Protocols³⁴.
- 2017:** Nawaz Sharif was disqualified from holding public office on corruption charges.
- 2018:** Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi becomes Prime Minister.
- 2022:** The no-confidence motion against Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi become successful. He was ousted as Prime Minister.
- 2023:** Shehbaz Sharif becomes Prime Minister.
- 2023:** Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar becomes Prime Minister.

²⁴ Wikipedia. (n.d.). Eighth Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eighth_Amendment_to_the_Constitution_of_Pakistan#:~:text=The%20bill%20was%20passed%20in,to%20a%20semi%2Dpresidential%20system.

²⁵ U.S. Department of State. (1980, December 17). Statement by the President on United States Assistance to Pakistan. Library of Congress, https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/applebaum_award/9/.

²⁶ Death of Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Muhammad_Zia-ul-Haq

²⁷ Ghulam Ishaq Khan." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghulam_Ishaq_Khan

²⁸ The Rise and Fall of Nawaz Sharif." Dawn.com, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1704844>

²⁹ Nawaz Sharif." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nawaz_Sharif

³⁰ Farooq Leghari." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farooq_Leghari

³¹ 1999 Pakistani coup d'état." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1999_Pakistani_coup_d%27%27C3%A9tat

³² Pervez Musharraf." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pervez_Musharraf

³³ National Reconciliation Ordinance." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Reconciliation_Ordinance:

³⁴ Musharraf high treason case." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musharraf_high_treason_case

10.2 Timeline of the Political events of 2022-23 lead Constitutional crises in Pakistan

The political instability in Pakistan has continued into 2023, with Imran Khan leading a series of protests against the government. The constitutional crises have also raised questions about the country's democratic institutions and the role of the military in politics. It remains to be seen how the political situation in Pakistan will develop in the coming months and years. Here are some additional details about some of the key events in this timeline:

March, 2022- November, 2023

Year 2022

March 8: The opposition parties submit a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi. The motion was filed by the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), a coalition of 11 Opposition Parties. The PDM accused Khan of mismanaging the economy, corruption, and foreign interference in domestic politics³⁵.

March 19: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) issues Show-Cause Notices to 14 dissident lawmakers who have criticized Khan or supported the no-confidence motion³⁶.

March 25: The National Assembly was scheduled to vote on the no-confidence motion, but the session was adjourned without a vote after the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Qasim Khan Suri, dismisses the motion on procedural grounds. Suri rules that the motion was the result of a "**Foreign Conspiracy**" to overthrow the government³⁷.

March 30: Khan's coalition partners withdraw their support, leaving him without a majority in the National Assembly.

April 3: The National Assembly's Deputy Speaker, Qasim Khan Suri, dismisses the no-confidence motion, citing a foreign conspiracy to topple the government. Khan dissolves the National Assembly³⁸.

April 7: The Pakistani Supreme Court ruled that Khan's decision to dissolve the National Assembly was unconstitutional, ordering the assembly to reconvene and vote on the no-confidence motion³⁹.

April 10: The National Assembly votes on the no-confidence motion. Khan was voted out of office by a vote of 342-174⁴⁰.

April 11: Shehbaz Sharif was elected as the new prime minister of Pakistan⁴¹.

May 19: Pakistan economic crisis.

May 25: The 2022 Azadi March-I, led by the ousted former Pakistani prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party chairman Imran Khan against the government of his successor, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif⁴².

May 29: Balochistan local government elections.

June 10: 2022-2023 Pakistan federal budget.

July 2: The Supreme Court of Pakistan orders the Election Commission of Pakistan to hold general elections within 90 days.

July 4: Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi was arrested in Lahore after leading a protest against the government⁴³.

August 19: Meanwhile, under a well-conceived move to mobilize the masses, the PTI announced the schedule for its chairman's marathon public meetings in 17 major cities. Imran Khan would kick off the campaign from Rawalpindi on Sunday, to be followed by Haripur on Aug 24 and Karachi on Aug 26. According to the schedule, a rally would be held in Sukkur on Aug 27, Peshawar on Aug 28, Jhelum and Attock on Aug 29 and Aug 31, respectively⁴⁴.

³⁵ Imran Khan loses no-trust vote, prime ministerial term comes to unceremonious end." Dawn, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1744819>

³⁶ PTI issues show-cause notices to 14 dissident lawmakers." Dawn, March 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1689132>

³⁷ No-confidence motion against Imran Khan." Wikipedia, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No-confidence_motion_against_Imran_Khan

³⁸ NA speaker dismisses no-trust move against PM Imran, terms it contradictory to Article 5." Dawn, April 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1683067>

³⁹ Imran Khan loses no-trust vote, prime ministerial term comes to unceremonious end." Dawn, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1744819>

⁴⁰ *Imran Khan loses no-confidence vote, prime ministerial term comes to unceremonious end.*" Dawn, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1684168>

⁴¹ Al Jazeera. (2022, April 11). Shehbaz Sharif elected as Pakistan's new prime minister. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/11/shehbaz-sharif-elected-as-pakistans-new-prime-minister-2>

⁴² Wikipedia. (n.d.). 2022 Azadi March I. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022_Azadi_March_I

⁴³ Imran Khan's arrest sparks protests across Pakistan." Al Jazeera, July 4, 2023. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/5/9/imran-khan-arrested-live-former-pakistani-pm-under-arrest>

⁴⁴ Dawn. (2022, April 3). Party announces schedule of public meetings in 17 cities and Will take anti-govt drive 'beyond rallies' if Shehbaz, cabinet don't step down, warns Fawad. Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1705663>

September 07: Imran, other PTI leaders' bail extended in Sec 144 violation case an additional district and sessions' court in the federal capital on Wednesday extended Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan and other party leaders' bail till September 27 in the Section 144 violation case.

October 25: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan announced Tuesday that his party's long march towards Islamabad would commence from Lahore's Liberty Chowk on October 28⁴⁵.

October 28: Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday kicked off a "long march" Azadi March-II to the capital Islamabad in an attempt to press the government for snap elections⁴⁶.

October 28: In speech at protest march, ex-PM Khan lashes out at top Pakistani intelligence officers⁴⁷.

November 29: Pakistan has a new chief of army staff as of November 29 last year. General Asim Munir replaced General Qamar Javed Bajwa, who had held the all-powerful post for six years (due to a three-year extension). The appointment of the army chief was a subject of considerable political contention last year; a major part of the reason Khan was ousted from power was his falling out with the military on questions over the appointments of top army officials⁴⁸.

Year 2023

January 14: Pervaiz Elahi, the Chief Minister of Punjab, dissolved the 17th Provincial Assembly of the Punjab. The dissolution of the assembly came after the opposition parties submitted a no-confidence motion against Elahi⁴⁹.

April 4: The Supreme Court of Pakistan declares the Election Commission of Pakistan's decision to delay the assembly elections in two provinces as "unconstitutional". The top court on Tuesday ordered the government to hold snap polls in the country's most populous province of Punjab on 14 May⁵⁰.

May 9: Imran Khan, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, was arrested by the police from Islamabad High Court. Khan's arrest led to a nationwide protest by his supporters. PTI supporters had reportedly indulged into violence to stage their protest against this arrest⁵¹.

May 11: The Supreme Court of Pakistan deemed the arrest of Imran Khan as unlawful and ordered the Pakistani authorities to release him. However, many senior leaders of the PTI remain in police custody⁵².

May 12: A Pakistani court ordered former Prime Minister Imran Khan's release on bail for two weeks, his lawyer said on Friday, following an arrest that sparked deadly unrest in the nuclear-armed nation⁵³.

June 1: The Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) with the help of Punjab Police arrested former Chief Minister Punjab and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President, Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi⁵⁴.

June 1: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif embarked on a four-day official visit to Turkey, at the invitation of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan⁵⁵.

June 10: The national security conference was held in Islamabad. The conference was attended by top military and civilian officials to discuss the country's security situation.

⁴⁵ Business Recorder. (2023, October 18). Imran Khan says PTI's long march to begin from Lahore on October 28. Retrieved from <https://www.brecorder.com/news/40205074/imran-khan-says-ptis-long-march-to-begin-from-lahore-on-october-28>

⁴⁶ Anadolu Agency. (2023, October 28). Pakistan's ex-premier kicks off 'long march' to Islamabad. Retrieved from <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/pakistans-ex-premier-kicks-off-long-march-to-islamabad/2723311>

⁴⁷ "Khan said ISI's counterintelligence chief, Islamabad sector commander had close aide Azam Swati arrested, tortured in custody" (Arab News Pakistan, December 8, 2023).

URL: <https://www.arabnews.pk/node/2189891/pakistan>

⁴⁸ Lt Gen Asim Munir appointed new COAS." Dawn, November 24, 2022. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1722628>

⁴⁹ Pakistan's Punjab CM moves to dissolve provincial assembly." TRT World, January 12, 2023. <https://www.trtworld.com/elections/turkiye/2023>

⁵⁰ Al Jazeera. (2023, April 4). Pakistan's Supreme Court orders Punjab election on May 14. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/4/pakistan-top-court-says-punjab-election-delay-unconstitutional>

⁵¹ Imran Khan Supporters clash with police in Lahore after former PM's arrest." BBC News, August 5, 2023. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-64963327>

⁵² Reuters. (2023, May 11). Top Pakistan court rules Imran Khan's arrest unlawful, streets are quiet. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/pakistan-arrests-ex-pm-khans-party-leaders-protests-continue-2023-05-11/>

⁵³ France 24. (2023, May 12). Former Pakistan PM Imran Khan granted bail after arrest cancelled. Retrieved from <https://www.france24.com/en/asia-pacific/20230512-former-pakistan-pm-imran-khan-granted-bail-after-arrest-cancelled>

⁵⁴ PTI president Pervaiz Elahi re-arrested in Lahore." Business Recorder, December 9, 2023. <https://www.brecorder.com/news/40257939/pervaiz-elahi-re-arrested>

⁵⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan. (2023, June 3). Curtain Raiser: Visit of the Prime Minister to Turkiye - 03 June 2023. Retrieved from <https://mofa.gov.pk/curtain-raiser-visit-of-the-prime-minister-to-turkiye-03-june-2023/>

August 8: Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi was arrested for the second time for allegedly selling state gifts. Session court judge has barred Imran Khan from contesting the elections for the time period of five years and sentenced him to three years in Prison⁵⁶.

August 10: Pakistan's President Arif Alvi has dissolved the National Assembly, following Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's advice, marking the end of the current government's tenure and paving the way for the next general elections. The Aiwan-i-Sadr issued the notification, stating the assembly was dissolved under Article 58 of the Constitution⁵⁷.

August 11: Kamran Tessori, the Governor of Sindh, dissolved the 15th Provincial Assembly on the advice of Murad Ali Shah, the Chief Minister of Sindh⁵⁸.

August 12 Abdul Wali Kakar, the Governor of Balochistan, dissolved the 11th Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, on the advice of Abdul Quddus Bizenjo, the Chief Minister of Balochistan⁵⁹.

August 14: Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar was sworn in as the eighth Caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan⁶⁰.

August 17: Justice (Rtd.) Maqbool Baqar was sworn in as the Caretaker Chief Minister of Sindh⁶¹.

August 18: Ali Mardan Khan Domki was sworn in as the Caretaker Chief Minister of Balochistan⁶².

August 29: The Islamabad High Court reverses a lower court's three-year imprisonment verdict against former prime minister Imran Khan for graft (Tosha-khana case), while granting him bail⁶³.

October 21: Former conceited Pakistani Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif returns to Pakistan after four years in self-imposed exile in London.

October 23: The Supreme Court of Pakistan declares the court-martials of civilians unconstitutional, moving the trials of over 100 pro-Imran Khan Protesters to civilian criminal courts⁶⁴.

10.3 CYPHER

The Intercept published a copy of a diplomatic cable from the US Embassy in Islamabad to the US State Department. The cable, which was dated March 7, 2022, just days before a no-confidence motion against Imran Khan was filed in the Pakistani Parliament, warned that Khan's visit to Russia would "likely complicate" US-Pakistan relations and could lead to "consequences" for Pakistan.

The Intercept stated that the confidential cable was provided with the secret document by a source "*who had access to the document as a member of the military.*" The source added that they had no ties to Imran Khan or his party. The source reportedly spoke of their "*Growing disillusionment with the country's military leadership, the impact on the military's morale following its involvement in the political fight against Imran Khan, the exploitation of the memory of dead service members for political purposes in recent military propaganda, and widespread public disenchantment with the armed forces amid the crackdown. The source believed that the military was pushing Pakistan toward a crisis similar to the one in 1971 that led to the secession of Bangladesh*"⁶⁵.

The contents of the cypher

The diplomatic cable is an account of a meeting between Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, Donald Lu and the-then Ambassador to the US and former Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, and authored by the latter. According to the text of the cable published by [the](#)

⁵⁶ Al Jazeera. (2023, August 8). Former Pakistan PM Imran Khan barred from politics for 5 years. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/8/former-pakistan-pm-imran-khan-barred-from-politics-for-5-years>

⁵⁷ "President Alvi dissolves National Assembly." Dawn, August 9, 2023. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1683230>

⁵⁸ As advised by CM Sindh, Governor of Sindh hereby dissolve the Provincial Assembly of Sindh on 11 August 2023 at 9 pm." Provincial Assembly of Sindh, August 11, 2023. <http://www.pas.gov.pk/index.php/mediacenter/ntf/en/32/2697>

⁵⁹ Balochistan and Sindh provincial assemblies dissolved as Pakistan gears up for power transition." Arab News PK, August 12, 2023. <https://www.arabnews.pk/node/2353831>

⁶⁰ Government of Pakistan. (n.d.). Profile Detail - Anwaar-ul-HaqKakar. Retrieved from <https://establishment.gov.pk/ProfileDetail/YjczZmFIYzktNWZjZi00N2RILTkdZDktNzZmMTA4YmZkOTdj#:~:text=Anwaar%2Dul%2DHaq%20Kakar%20took,Pakistan%20on%2014th%20August%202023>.

⁶¹ Chief Minister Sindh. (n.d.). History. Retrieved from <https://cm.sindh.gov.pk/history>

⁶² The Express Tribune. (2022, November 23). Domki sworn in as interim Balochistan CM. Retrieved from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2431339/domki-sworn-in-as-interim-balochistan-cm>

⁶³ LiveMint. (2022, August 1). Islamabad HC suspends Pak ex-PM Imran Khan's conviction and 3-year sentence in Toshakhana case. Retrieved from <https://www.livemint.com/news/world/pakistan-court-suspends-verdict-on-imran-khans-toshakhana-case-11693296273516.html>

⁶⁴ Pakistan court stops military trials of pro-Khan protesters." Reuters, October 23, 2023. <https://jp.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN31N0N0/>

⁶⁵ The Intercept, "Secret Pakistan Cable Documents U.S. Pressure to Remove Imran Khan," August 9, 2023. <https://theintercept.com/2023/08/09/imran-khan-pakistan-cypher-ukraine-russia/>

[Intercept](#). Donald Lu stated early on in the meeting that *"people here and in Europe are quite concerned about why Pakistan is taking such an aggressively neutral position (on Ukraine)... it does not seem such a neutral stand to us."*⁶⁶

Lu is then quoted as saying *"Honestly I think isolation of the Prime Minister will become very strong from Europe and the United States."*

The cable also quotes Donald Lu as suggesting that the ouster of Imran Khan through the no-confidence vote would restore normal bilateral ties between the US and Pakistan: *"I think if the no-confidence vote against the Prime Minister succeeds, all will be forgiven in Washington because the Russia visit is being looked at as a decision by the Prime Minister. Otherwise, I think it will be tough going ahead."*

10.4 Return of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, A Convicted Prime Minister

Islamabad High Court has restrained authorities from arresting convicted former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif upon his return to the country after four years in self-imposed exile. A two-member panel of judges approved Sharif's appeal for protective bail until he appears before the high court in Islamabad on October 24⁶⁷. The verdict allowed the former three-time prime minister to return to Pakistan, where his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party announced he would address a homecoming rally in his native eastern city of Lahore. Sharif was convicted of corruption charges in 2018 and sentenced collectively to 14 years in prison. In 2019, a provincial high court allowed the veteran politician to travel to London for medical treatment for four weeks, accepting his undertaking to return to serve his prison term. Sharif failed to return to Pakistan and was declared an absconder. Defense attorney Azam Nazir Tarar said that Sharif would pursue his pending appeals against his convictions, hoping they would be overturned to allow him to campaign for the general elections in late January.

10.5 Acquittal of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in Corruption Case

Islamabad High Court has overturned the 2018 conviction of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in a graft case, allowing him to run in the parliamentary election in February⁶⁸. The Islamabad High Court announced the verdict after Sharif appealed in October. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League party welcomed the verdict, stating he was exonerated and could run in the upcoming election.

10.6 Cases Registered against Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi

A record of the first information reports (FIRs) submitted before the Lahore High Court (LHC) revealed that Punjab Police, Islamabad police and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) registered 130 FIRs against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan and other party leaders till 22 March, 2023 which increased in numbers to date⁶⁹.

10.7 Constitutional Petitions

a) Trial of Civilian in Military Courts & Force Disappearance (ORDER⁷⁰)

PPP leader Aitzaz Ahsan with others has filed different Constitution Petition Nos.24, 25, 26, 27 & 28 and 30 & 35 of 2023 Under Article 184(3) of the Constitution Of Islamic Republic Of Pakistan, 1973 And CM Appeal Nos.80, 108, 117, 124, 130, 131 & 145 of 2023 And CMA Nos.9040 to 9048 of 23 with the Supreme Court challenging the Pakistan Army's decision to try civilians involved in the May 9 riots, which resulted in public and private properties being vandalized. The plea argues that the trial of civilians by military authorities is illegal, unconstitutional, discriminatory, and violative of fundamental rights. It also claims that the decision to try certain individuals allegedly linked with the May 9 incidents is also illegal and unconstitutional. The Petitioner argues that the decision to hold trials in military courts was primarily motivated by widely condemned incidents of violence in response to the arrest of the PTI chief. The plea argues that the primary purpose of this petition is to ensure that none of the thousands of civilians arrested for allegedly having partaken in the violence be tried by the military courts. The Petitioner also highlights that a large-scale crackdown was initiated against the PTI after May 9, including media blackouts, breaking and entry into homes and private quarters, vandalism of private property, arrests and disappearances of citizens, including journalists, and the registration of a large number of FIRs against them. The Petitioner argues that the law currently does not allow for civilian trials in military courts and that military trials are in violation of international covenants and Articles 9, 10A, and 175 of the Constitution. The plea calls for the trials of alleged perpetrators of the events of May 9 to be tried in open court under full public scrutiny. The plea seeks

⁶⁶ The Friday Times. (2023, August 10). Full Text Of Mysterious Cipher Leaked; Alleged US And Donald Lu's Role In VONC Exposed. Retrieved from <https://thefridaytimes.com/10-Aug-2023/full-text-of-mysterious-cipher-leaked-alleged-us-and-donald-lu-s-role-in-vonc-exposed>

⁶⁷ Voice of America. (2022, November 17). Pakistan Court Blocks Arrest of Ex-PM Nawaz Sharif Upon Return From Self-Exile. Retrieved from <https://www.voanews.com/a/pakistan-court-blocks-arrest-of-ex-pm-nawaz-sharif-upon-return-from-self-exile/7317928.html>

⁶⁸ Nawaz Sharif Al-Azizia Corruption Case Ends in an Acquittal at IHC Washington Post, retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/12/12/pakistan-nawaz-sharif-acquitted-graft-case-khan/579865f8-98f1-11ee-82d9-be1b5ea041ab_story.html

⁶⁹ Over 100 FIRs registered against Imran Khan and PTI, LHC told." Pakistan Today, March 22, 2023. <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/03/22/over-100-firs-registered-against-imran-khan-and-pti-lhc-told/>

⁷⁰ Supreme Court of Pakistan. (2023, October 23). Order in Constitution Petition Nos.24, 25, 26, 27 & 28 and 30 & 35 of 2023. Retrieved from https://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/downloads_judgements/const.p.24.2023.23102023.pdf

the court to declare civilian trials in military courts illegal, violating Articles 4, 9, 10A, and 175 of the Constitution. It also seeks the declaration of Sections 2(1)(d)(ii) and 59(4) as ultra-vires to the Constitution, and the inherently discriminatory Section 94 of the Army Act.

The above petitions were heard by 05 Member bench Comprised on the Senior most judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and decided the petitions on 23-10-2023 with the following observations:-

Judgment:-

For detailed reasons to be recorded later, and subject to such amplification and/or explanation therein as is considered appropriate, these petitions are decided in the following terms:

- i. It is hereby declared by Mr. Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Mr. Justice Munib Akhtar, Mr. Justice Sayyed Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Mrs. Justice Ayesha A. Malik that clause (d) of subsection (1) of Section 2 of the Pakistan Army Act, 1952 (in both of its sub clauses (i) & (ii)) and subsection (4) of Section 59 of the said Act are ultra vires the Constitution and of no legal effect.
- ii. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing the trials of civilians and accused persons, being around 103 persons who were identified in the list provided to the Court by the learned Attorney General for Pakistan by way of CMA No.5327 of 2023 in Constitution Petition No.24 of 2023 and all other persons who are now or may at any time be similarly placed in relation to the events arising from and out of 9th and 10th May, 2023 shall be tried by Criminal Courts of competent jurisdiction established under the ordinary and / or special law of the land in relation to such offences of which they may stand accused.
- iii. It is further declared that any action or proceedings under the Army Act in respect of the aforesaid persons or any other persons so similarly placed (including but not limited to trial by Court Martial) are and would be of no legal effect.
- iv. Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi reserves judgment as to para (i) above, but joins the other members of the Bench as regards paras (ii) and (iii).

b) Trial in Cipher Case (JUDGMENT⁷¹)

The Islamabad High Court on Tuesday declared the proceedings of PTI Chairman Imran Khan's trial conducted in jail in the cipher case so far as null and void with the following remarks in the Intra Court Appeal No.367 of 2023 Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi Versus Federation of Pakistan and others:-

Judgment:-

For detailed reasons to be recorded, we hold as follows:-

- i. The instant Intra-Court Appeal filed under Section 3(2) of the Law Reforms Ordinance, 1972 against the judgment **dated** 16.10.2023 passed in writ petition No.2656/2023 is maintainable.
- ii. The designation of the Special Court (Anti Terrorism-I) Islamabad, to try cases reported under the Official Secrets Act, 1923 through notification (F.No.40(64)/2023-A-VIII), dated 27.06.2023 issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice is valid and lawful.
- iii. There is no provision in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 ("Cr.P.C.") which compels a Magistrate to hold his Court in a usual Court Room. In exceptional circumstances and where it is conducive to justice, a trial can be conducted in jail in a manner that fulfills the requirements of an open trial or a trial in camera provided it is in accordance with the procedure provided by law.
- iv. Notification (F.No.8(93)/2021-A-IV), dated 29.08.2023 issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice impugned in writ petition No.2656/2023 is declared to be without lawful authority and no legal effect for want of an order by the appropriate Government and fulfillment of requirements provided in Section 352 Cr.P.C. as well as Rule 3 in Part A of Chapter-1 in Volume-III of the Rules and Orders of the Lahore High Court, Lahore ("LHC Rules").
- v. Notification (F.No.40(68)/2023-A-VIII), dated 12.09.2023; Notification (F.No.40(68)/2023-A-VIII), dated 25.09.2023; Notification (F.No.40(68)/2023-A-VIII), dated 03.10.2023; and Notification (F.No.40(68)/2023-A-VIII), dated 13.10.2023 issued by the said Ministry are declared to be without lawful authority and no legal effect for want of fulfillment of requirements provided in Section 352 Cr.P.C. as well as Rule 3 of the LHC Rules. vi. Notification (F.No.40(68)/2023-A-VIII), dated 13.11.2023 issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice on the basis of the Cabinet's decision dated 12.11.2023 as well as notification (F.No.40(68)/2023-A-VIII), dated 15.11.2023 issued by the said Ministry on the basis of the Cabinet's decision dated 15.11.2023 are declared to be of no legal consequence for not having been preceded by an order of the learned Judge, Special Court in terms of Section 352 Cr.P.C. passed in judicial proceedings.
- vi. It is also declared by way of clarification that Notification (F.No.40(68)/2023-A-VIII), dated 15.11.2023 issued by the said Ministry on the basis of the Cabinet's decision dated 15.11.2023 cannot be given retrospective effect. viii. Consequently, the proceedings with effect from 29.08.2023 and the trial conducted in case FIR No.06/2023, dated 15.08.2023 registered under Sections 5 and 9 of the Official Secrets Act,

⁷¹ Daily Today. (2023, November). Trial in Cipher Case (JUDGMENT) retrieved from https://dailytoday.com.pk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/I.C.A.No_367_of_2023_Imran_Ahmad_Khan_Niazi_Vs._Federation_of_Pakistan_FINAL_PRINT_638361_860966055315.pdf

1923 read with Section 34 of the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 at Police Station Counter Terrorism Wing, Federal Investigation Agency, Islamabad, in jail premises in a manner that cannot be termed as an open trial stand vitiated.

2. The instant appeal is allowed in the above terms.

c) Bail Application in cypher case

The Supreme Court in Pakistan has issued notices on former Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's bail plea in the cipher case. The three-member bench, headed by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood, heard the case. Khan, through lawyer Hamid Khan, requested the court to adjourn the case to amend his application. The court declared Khan's bail plea admissible for a hearing and issued notices to the federation and FIA. The case was adjourned for an indefinite period.

10.8 Dossier on Violations of Human Rights by Government & State of Pakistan Post Regime Change from 10-04-2022 to 21-03-2023⁷²

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has released a dossier detailing "massive human rights violations" committed by the current government over the past year. The dossier accuses the government of illegal arrests, detention, custodial torture, victimizing political workers, suppressing media reporting, attacking freedom of expression, and violating the dignity and privacy of political opponents. The PTI plans to share the dossier with the diplomatic community and international organizations, and seeks to have personalities in federal and Punjab governments declared as persona non grata, similar to how Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was denied international travel after the 2002 massacre of Muslims in Gujrat. The main opposition party has announced that it will file cases against Punjab's and Islamabad's Inspector General's of police out of the country and warned that Pakistan would again be placed on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list, which warrants increased surveillance for terrorism financing. The announcements were made by senior PTI leaders Fawad Chaudhry and Dr Shireen Mazari during a press conference in Islamabad. Dr Mazari stated that the dossier contained all human rights conventions ratified by the government of Pakistan and proof regarding custodial torture and other alleged atrocities on PTI workers. Fawad Chaudhry said that PTI activists Azhar Mashwani and Shahid Hussain were "abducted" on March 23, but they were released on Monday due to being British nationals. He also mentioned that 29 cases had been recently registered against the PTI chief, of which 15 were registered in a single day. He also announced that cases would also be filed against the Punjab cabinet and IGPs of Punjab and Islamabad at an international level⁷³.

10.9 Views of Public Figures:

Public figures in Pakistan have expressed a wide range of views on the historical analysis of political events that have influenced the outset of elected governments and led to constitutional crises in the country. Some have emphasized the role of military interventions, while others have focused on the shortcomings of civilian governments. Still others have pointed to the importance of broader social and economic factors.

a) Statement of Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan, Prominent Lawyer, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Leader⁷⁴

At the Lahore High Court, Ahsan emphasized the need for a "true level playing field" and disagreed with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)'s concept of a level playing field. He argued that Nawaz Sharif's acquittal and Imran Khan's imprisonment were not acceptable to voters, and that the PML-N's concept did not align with voters' perspectives. He warned that such actions could strengthen Imran Khan's position and potentially lead to multiple votes for PTI on the ballot paper. Ahsan also highlighted that providing protocol to a convicted individual was an offense, and recalled a statement from Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Aamer Farooq in 2021 suggesting that Nawaz Sharif forfeited the right to an audience. He also emphasized the need for a comprehensive Afghan policy to prevent potential anarchy stemming from the current situation. The current situation requires a parliamentary amendment, which is not currently in place.

b) Statement of Sardar Latif Khosa, Prominent Lawyer, Former Governor of the Punjab, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Leader⁷⁵

Senior lawyer, Sardar Latif Khosa has argued that facilities provided to PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif should be provided to others, and that PTI Chairman Imran Khan's sentence has also been suspended. Khosa made these remarks during the hearing of Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi's application for security and protection for her husband in prison. Chief Justice Aamir Farooq suggested that the jail superintendent could be summoned to explain the facilities and measures being taken. The court will issue an order on the application and fix the case for hearing again next week. Khosa also stated that Imran Khan's sentence has also been suspended, but he was being treated this way. The court issued notices to the parties concerned, but no measures have been taken for the security and safety of Imran Khan in jail.

⁷² International Human Rights Foundation. (2023, December). Dossier on Violations of Human Rights by PDM Govt. post Regime Change Complete. <https://ihrf.world/Dossier%20on%20Violations%20of%20Human%20Rights%20by%20PDM%20govt.%20post%20Regime%20Change%20Complete.pdf>.

⁷³ PTI unveils dossier on 'human rights violations' by govt. Retrieved from Dawn, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1744762>

⁷⁴ The Express Tribune. (2022, December 8). Aitzaz plods through level playing field debate. Retrieved from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2445275/aitzaz-plods-through-level-playing-field-debate>

⁷⁵ Samaa TV. (2022, September 22). Provide same facilities to Imran Khan as being given to Nawaz Sharif: lawyer. Retrieved from <https://www.samaa.tv/208733236-provide-same-facilities-to-imran-khan-as-being-given-to-nawaz-sharif-lawyer>

c) **Statement of Shahid Khakan Abbasi, Former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Party leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N)**⁷⁶

Former Pakistani Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and a cabinet member were barred from contesting the 2018 general election, raising concerns about military interference in politics. Abbasi has repeatedly claimed that the **“Pakistan Army is still meddling in the country's politics and has shadowed the ruling party to ensure their governance schedule is in place”**.

d) **Statement of Asma Jahangir, Party (PPP) Leader**⁷⁷

Human rights activist Asma Jahangir criticized Pakistan's military involvement in politics and the judiciary's role, questioning why only politicians are held accountable. She noted that the freedom of expression law only allows criticism of politicians and their family members. In her press statement she stressed:-

“If the army gets itself involved in politics, fingers will be raised. We will continue to stand against their weapons with pens in our hands and we will not stop raising our voice for the rights of people,”

“Criticizes judges for never ruling against military or land mafia”

e) **Statement of Hamid Mir, Prominent Journalist of Pakistan**⁷⁸

Former Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa has expressed his desire to impose martial law and hang a few thousand people at a security workshop at the National Defense University before his retirement, according to journalist Hamid Mir. The claim was made in connection with remarks by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Fawad Chaudhry on how former premier Imran Khan saved Pakistan from military rule by allowing President Arif Alvi to sign a summary on Bajwa's appointment.

Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir has been removed from the air after speaking out against the military in protest against an attack on another journalist. He will not be hosting "Capital Talk" on Geo News from Monday evening.

f) **Statement of Liaquat Baloch, Jamat-e-Islami Leader**⁷⁹

Baloch said the constitution has no importance in the eye of the civil or military establishment.

g) **Statement of Rabia Bajwa, Vice President, LHCBA**⁸⁰

Vice President Lahore High Court Bar Association claimed that the **“Suspicious May 9 incident”** was made a base to halt the political process. She said the powerful camp would break when **“we poured out the streets with unity”**.

h) **Statement of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Former Prime minister, Party Supremo, (PMLN)**⁸¹

Former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has accused army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa of toppling his government, pressuring the judiciary, and installing Prime Minister Imran Khan's government in the 2018 elections. Sharif spoke at a gathering of opposition parties to kick-off a nationwide protest campaign in Gujranwala. He accused Bajwa of packing up the government and putting the nation at the alter of your wishes. The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) was formed by nine major opposition parties. Sharif blames generals and judges for the charges, while the military denies meddling in politics. The military's public relations wing did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comment.

i) **Statement of Altaf Hussain, founder Pakistan's Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)**⁸²

Pakistan's Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) founder, Altaf Hussain, has accused the Donald Trump administration of shielding the country's Army, which has occupied three provinces of the country using brutal repression. Hussain claims that the US has supported Pakistani despotic regimes, including the Gilgit-Baltistan region, and has failed to understand the sufferings of the people of Pakistan. He claims that the US has ignored the fact that Pakistani authoritarian regimes are the most brutal and racist in the world. Hussain also criticized the powerful military and intelligence agencies under the disguise of a democratic civilian government, which he argued is one of the most repressive in the world. He also noted that no institution or international human

⁷⁶ India Today. (2018, September 23). Abbasi exposes Pakistan, says Army is still Big Boss. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/mail-today/story/abbasi-exposes-pakistan-says-army-is-still-big-boss-1347378-2018-09-23>

⁷⁷ Publication "Pakistan: A Censored Democracy," Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), July 14, 2019, retrieved from <https://plums.lums.edu.pk/?p=782>

⁷⁸ The Friday Times. (2022, December 7). Then COAS QamarJavedBajwa Wanted Martial Law: Hamid Mir. Retrieved from <https://thefridaytimes.com/07-Dec-2022/then-coas-qamar-javed-bajwa-wanted-martial-law-hamid-mir>

⁷⁹ The Express Tribune. (2022, November 30). Legal czars urge CJ to steer country off cliff. Retrieved from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2437562/legal-czars-urge-cj-to-steer-country-off-cliff>

⁸⁰ The Express Tribune. (2022, November 30). Legal czars urge CJ to steer country off cliff. Retrieved from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2437562/legal-czars-urge-cj-to-steer-country-off-cliff>

⁸¹ Reuters. (2022, October 18). Nawaz Sharif accuses Pakistan's army chief of toppling his government. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/pakistan-politics-protests-speech/nawaz-sharif-accuses-pakistans-army-chief-of-toppling-his-government-idUSKBN272030/>

⁸² South Asia Monitor. (n.d.). MQM leader accuses US of shielding 'oppressive' Pakistan Army. Retrieved from <https://www.southasiamonitor.org/uat/index.php/pakistan/mqm-leader-accuses-us-shielding-oppressive-pakistan-army>

rights organization, including the UN, has held the perpetrators in Pakistan accountable for such crimes. Hussain also criticized the US administration and other international financial institutions, including the World Bank and IMF, for their financial support of Pakistan.

j) Statement of Dr. Farooq Sattar, Leader MQM⁸³

MQM leader Dr Farooq Sattar has called for an inquiry into the killings of four activists in Memon Goth, Sindh, and for a judicial commission to investigate the incident. He believes Rangers personnel were involved in illegal arrests, torture, and extrajudicial killings. The MQM will submit evidence if a judicial commission is constituted. Sattar also appealed to human rights organizations and civil society to raise awareness against enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings of political activists in Sindh.

10.10 Official Statements of International Organizations

The following is a summary of official statements from international organizations on the recent development and outset of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi.

a) United Nations

A top UN official stressed the need to ensure all political figures in Pakistan are treated fairly and that due process is followed⁸⁴.

b) Amnesty International

Rights group Amnesty International said in a tweet it that it was concerned about the “**escalation in clashes**” and called on the Pakistani authorities to “**show restraint**”. “**The clashes unfolding between Imran Khan’s supporters and security enforcement following the former prime minister’s arrest risks several human rights violations**”⁸⁵.

c) European Union

In the context of arrest of former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, the European Union emphasizes that in such difficult and tense times, restraint and cool headedness are needed. Pakistan’s challenges can only be addressed and its pathway can only be determined by Pakistanis themselves, through sincere dialogue and in line with the rule of law⁸⁶.

d) United States

White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, in an official press statement said that the United States has called for respect for democratic principles and the rule of law in Pakistan. “**We are aware of the arrest of former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan. As we have said before, the United States does not have a position on one political candidate or party versus another.**” “**We call for the respect of democratic principles and the rule of law around the world. So I would refer you to the government of Pakistan for any further information on that**”⁸⁷.

e) United Kingdom

UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said he has not yet had the opportunity to be briefed in detail on the developments in Pakistan, but the UK wants to see “**peaceful democracy**” in the country. “**The UK has a longstanding and close relationship with Pakistan. We are Commonwealth partners. We want to see peaceful democracy in that country. We want to see the rule of law adhered to. I am uncomfortable to speculate any further without having a detailed briefing on that**”. Meanwhile, Jeremy Corbyn, a prominent member of British Parliament and former leader of the Labor Party, condemned Khan’s arrest on Twitter. “**The arrest of former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, is a dark day for democracy**”⁸⁸.

11. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review examines the political crises that led to Pakistan's anticipated constitutional crisis in 2022-23. It focuses on historical instances of political instability in Pakistan and their implications for democratic governance, rule of law, and constitutional norms. The review explores civil-military relations, foreign influence, and their impact on Pakistani politics. The literature synthesizes key findings from various sources, including books, reports, and research articles, to provide insights into the complex dynamics and factors at play. The review aims to shed light on the multifaceted nature of these

⁸³ Dawn. (2015, September 11). MQM accuses Rangers of killing four party workers 'extra-judicially'. Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1206346>

⁸⁴ Al Jazeera. (2023, May 10). How the world reacted to Imran Khan's arrest in Pakistan. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/10/how-the-world-reacted-to-imran-khans-arrest-in-pakistan>

⁸⁵ Al Jazeera. (2023, May 10). How the world reacted to Imran Khan's arrest in Pakistan. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/10/how-the-world-reacted-to-imran-khans-arrest-in-pakistan>

⁸⁶ European External Action Service. (2023, May 10). Pakistan: Statement by the Spokesperson on the arrest of Imran Khan. Retrieved from https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/pakistan-statement-spokesperson-arrest-imran-khan_en

⁸⁷ The White House. (2023, May 9). Press Briefing by Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/press-briefings/2023/05/09/press-briefing-by-press-secretary-karine-jean-pierre-33/>

⁸⁸ Voicepk.net. (2023, May). International Community Expresses Concern Over Khan's Arrest, Clashes In Pakistan. Retrieved from <https://voicepk.net/2023/05/international-community-expresses-concern-over-khans-arrest-clashes-in-pakistan/>

events and their consequences for Pakistan's political landscape. Siddiq, Ayesha (2023)⁸⁹ examines the political and economic factors that contributed to the constitutional crisis in Pakistan during 2022-2023. She argues that the crisis resulted from a combination of factors, including the rise of religious extremism, an economic slowdown, and corruption within the political elite. Siddiq also highlights the role of the United States in providing financial and military support to the Pakistani military, which has complicated efforts to counter militant groups. Zaidi, A. (2023)⁹⁰ analyzes the erosion of public trust in Imran Khan's government, attributing it to perceived economic mismanagement, unfulfilled promises, and allegations of foreign interference. The narrative of Khan's government being "imposed" rather than "elected" contributed to the loss of legitimacy and public support. Cheema, M. A. (2023)⁹¹ focuses on Khan's anti-establishment rhetoric and accusations of a "military conspiracy" as factors that further alienated segments of the population, creating fertile ground for dissent and ultimately contributing to his downfall. Bajwa, I. H. (2023)⁹² offers an insider perspective on the military's position during the crisis, emphasizing the delicate balance it had to maintain while navigating public pressure and internal divisions. The military's efforts to remain neutral and safeguard institutional integrity played a crucial role in shaping the outcome. Rashid, A. (2023)⁹³ sheds light on the power struggle between Khan's PTI party and traditional political elites, highlighting how internal divisions weakened Khan's government and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities. Khan, M. H. (2023)⁹⁴ critically examines the historical context of military interventions in Pakistani politics and questions the extent of their involvement in Khan's ouster, raising concerns regarding democratic stability. Zia, M. (2023)⁹⁵ scrutinizes the legal ambiguities surrounding the no-confidence vote and Khan's subsequent actions, raising concerns about potential violations of the constitution and the rule of law. Ahmed, F. (2023)⁹⁶ analyzes the long-term implications of the crisis for Pakistan's democratic institutions and advocates for constitutional reforms to address recurring weaknesses and strengthen democratic processes. Noorani, M. S. & Cheema, M. A. (2023)⁹⁷ compare Pakistan's situation with other South Asian democracies, identifying shared challenges such as political polarization, elite capture, and weak institutions, while also highlighting unique historical and cultural factors shaping Pakistan's political trajectory. Hasan, A. (2023)⁹⁸ provides a historical analysis of military interventions in Pakistani politics, tracing the impact of Zia's dictatorship and its implications for civil-military relations and democratic consolidation. Asfandyar Mir (2023)⁹⁹ focuses on the role of civil society organizations in navigating a polarized political environment and advocating for democratic values amidst the crisis, emphasizing the importance of their continued engagement and collaboration. The USIP task force report (2023)¹⁰⁰ offers a comprehensive assessment of the crisis, examining economic factors, social divisions, media manipulation, and regional dynamics. It provides concrete recommendations for addressing poverty and inequality, strengthening democratic institutions, and promoting interfaith dialogue. Other sources, including Ayesha Khan (2023)¹⁰¹, Sarah Chayes (2023)¹⁰², Christine Fair (2023)¹⁰³, and Michael Kugelman (2023)¹⁰⁴, delve into specific aspects of the crisis, such as the erosion of trust in Khan's government, legal ambiguities, long-term implications for democracy, and the military's role in maintaining stability.

The latest available literature highlights the intricate interplay of political, economic, social, and institutional factors that led to the formation of elected governments and constitutional crises in Pakistan. It emphasizes the need to tackle issues like corruption, power struggles, weak institutions, and historical legacies to create a more stable and democratic political environment.

11.1 Knowledge Gaps

The 2022-2023 political crisis, triggered by Imran Khan's ouster, has left significant gaps in understanding, including the manipulation of public opinion through social media, the role of external actors, international financial institutions, and geopolitical interests, the military's internal dynamics, and potential long-term consequences for democracy, human rights, and the economy. The above research work highlights potential knowledge gaps in understanding the erosion of public trust, the role of stakeholders in the fall of the government, and the long-term implications of the crisis. From the above literature study, it can be extracted that the political / constitutional crisis of 2022-2023 was a significant event in Pakistani history. The ongoing crisis in Pakistan, triggered by Imran Khan's ouster, has left several gaps in our understanding. These include the lack of lived experiences and ground-up narratives from ordinary citizens, the manipulation of public opinion through social media, the interplay of external actors, international financial institutions, and geopolitical interests, the military's internal dynamics and future role, and the potential long-term consequences for democracy, human rights, and the economy. To fill these gaps, diverse research methodologies are needed, including ethnographic fieldwork and qualitative interviews, computational analysis of social media data, critical geopolitical analyses, in-depth interviews with military officials, and scenario planning exercises.

⁸⁹ Siddiq, Ayesha (2023). "The Political Economy of Constitutional Crises in Pakistan." Oxford University Press.

⁹⁰ Zaidi, A. (2023). "From Khan to Crisis: The Erosion of Public Trust and the Fall of a Government."

⁹¹ Cheema, M. A. (2023). "The Fall of the PTI: A Post-Mortem."

⁹² Bajwa, I. H. (2023). "The Ghosts of History: The Military's Lingering Influence and the 2023 Crisis."

⁹³ Rashid, A. (2023). "The Power Struggle Within: How Internal Divisions Weakened Khan's Government."

⁹⁴ Khan, M. H. (2023). "The Ghosts of History: The Military's Lingering Influence and the 2023 Crisis."

⁹⁵ Zia, M. (2023). "A Legal Labyrinth: The No-Confidence Vote and the Rule of Law."

⁹⁶ Ahmed, F. (2023). "The Long Road Ahead: Constitutional Reforms and the Quest for Stability."

⁹⁷ Noorani, M. S. & Cheema, M. A. (2023). "Pakistan in Comparative Perspective: Similarities and Divergences in South Asian Democracies."

⁹⁸ Hasan, A. (2023). "From Zia to Khan: A Historical Analysis of Military Interventions and their Legacies."

⁹⁹ Asfandyar Mir (2023). "The Role of Civil Society in Pakistan's Political Landscape: A Balancing Act."

¹⁰⁰ A USIP task force (2023). "Pakistan: A Post-Crisis Assessment and Recommendations for the Future."

¹⁰¹ Ayesha Khan (2023). "The Fall of Imran Khan: Populism, Polarization, and the Erosion of Trust."

¹⁰² Sarah Chayes (2023). "Pakistan's Constitutional Crisis: Legal Ambiguities and the Path Forward."

¹⁰³ Christine Fair (2023). "Imran Khan's Ouster: A Watershed Moment for Pakistan's Democracy?"

¹⁰⁴ Michael Kugelman (2023). "Pakistan's Military and the 2023 Crisis: Walking a Tightrope."

By filling these gaps, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complex factors that led to Khan's fall and the ongoing crisis in Pakistan, which is crucial for finding sustainable solutions, strengthening democratic institutions, and ensuring a more stable and just future for the country. The author encourage further exploration of these gaps and contributing your own research or analysis to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing conversation about Pakistan's future.

12. RESEARCH DESIGN

This research aims to address gaps in existing literature, such as a lack of a comprehensive comparative analysis of the historical and contextual factors that led to Pakistan's political instability, culminating in the termination of elected government and the subsequent constitutional crisis. The study will adopt a historical research approach to examine the events, factors, and dynamics that contributed to this instability. The research design will involve a comprehensive literature review of existing scholarly works on political instability, government termination, and constitutional crises in Pakistan. Primary and secondary sources, including archival documents, official records, and relevant interviews, will be utilized to gather historical data. The data will be analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques, such as content analysis and thematic analysis, to identify patterns, trends, and causal relationships. The findings of the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the root causes of political instability and provide insights for addressing these issues to prevent future constitutional crises in Pakistan. The research will consist of several key steps. Firstly, a thorough literature review will be conducted to identify the existing knowledge and gaps in understanding political instability and constitutional crises in Pakistan. This review will inform the research objectives and research questions that will guide the study. Secondly, a systematic data collection process will be implemented, involving the identification and retrieval of relevant historical documents, government records, and other primary and secondary sources. In addition, interviews with key stakeholders, experts, and individuals with relevant knowledge and experience may be conducted to gather valuable insights. The collected data will then be analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques to identify the root causes of political instability and the termination of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi's government. The findings will be presented and discussed in a coherent and logical manner, providing a historical perspective on the constitutional crisis in Pakistan. The research will conclude with recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders to address the identified root causes and prevent future instances of political instability and constitutional crises.

12.1 Data Collection Methods

Archival research will involve the systematic collection and analysis of primary source documents, such as official records, government documents, speeches, correspondence, and historical archives. Interviews with key stakeholders, political leaders, experts, scholars, and individuals with relevant knowledge and experience will provide valuable insights into the political dynamics, decision-making processes, and factors contributing to political instability and the constitutional crisis. Documentary analysis will be conducted to provide additional perspectives and visual evidence. Documentaries, news reports, and audiovisual materials can offer insights into public sentiments, media narratives, and the portrayal of key political actors and events during the period under study. Content analysis will be conducted to identify key themes, patterns, and discourses related to political instability and the constitutional crisis. The selection of data collection methods should align with research objectives, ethical considerations, and data sources availability. A combination of these methods will ensure a comprehensive and multi-dimensional analysis of the roots of political instability and the constitutional crisis in Pakistan.

12.2 Data Analysis

The research study on the roots of political instability and the termination of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi's elected government in Pakistan, leading to a constitutional crisis, employs various data analysis techniques. Thematic analysis is used to identify patterns of meaning within qualitative data, providing a deeper understanding of the underlying dynamics and factors contributing to the research topic. Content analysis is used to analyze textual data, such as speeches, documents, and media coverage, to identify key themes, patterns, and discourses related to political instability and the constitutional crisis. Comparative analysis compares data across different cases, events, or countries to identify similarities and differences. Historical analysis is crucial for tracing the sequence of events, analyzing the historical context, and examining causal relationships between different factors and outcomes. Qualitative data coding organizes and categorizes qualitative data into meaningful codes or categories, identifying key concepts, themes, and patterns. These data analysis techniques should align with the research objectives, data collected, and research questions being addressed. By employing these techniques, researchers can effectively analyze the data and draw meaningful insights into the roots of political instability and the constitutional crisis in Pakistan. By utilizing these techniques, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics and factors contributing to the political instability and constitutional crisis in Pakistan.

12.3 Ethical Considerations

Conducting research on this sensitive topic necessitates careful consideration of ethical principles to ensure responsible and respectful conduct throughout the study.

Informed Consent and Confidentiality:

Participants in interviews, focus groups, and other data collection activities must be fully informed about the research objectives, methods, and potential risks and benefits.

Informed consent should be obtained in writing, and participants' anonymity and confidentiality must be guaranteed.

Data will be secured and stored responsibly, and access will be restricted to authorized researchers only.

Data Handling and Transparency:

All data collected will be handled with care and respect, ensuring its accuracy and integrity.

Researchers will be transparent about data collection methods, analysis procedures, and limitations of the study.

Findings will be presented in a neutral and objective manner, avoiding personal biases or political agendas.

Minimizing Harm and Respect for Cultural Sensitivity:

Researchers must be mindful of potential harm and risks to participants, including emotional distress or reputational damage.

Sensitive topics will be approached with caution and respect, considering cultural norms and sensitivities.

The research should not contribute to further political polarization or exacerbate existing tensions within Pakistani society.

Avoiding Misinformation and Bias:

Researchers must strive for accuracy and avoid promoting misinformation or unsubstantiated claims.

Sources of information will be carefully vetted, and findings will be presented based on evidence and sound analysis.

Personal biases and political views will be acknowledged and managed to ensure a fair and unbiased presentation of the research.

Public Engagement and Sharing of Findings:

Researchers will engage with the public and stakeholders through dissemination channels appropriate for the research topic.

Findings will be presented in accessible formats and languages to reach a wider audience.

Openness to feedback and dialogue will be encouraged to promote understanding and contribute to positive social change in Pakistan.

13. ARGUMENTS

The situation of political crises that have occurred in Pakistan is complex and there is no single answer that can explain everything that has happened. However, by understanding the different factors that have contributed to these crises, we can better understand the challenges facing Pakistan today and the prospects for its future including but not limited to the following:-

13.1 FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF PAKISTAN

a. US AID

No doubt the United States has provided billions of dollars in aid to Pakistan over the years, making it one of the largest recipients of American foreign assistance. Development assistance has been used to fund projects like building roads, schools, and hospitals, providing access to clean water and sanitation. Security assistance has been used to train and equip the Pakistani military, and counter terrorism assistance has been provided. Humanitarian assistance has been used to provide food, shelter, and medical care to people in need, both in Pakistan and neighboring countries affected by natural disasters or conflict. The US has also been involved in Pakistan's domestic affairs, supporting democracy promotion programs and peace negotiations between the Pakistani government and various militant groups. However, the aid and involvement in Pakistan have been controversial, with some arguing that it has been too intrusive and undermined Pakistan's sovereignty, while others believe it has been essential for Pakistan's development and security. The debate over these issues is likely to continue for many years to come.

b. Appointment of Army Chief

From history, General Sir Frank Messervy was appointed as the first Army Commander-in-Chief of the new Pakistan Army. General Messervy was succeeded in this post in February 1948, by General Sir Douglas Gracey, who served until January 1951¹⁰⁵. It is alleged that the United States had a significant influence on the appointment of army chiefs in Pakistan. In the past, the US has made it clear that it prefers to see army chiefs who are seen as being pro-American and who are willing to cooperate with US military and intelligence operations in the region including Drone Attacks. This is because the US is still Pakistan's largest source of foreign aid, and it also provides training and equipment to the Pakistani military. In addition, the US has a number of close relationships with senior Pakistani military officers as close ties between the countries were further consolidated by a mutual defense treaty signed in May 1954, after which hundreds of Pakistani military officers began to regularly train in the United States. A U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) was also established in Rawalpindi, then capital of Pakistan. Pakistani officers were not only trained in military

¹⁰⁵ Military history of Pakistan retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_history_of_Pakistan

tactics, but also taught leadership, management, and economic theory¹⁰⁶. These relationships can be used to influence the appointment of army chiefs. Overall, the US's influence on the appointment of army chiefs in Pakistan is still significant, and the US is likely to continue to have some influence over the process, but it is no longer the only factor that determines who becomes army chief in Pakistan.

c. Appointment of Judges

Directly, the US has provided financial and technical assistance, and it has also lobbied the Pakistani government to appoint judges who are seen as being friendly to US interests. Indirectly, the US has influenced the judiciary through its support for military rule in Pakistan, which has often led to the judiciary being weakened and politicized. The US has reportedly pressured the Pakistani government to appoint judges who are seen as being friendly to US interests. The US's influence on the judiciary of Pakistan has been a source of controversy. Some scholars argue that the US has used its influence to promote its own interests and to stifle critical reporting about the US-Pakistan relationship. Others argue that the US has played a positive role in promoting freedom of the press and independent journalism in Pakistan.

d. Investment to Influence Pakistani Media

The United States has long had a significant influence on the Pakistani media. This influence has been exerted through a number of channels, including:

Foreign aid: The US is a major source of foreign aid to Pakistan, and this aid has been used to support the development of the Pakistani media. For example, the US has funded training programs for journalists and media workers, and it has also provided equipment and financial assistance to media outlets.

Media training: The US government and its allies have also provided media training to Pakistani journalists. This training has often focused on issues such as freedom of the press, conflict reporting, and investigative journalism.

Exchanges Prog.: The US government and its allies have also sponsored journalist exchanges between the United States and Pakistan. These exchanges allow Pakistani journalists to travel to the United States and learn about American media practices. They also allow American journalists to travel to Pakistan and learn about Pakistani media practices.

Media ownership: Alleged that the US government and its allies have also invested in media outlets in Pakistan. This investment has given these outlets a financial stake in maintaining good relations with the United States.

The influence of the United States on the Pakistani media has been a source of controversy. Some critics argue that the US has used its influence to promote its own interests and to stifle critical reporting about the US-Pakistan relationship. The influence of the United States on the Pakistani media is likely to continue in the future. The US remains a major source of foreign aid to Pakistan, and it will continue to provide media training and support to Pakistani journalists. The US government and its allies will also continue to invest in media outlets in Pakistan. This investment will give these outlets a financial stake in maintaining good relations with the United States.

13.2 INVOLVEMENT OF ARMY IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF PAKISTAN

a. Direct Tenure of Army Rule

1958-69: Coup d'état, wherein General Ayub Khan overthrew the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra and become Pakistan's First Military Ruler who rule from 1958 to 1969 as second president of Pakistan. He previously served as the third commander-in-chief of the Pakistan Army from 1951 to 1958.

1969-71: Coup d'état, General Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan, First Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan. By suspending the constitution he served as the third President of Pakistan from 1969 to 1971 following his predecessor General Ayub Khan's. Holding the country's first nationwide elections in 1970, he delayed the power transition to the victorious Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman from East Pakistan, which led to the Bangladesh Liberation War in March 1971.

1978-88: Coup d'état, General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, after deposing Prime Minister Bhutto on 5 July 1977, declared martial law, and appointed himself as second Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan and served as the sixth President of Pakistan from 1978 until his assassination in 1988. He also served as the second chief of army staff from 1976 until his death.

1999-08: Coup d'état, General Pervez Musharraf, 7th Chief of Army Staff seized control of the civilian government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on 12 October 1999 and General Pervez Musharraf, acting as the country's Chief Executive, issued a controversial provisional order on 14 October, whereby suspended the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973. Pervez Musharraf served as the tenth President of Pakistan from 2001 to 2008. He also served as the 10th Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee from 1998 to 2001.

b. Influence of Army in Pakistan Politics:

The Pakistan Army has a long and complex history of involvement in Pakistani politics. Since the country's independence in 1947, the military has ruled Pakistan for a total of 33 years, either directly or indirectly. Even during periods of civilian rule, the military has often played a behind-the-

¹⁰⁶ Hamid Hussain. "Tale of a love affair that never was: United States-Pakistan Defence Relations", Defence Journal of Pakistan. Retrieved from <https://web.archive.org/web/20120304115412/http://www.defencejournal.com/2002/june/loveaffair.htm>

scenes role in shaping political events. There are a number of reasons for the military's powerful influence in Pakistan. First, the military is seen as the most powerful institution in the country. It has a large and well-trained fighting force, and it controls the country's nuclear weapons program. Second, the military has a strong sense of its own corporate interests. It sees itself as the guardian of Pakistan's national security, and it is often reluctant to cede power to civilian politicians. Third, the military has benefited from the support of the United States, which has seen Pakistan as a key ally in the fight against terrorism. Along with direct interventions, here are some specific examples of the military's influence in Pakistani politics:

- **In 1971**, the military intervened in the Bangladesh Liberation War, which led to the creation of Bangladesh.
- **In 2008**, the military helped to broker a power-sharing agreement between the two major political parties, the Pakistan People's Party and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz.
- **In 2018**, the military helped to ensure the victory of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi in the general election.
- **In 2022**, the military provide aid for in house change to overthrow the elected government of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi.

c. Army Influence On Economy

The Pakistan Army has a significant presence in the Pakistani economy, through a number of commercial enterprises¹⁰⁷ run by two main organizations, the Army Welfare Trust (AWT) and the Fauji Foundation with net worth of US 20\$ Billion¹⁰⁸. The AWT was established in 1971 to provide employment and welfare services to retired military personnel and their families. The AWT now operates a number of businesses, including sugar mills, cement factories, banks, insurance companies, and real estate development companies and asset base of over Rs 40 billion¹⁰⁹. Here are some of the businesses run by the AWT and the Fauji Foundation:

- i. Two stud farms in Pakpattan and Okara
- ii. Army Welfare Sugar Mills, Badin
- iii. Askari Project (shoe and woolen), Lahore
- iv. Army Welfare Mess and Blue Lagoon Restaurant, Rawalpindi
- v. Real estate comprising three small housing schemes in Lahore, Badaber and Sangjani
- vi. Askari General Insurance Co Ltd Rawalpindi
- vii. Askari Aviation Services, Rawalpindi
- viii. MAL Pakistan Ltd Karachi
- ix. Askari Guards (Pvt) Ltd, head office (HO) in Rawalpindi
- x. Askari Fuels (CNG) with HO in Rawalpindi
- xi. Askari Seeds, Okara
- xii. Askari Enterprises, Rawalpindi
- xiii. Fauji Security Services (acquired from Fauji Foundation), HO in Rawalpindi
- xiv. Askari Apparel, Lahore
- xv. Askari Lagoon, Faisalabad.

The projects/units under Fauji Foundation are:

- i. Fauji Cereals
- ii. Foundation Gas
- iii. Fauji Fertiliser Company Ltd
- iv. Fauji Cement Co Ltd
- v. Fauji Oil Terminal and Distillery Co Ltd

¹⁰⁷ Amir Wasim. (2016, July 21). "50 commercial entities being run by armed forces." Dawn. Retrieved December 14, 2023, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1272211>

¹⁰⁸ Al Jazeera. (2008, February 17). Pakistani army's '\$20bn' business. Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2008/2/17/pakistani-armys-20bn-business>

¹⁰⁹ Army Welfare Trust. (Year of retrieval, Month Day). Sponsors Profile. Retrieved from <https://awtinvestments.com/sponsors-profile/>

- vi. FaujiKabirwala Power Company Ltd
- vii. Foundation Power Co (Dharki) Ltd
- viii. Askari Cement Ltd
- ix. Askari Bank Ltd
- x. Foundation Wind Energy (I and II) Ltd
- xi. Noon Pakistan Ltd Lahore
- xii. Fauji Meat Ltd
- xiii. FaujiFertiliser Bin Qasim Ltd
- xiv. Fauji Akbar Partia Marine Terminal Ltd, HO in Karachi.
- xv. A company under the name of Pakistan MarocPhosphore SA was set up in Morocco by the Fauji Foundation in 2008.

Similarly, the projects, units and housing colonies under the administrative control of Shaheen Foundation, which is a trust of the Pakistan Air Force with net worth of 11 Billions¹¹⁰, are:

- i. Shaheen Airport Services
- ii. ShaheenAerotraders
- iii. Shaheen Knitwear
- iv. Shaheen Complex, Karachi
- v. Shaheen Complex, Lahore
- vi. Shaheen Medical Services
- vii. Hawk Advertising
- viii. Fazaia Welfare Education School System
- ix. SAPS Aviation College
- x. Air Eagle Aviation Academy
- xi. Shaheen Welfare Housing Scheme, Peshawar.

d. Influence of Army on Law Enforcement agencies

The Pakistan Army has a significant influence on law enforcement agencies in Pakistan. The army has a say in the appointment of senior police officials, provides training to police officers, and even deploys troops to assist with law enforcement duties. This influence is due to a number of factors, including the army's history of involvement in law enforcement, its strong institutional culture, and its close relationship with the civilian government and it is from the record of the first information reports (FIRs) submitted before the Lahore High Court (LHC) on 22nd March, 2023 revealed that Punjab Police, Islamabad police and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) with others registered **130 FIRs** against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Ahmad Khan Nizai and other party leaders¹¹¹ on the behest of Establishment. Imran Khan has the most FIRs (First Information Reports) filed against him in Pakistan and the charges against Khan in the FIRs vary widely, but they mostly relate to corruption, misuse of power, and inciting violence, murder and attempt to murder.

e. Induction of Army in the Bureaucracy to control over the Governments

The Civil Servants Act, 1973, Chapter 3, deals with the induction of commissioned officers and other ranks recruited or inducted on regular or contract basis against any civil posts. Our army was allocated quota as a favor by General Zia-ul-Haq during his reign by amending the law through his puppet parliament. A 10% quota system for military is allocated for the top three groups in Civil Services of Pakistan, i.e. Police Service of Pakistan, Pakistan Administrative Service (former DMG) and Foreign Service of Pakistan¹¹². The serving commissioned officers of the three forces join civil bureaucracy without taking any kind of written examinations. This is also sheer injustice to the candidates who have to burn midnight oil even to pass the examinations. In the beginning (when this wicked law was passed), the army inductees were given last positions in the seniority list. When Zia came to know about this, he added icing to the cake by passing a law in which the army inductees were given topmost slots in the seniority list. They were given marks equal to the top scorer of the group they had joined. This infringes upon the merits of this examination. Therefore, on the top seats in all four provinces, the Army

¹¹⁰ Shaheen Foundation. (Year of retrieval, Month Day). Overview. Retrieved from <https://www.shaheenfoundation.com/overview.php>

¹¹¹ Pakistan Today. (2023, March 22). Over 100 FIRs registered against Imran Khan and PTI, LHC told. Pakistan Today. <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2023/03/22/over-100-firs-registered-against-imran-khan-and-pti-lhc-told/>

¹¹² Awan, I. (2012, October 19). Army quota in CSS. DAWN.COM. <https://www.dawn.com/news/757821/army-quota-in-css-2>

Officials are being seated to control over the provincial as well as federal government. Further, hundreds out of these Officials posted in foreign missions in different countries.

f. Army control on civil posts appointments

The Pakistan Army does not have direct control over civil posts appointments through commissions. However, the army does have a significant influence over the appointment process through its representation on various Public Service Commission's as scene below.

i. Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC)

Captain(R) Zahid Saeed, served on the post of Chairman Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC)¹¹³ and as tendered his resignation after serving from 22-12-2020 to 16-12-2022.

ii. Punjab Public Service Commission (PPSC)

Lieutenant General (Retired) Malik Zafar Iqbal is a retired Pakistani Army officer who served as the Chairman of the Punjab Public Service Commission (PPSC)¹¹⁴.

iii. Azad Jammu & Kashmir Public Service Commission (AJKPSC)

Air Marshal Masood Akhtar (Rtd.), the current Chairman of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (AJKPSC)¹¹⁵.

The army's influence over the appointment process for civil posts is not limited to its representation on Public Service Commissions. The army also has a number of retired officers who are appointed to key positions in the civil service, such as secretaries to the government and heads of departments. These retired officers often continue to act as informal advisors to the civilian government, and they can use their influence to promote the interests of the army.

g. Army influence over Judiciary

On 9 March 2007, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, 20th Chief Justice of Pakistan Chaudhry was suspended by General Pervez Musharraf. Chaudhry was summoned to Army House and was asked to resign in presence of five Army Generals, including heads of Intelligence Services. Chaudhry refused to resign so Musharraf decided to file a Presidential Reference against Chaudhry for misconduct. Upon Chaudhry's refusal to resign, Musharraf forwarded the case to Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) as per procedure in constitution of Pakistan. Justice QaziFaez Isa, A senior Supreme Court judge in Pakistan's top court is facing possible legal action after delivering a landmark ruling that criticized the role of the country's powerful military in an anti-government protest in 2017¹¹⁶. It was also alleged by Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui, Judge, Islamabad High Court that ISI officials were manipulating judicial proceedings in courts, however, Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar has taken serious notice of a speech delivered by Justice Shaukat¹¹⁷. It is also alleged that Pakistan Army has a significant influence on the appointment of judges in Pakistan. The army has a number of retired officers who are appointed to key positions to often continue to act as informal advisors to the civilian government, and they can use their influence to promote the interests of the army.

14. DISCUSSION

Pakistan's political instability, which led to the termination of Imran Ahmad Khan Niazi's government and the subsequent constitutional crisis, can be attributed to deep-seated socio-political divisions and the historical role of military interventions. The diverse population, with varying ethnic, linguistic, and regional identities, often leads to competing interests and demands. These divisions, combined with weak democratic institutions, create a fertile ground for political instability. The lack of consensus among different factions and failure to address marginalized groups' concerns can lead to widespread discontent and upheaval, ultimately resulting in the termination of elected governments. The military's influence in politics, coupled with weak civilian leadership, has created an imbalance of power and hindered the consolidation of democratic norms and institutions. The interference of the military in political affairs has often resulted in the dismissal or overthrow of elected governments, leading to constitutional crises and a cycle of political instability. To address these root causes, efforts must be made to foster national unity, promote inclusivity, and strengthen democratic institutions. A more inclusive and accountable political system that respects the rule of law and ensures civilian supremacy is crucial for a stable and resilient democracy in Pakistan.

¹¹³ Zahid Saeed. (2019). Capt (R) Zahid Saeed (BS-22). Retrieved from [https://establishment.gov.pk/userfiles1/file/Capt%20\(R\)%20Zahid%20Saeed-\(BS-22\).pdf](https://establishment.gov.pk/userfiles1/file/Capt%20(R)%20Zahid%20Saeed-(BS-22).pdf)

¹¹⁴ Malik Zafar Iqbal. (2021). Malik Zafar Iqbal appointed as Chairman Punjab Public Service Commission. Business Recorder. Retrieved from <https://www.brecorder.com/news/40061460>

¹¹⁵ The Newspaper's Staff Correspondent. (2020, May 9). AJK's new PSC chairman takes oath. Dawn. Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1555663>

¹¹⁶ Court Verdict Rebuking Pakistan Army's 'Political Activities' in Spotlight as Chief Justice Hears Appeals retrieved from Arab News [Accessed December 12, 2023]. <https://www.arabnews.pk/node/2382166/pakistan>

¹¹⁷ "Army seeks SC probe into IHC judge's allegations." The Express Tribune, [Accessed on 12-12-2023]. [URL: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1764166/army-asks-top-court-initiate-probe-allegations-levelled-justice-siddiqui>]

15. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The Pakistani military has been a significant force in Pakistani politics since 1947, often backing and removing civilian governments. Imran Khan Niazi's relationship with the military was initially cordial, but soured due to his populist rhetoric and attempts to assert independence. The military's role in Khan's ouster is unclear, with some analysts suggesting it engineered his removal or allowed the opposition to succeed in its no-confidence vote. The United States, a significant player in Pakistani politics, has provided billions of dollars in military and economic aid to Pakistan. Khan's relationship with the US was strained, as he was critical of the US-led war in Afghanistan and drone strikes in Pakistan. While the US government did not openly support or oppose Khan's ouster, some analysts believe it may have tacitly encouraged his removal. The United States has a long history of involvement in Pakistan's domestic affairs, including influence on the appointment of the army chief, the appointment of judges, and investment in Pakistani media. The Pakistani government has generally been reluctant to criticize the United States for its involvement in Pakistan's domestic affairs, as Pakistan relies on the United States for military and economic assistance. However, there are several events that discuss the involvement of America in Pakistan's domestic affairs, such as military assistance, economic assistance, diplomacy, and intelligence sharing. The United States has been accused of interfering in the appointment of top military officials and judges on several occasions. The Pakistani military has a long history of influencing and controlling various aspects of Pakistan's politics, economy, law enforcement agencies, bureaucracy, civil posts appointments, and judiciary. It has intervened in Pakistani politics on several occasions, including in 1958, 1977, and 1999. The military has a significant presence in the Pakistani economy, owning and operating businesses such as the Pakistan Ordnance Factories, the National Logistics Cell, and the Fauji Foundation. The military has a strong influence over the Pakistani police and other law enforcement agencies, providing training and equipment to the force and often taking over security operations during crises. The military also has a significant presence in the Pakistani bureaucracy, with retired military officers in senior positions such as cabinet secretary, foreign secretary, and interior secretary. The military has a significant influence over the appointment of civil servants to key positions, often recommending candidates and blocking those not seen as friendly to the military. The military has a long history of influencing the Pakistani judiciary, appointing retired military officers to key positions and interfering in judicial cases that are seen as being critical of the military. The 2022-2023 constitutional crisis in Pakistan was caused by a combination of factors, including political, economic, and social problems. A critical study found that the military played a significant role in the crisis, both through its overt actions and implicit support for the opposition parties. The crisis highlighted deep divisions within Pakistani society and the challenges facing Pakistani democracy. The military's role in the crisis also raised questions about the ability of civilian governments to govern effectively. The military's role in the crisis showed that it is still willing to intervene in politics when it feels threatened, raising questions about the ability of civilian governments to make decisions without the military's approval.

16. ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1) What were the key events that led to the constitutional crisis in Pakistan?

The political and constitutional crisis in Pakistan has been shaped by a series of key events that have unfolded over time. These events have had significant implications for the stability, governance, and democratic processes within the country. One of the major factors contributing to these crises is disputes over elections. Allegations of electoral rigging or irregularities have sparked protests and political unrest, leading to demands for electoral reforms and calls for transparent, free, and fair elections. Such controversies often create a sense of mistrust among different political parties and undermine the legitimacy of elected governments. Political instability has also played a crucial role in triggering these crises. Power struggles between various political parties or factions within the government can lead to leadership changes through resignations or dismissals. These internal conflicts weaken governance structures, disrupt policy implementation processes, and hinder effective decision-making. Judicial interventions have further compounded these challenges. Supreme Court rulings on matters related to executive authority or corruption cases can significantly impact political dynamics and legal frameworks. Conflicts between the judiciary and other branches of government often arise during such instances, creating further uncertainty about the separation of powers. In some cases, military interventions have disrupted civilian governments altogether. Periods of military rule or coups d'état resulting in martial law being imposed severely impact democratic processes and institutions in Pakistan. Corruption scandals involving politicians, bureaucrats, or public figures have contributed significantly to public outrage as they erode trust in governance systems. High-profile corruption cases trigger protests demanding accountability measures against those involved while calling for comprehensive reform initiatives. Social unrest and mass protest movements orchestrated by various actors such as political parties, civil society organizations, and youth groups also play a role in fueling political/constitutional crises. Such movements demand political change, governance reforms, and socioeconomic justice, citing grievances related to inequality, discrimination, and lack of representation. Ethnic or regional tensions add another layer to these crises when conflicts escalate into full-blown political crises demanding greater representation, equality, or solutions to ongoing issues related to ethnic discrimination or disparity. These key events collectively contribute to the political and constitutional crises in Pakistan. It is important for stakeholders within the country to address these underlying issues through dialogue, inclusivity, and comprehensive reforms to ensure long-term stability and effective governance.

Q2) What were the different perspectives on the crisis, from the government, the opposition, the media and the international observers?

The government of Imran Khan argued that the no-confidence motion against him was part of a foreign conspiracy to remove him from power. They alleged that the United States was involved in the conspiracy because they were unhappy with Khan's independent foreign policy. The government also argued that the Supreme Court's decision to overturn the dissolution of the National Assembly was a "**judicial coup**". The opposition parties argued that the no-confidence motion was a legitimate attempt to remove a Prime Minister who had lost the confidence of the majority of the National Assembly. They denied that there was any foreign conspiracy and accused the government of trying to divert attention from its own failures. The opposition also welcomed the Supreme Court's decision to overturn the dissolution of the National Assembly, calling it a victory for democracy. The Pakistani media

was divided in its coverage of the crisis. Some outlets were sympathetic to the government, while others were more critical. However, most outlets agreed that the crisis was a major setback for Pakistan's democracy. The crisis has also had a significant impact on the relationship between the government and the media. The government has accused the media of being biased against it and of spreading "fake news". The media has responded by accusing the government of trying to muzzle dissent and of suppressing freedom of expression. The crisis has also raised questions about the role of the military in politics. The military has traditionally played a significant role in Pakistani politics, and some analysts believe that it may have been involved in the crisis. However, the military has denied any involvement and has said that it respects the constitution. The crisis in Pakistan is a complex and multifaceted issue. There are a variety of perspectives on the crisis, and it is important to consider all of these perspectives in order to understand the full picture.

Q3) What are the different perspectives on the crisis among international observers?

Some observers have welcomed the Supreme Court's decision to overturn the dissolution of the National Assembly, calling it a victory for democracy. They argue that the court's decision was necessary to uphold the constitution and to prevent Khan from subverting the democratic process. Other observers have expressed concerns about the role of the military in the crisis. They argue that the military may have played a role in Khan's ouster and that this could have a negative impact on Pakistan's democracy. Still other observers have questioned the legitimacy of Khan's government. They argue that Khan's government was elected on a platform of "change" and that it has failed to deliver on its promises. They also argue that Khan's government has been plagued by corruption and mismanagement. Some observers have also expressed concerns about the impact of the crisis on Pakistan's economy. They argue that the crisis has created uncertainty and instability, which could have a negative impact on investment and growth. The crisis in Pakistan is a complex and multifaceted issue. There are a variety of perspectives on the crisis, and it is important to consider all of these perspectives in order to understand the full picture. However, without prejudice, it is clear that when someone invests in billions to you then it is understandable that they have some serious interest and you should have to follow the orders, that is the logic and Imran Khans's version against America's illegal drone strikes and involvement led the crises began.

India:

Cautious diplomacy: India, wary of escalating tensions, adopted a cautious approach (BBC News, 2023). It called for democratic processes and stability while maintaining backchannel communication (The Hindu, 2023). This was seen as lacking clarity by some, potentially emboldening Khan's "foreign interference" narrative (Dawn, 2023).

Security concerns: India expressed anxieties about the crisis's regional security implications, particularly cross-border terrorism (The Indian Express, 2023). This historical baggage colored its perception and engagement (The Diplomat, 2023).

Russia:

Emphasis on stability: Russia, with its own history of turmoil, prioritized stability (Al Jazeera, 2023). It refrained from criticizing internal developments, emphasizing respecting Pakistan's sovereignty and legal resolution (TASS, 2023). This resonated with those seeking a non-Western approach (Geo News, 2023).

Geopolitical calculations: Russia's longstanding ties with Pakistan and its growing partnership with China likely influenced its cautiousness (Reuters, 2023). The potential for further US influence in Pakistan was likely a concern (The Moscow Times, 2023).

Turkey:

Strong support for Khan: Turkey, under Erdogan, expressed strong support for Khan, mirroring his anti-Western rhetoric and portraying the crisis as a Western conspiracy (TRT World, 2023). This aligned with Khan's narrative but risked further division and isolation (Hurriyet Daily News, 2023).

Brotherhood interests: Turkey's historical and cultural ties with Pakistan, coupled with their shared concerns about Western influence and Palestinian rights, likely fueled its vocal stance (Anadolu Agency, 2023).

China:

Measured response: China, a close economic and strategic partner, maintained a measured approach, calling for dialogue and respecting Pakistan's internal affairs (Xinhua News, 2023). This reflected its cautious regional approach and non-interference policy (South China Morning Post, 2023).

Strategic interests: China's massive investments in Pakistan, particularly the CPEC corridor, and its strategic partnership against India likely shaped its stance (Financial Times, 2023). Stability in Pakistan is crucial for China's economic and strategic interests (The Global Times, 2023).

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates:

Financial support: Both provided financial support and cautiously engaged with both sides (Arab News, 2023). This reflected their interest in maintaining stability and preventing regional turmoil (Khaleej Times, 2023).

Regional interests: The internal power struggles within these monarchies and their complex relationships with other regional players, including Iran and Israel, likely influenced their cautiousness (BBC Arabic, 2023).

United States of America:

Ambivalent approach: The US faced a dilemma. It supported democratic processes and rule of law, raising concerns about Khan's actions and alleged foreign interference (CNN, 2023), but also desired stability and counter-terrorism cooperation (The Washington Post, 2023). This ambivalence was criticized as lacking clarity and potentially emboldening Khan (The New York Times, 2023).

Competing interests: The US has long struggled to balance security interests with democracy and human rights commitments (Council on Foreign Relations, 2023). This internal conflict became even more evident during the crisis (Foreign Policy, 2023).

The international response was a tapestry of diverse perspectives, reflecting complex calculations, historical baggage, and individual country interests. While some emphasized stability and non-interference, others voiced concerns about democratic backsliding and foreign influence. Understanding these diverse viewpoints is crucial for deciphering the global implications of the crisis and Pakistan's future trajectory. As Pakistan moves forward, it must actively engage with these international actors, addressing their concerns, fostering trust, and charting a course that secures both stability and democratic progress. Only through open dialogue, mutual respect, and a commitment to shared values can Pakistan build a resilient democracy and ensure its place in the international community.

Q4) How did the crisis impact the country's political, economic, and social stability?

The crisis has led to increased political polarization and has eroded public trust in the country's political institutions. For example, a poll conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2022 found that only 38% of Pakistanis believe that democracy is working well in the country. The crisis has had a negative impact on the country's economy. For example, the Pakistani rupee has lost about 50% of its value against the US dollar since the crisis began. This has made it more expensive for Pakistanis to import goods and services, and has led to inflation. The crisis has led to increased tensions between different political and social groups. For example, there have been several violent clashes between supporters of Imran Khan and supporters of the new government. This has made it more difficult for the government to maintain law and order.

Q5) What are the long-term implications of the crisis for Pakistan's democracy?

The constitutional crisis in Pakistan has had significant long-term implications for the country's democracy. Negative consequences include the erosion of public trust, deepening polarization due to legal ambiguities surrounding the no-confidence vote and the military's role, weakening democratic processes, and increasing military influence. On the positive side, the crisis may serve as a wake-up call for serious discussions and reforms to strengthen democratic institutions, address legal ambiguities, and improve transparency and accountability. This could lead to a more robust and resilient democracy in the long run. Civil society engagement may have increased, leading to a more vibrant and participatory democracy. The crisis may also highlight the need for inclusive dialogue and bridge-building across political divides, leading to a more cohesive national identity and a stronger sense of shared purpose. International scrutiny on the crisis may put pressure on Pakistan's government to uphold democratic norms and respect human rights, leading to a more accountable and responsive government in the long run. The long-term implications of the crisis will depend on how Pakistan responds. If the government prioritizes reforms, strengthens institutions, and fosters dialogue, the crisis could be a catalyst for a stronger democracy. However, if the government fails to address the underlying issues, the crisis could lead to further instability and democratic backsliding. By closely examining these potential implications, we can contribute to shaping a brighter democratic future for Pakistan.

Q6) How did the military and other state institutions play a role in the crisis?

The military and other state institutions in Pakistan's constitutional crisis were a complex and multifaceted entity. The military maintained neutrality during the vote, but its influence fueled accusations of "selection" rather than "election" and deepened divisions. Internal divisions within the military led to differing opinions and power struggles, causing uncertainty and volatility. The military's intervention prevented further chaos but raised concerns about its long-term influence on civilian politics and the future of Pakistani democracy. The judiciary played a crucial role in interpreting the vote's constitutionality and ordering Khan's release, but some criticized its rulings as politically motivated, further eroding public trust. The civil bureaucracy, traditionally seen as close to the military establishment, likely played a part in implementing decisions during the crisis, but its exact role and level of autonomy remain unclear. The crisis exposed the intricate relationship between the military and other state institutions, highlighting their continued influence on Pakistani politics despite transitions to democracy. Further investigation is needed to analyze internal dynamics, power struggles, and the effectiveness of civilian oversight mechanisms.

Q7) What was the role of foreign powers in the inside politics of Pakistan and how did the crisis affect Pakistan's relations with other countries?

The recent constitutional crisis in Pakistan has exposed the complex interplay between internal political dynamics and foreign influences, particularly from the United States. The US-Pakistan alliance faced significant test in recent years, with differing priorities and lack of trust causing uncertainty. The US adopted a cautious approach during the crisis, advocating for democratic processes and rule of law while maintaining backchannel communication with both sides. Neighboring countries like China and Saudi Arabia engaged with both sides while offering economic and diplomatic support, highlighting their growing influence in the region and potential role in shaping Pakistan's future. The crisis put Pakistan under intense international scrutiny, raising concerns about democratic backsliding, human rights, and the potential for further instability. This could impact Pakistan's access to foreign aid, trade deals, and international investment. The crisis likely reinforced anti-Western sentiments in Pakistan, making it harder for future governments to openly engage with the US and other Western powers. Pakistan may seek to diversify its foreign partnerships, potentially leaning more towards China and other regional actors who offer different political and economic models. Future foreign engagement with Pakistan is likely tied to conditions such as democratic reforms, respect for human rights, and transparency in decision-making. Understanding the role of foreign powers and the crisis's impact on Pakistan's

international relations requires continued analysis, including examining the nature and extent of foreign interference, evaluating Pakistan's foreign policy effectiveness, and assessing the long-term implications for regional stability and the global balance of power.

Q8) What lessons can be drawn from Pakistan's history of constitutional crises to inform the development of more resilient and sustainable democratic institutions in the future?

Pakistan's history is rich in constitutional crises, each offering valuable lessons for building stronger democratic institutions. The recent 2023 events can offer insights into these lessons.

Lesson 1: Strengthening Civilian Supremacy: The military's perceived influence in the recent crisis underscores the need for clear boundaries and civilian control over the armed forces. Civilian oversight mechanisms should be strengthened, and the military's political role should be strictly defined and limited to national security matters. Emphasizing democratic values, promoting civil-military dialogue, and fostering a culture of civilian leadership are crucial.

Lesson 2: Addressing Legal Ambiguities: The unclear legal interpretations surrounding the no-confidence vote exposed vulnerabilities in Pakistan's constitution. A comprehensive review and reform process are necessary to ensure clarity and consistency in the application of laws. Strengthening judicial independence, promoting legal education, and fostering a culture of respect for the rule of law are key.

Lesson 3: Fostering Inclusive Institutions: The recent crisis highlighted the marginalization of certain groups and the need for representation and participation of diverse voices in decision-making processes. Institutional reforms should aim to promote inclusivity, address systemic inequalities, and empower marginalized communities.

Lesson 4: Promoting Political Tolerance and Dialogue: The deep polarization witnessed during the crisis underscores the need to cultivate a culture of political tolerance and compromise. Open dialogue, respect for dissenting voices, and mechanisms for conflict resolution are essential.

Lesson 5: Ensuring Economic Stability and Social Justice: The recent crisis was partly fueled by economic anxieties. Prioritizing social justice, improving education and healthcare, and empowering youth are critical for building a strong democratic foundation.

Pakistan must commit to democratic values and strengthen its institutions through a national commitment from all stakeholders. Regular review and adaptation of these institutions are necessary to ensure they remain relevant and responsive to societal needs. Fostering a culture of civic engagement, critical thinking, and informed political participation is crucial for a vibrant and resilient democracy. By learning from past experiences and building upon them, Pakistan can chart a course towards a more stable and sustainable democratic future, requiring collective effort, a willingness to confront challenges, and a commitment to democracy in practice.

17. CONCLUSION

This research paper delved into the historical roots of Pakistan's political turmoil, examining the multifaceted factors that have undermined the stability and legitimacy of elected governments. The study revealed that Pakistan's political instability is deeply rooted in its colonial past, characterized by a weak democratic tradition, a strong military presence, and deep-seated socioeconomic inequalities that led to constitutional crises in the country. These factors have contributed to a cycle of coups, political assassinations, and periods of martial law, hindering the establishment of a stable and functioning democracy. Military coups have undermined civilian rule and fueled political uncertainty. On the other hand, Socio-economic challenges like poverty, inequality, and corruption have fueled public discontent and exacerbated political instability. The failure of successive governments to address these issues has created disillusionment among the populace, making them more susceptible to populist rhetoric and extremist ideologies. The ouster of Imran Khan Niazi as Prime Minister of Pakistan in April 2022 was a watershed moment in the country's political history, marking the culmination of a complex interplay of factors that have contributed to Pakistan's chronic political instability.

18. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended a number of reforms, including the strengthening of civilian institutions, the reduction of military and foreign influence in Pakistan politics, and the reform of the electoral system. These are just some of the recommendations that could help to avoid political/constitutional crisis in Pakistan. It is important to note that there is no single solution that will guarantee stability. However, by taking steps to strengthen democratic institutions, promote tolerance and respect for diversity, address economic inequality, reduce corruption, and promote peace and stability in the region, Pakistan can reduce the risk of political/constitutional crisis. It is important to note that these are just some recommendations, and there is no guarantee that they will be successful. However, by taking these steps, Pakistan can reduce the risk of American influence in its domestic affairs. It is important to note that these are just some recommendations, and there is no guarantee that they will be successful. However, by taking these steps, Pakistan can reduce the role of the army in political affairs and strengthen its democracy.

Strengthen institutions: Pakistan's democratic institutions, such as the parliament, the judiciary, and the media, need to be strengthened to ensure that they are able to function independently and effectively. This would help to prevent any one institution from becoming too powerful and abusing its authority. Strong democratic institutions, such as the parliament, the judiciary, and the military, can help to prevent the United States from interfering in domestic affairs. Pakistan can strengthen its democratic institutions by ensuring that they are independent and by providing them with the resources they need to function effectively.

Tolerance & respect for diversity: Pakistan is a diverse country with a variety of religious, ethnic, and political groups. It is important to promote tolerance and respect for diversity in order to prevent conflict and instability. This can be done through education, public awareness campaigns, and by encouraging interfaith dialogue.

Address economic inequality: Economic inequality is a major source of tension in Pakistan. It is important to address this issue by implementing policies that promote economic growth and social justice. This could include investing in education and healthcare, providing job training programs, and raising the minimum wage.

Reduce corruption: Corruption is a major problem in Pakistan. It undermines the rule of law and erodes public trust in government. It is important to reduce corruption by strengthening anti-corruption laws and institutions, and by holding corrupt officials accountable.

Promote peace and stability: Pakistan is located in a volatile region. It is important to promote peace and stability in the region in order to prevent spillover effects into Pakistan. This can be done through diplomacy, trade, and regional cooperation.

Reduce reliance on foreign aid: Pakistan is a recipient of significant foreign aid from the United States. This aid can be a source of influence for the United States, as it can be used to pressure Pakistan to adopt policies that are in line with US interests. Pakistan can reduce its reliance on foreign aid by increasing its own economic development and by diversifying its sources of aid.

Independent media: A free and independent media can help to hold the government accountable and to prevent the United States from interfering in domestic affairs. Pakistan can promote independent media by ensuring that there are no restrictions on freedom of speech and by providing financial support to independent media outlets.

Build a strong national identity: A strong national identity can help to unite the people of Pakistan and to resist foreign interference. Pakistan can build a strong national identity by promoting a shared history and culture, and by providing education and opportunities for all citizens.

Dialogue with the United States: Pakistan can engage in dialogue with the United States to discuss its concerns about American influence in its domestic affairs. This dialogue can help to build trust and understanding between the two countries, and to ensure that the United States respects Pakistan's sovereignty.

Promote democratic values: Democratic values, such as civilian supremacy, rule of law, and transparency, need to be promoted in order to reduce the role of the army in politics. This can be done through education, public awareness campaigns, and by encouraging civic participation.

Reduce military spending: Military spending is a major drain on Pakistan's economy. Reducing military spending would free up resources that could be used to strengthen civilian institutions and promote economic development.

Create a national security council: A national security council could be created to advise the government on security matters. This would help to ensure that the military is not the only institution that is involved in making security decisions.

Hold the military accountable: The military needs to be held accountable for its actions, both in terms of its human rights record and its political interference. This can be done through independent investigations and by ensuring that those who are responsible for abuses are brought to justice.

19. IMPLICATION OF THE RESEARCH

This research study on the factors behind Imran Khan's ouster and the subsequent constitutional crisis in Pakistan paints a complex picture with far-reaching implications. Here are some key takeaways:

Erosion of Public Trust:

The research highlights how Khan's perceived economic mismanagement, broken promises, and accusations of foreign interference eroded public trust in his government. This narrative of "selection" over "election" fueled instability and paved the way for his downfall.

Intra-Elite Power Struggles:

Studies reveal bitter power struggles between Khan's PTI and traditional elites, crippling his ability to govern effectively and creating fertile ground for dissent. This dynamic exposed deep fractures within the political system and the challenges of forging consensus.

Legal Ambiguities and Constitutional Fallout:

The research sheds light on the legal ambiguities surrounding the no-confidence vote and Khan's actions, raising concerns about potential violations of the constitution and the rule of law. This episode exposed vulnerabilities in Pakistan's democratic institutions and highlighted the need for legal reforms.

Historical Echoes and Regional Dynamics:

Comparisons are drawn between Khan's fall and past periods of political turmoil in Pakistan, revealing recurring patterns and missed opportunities for learning. Additionally, the research analyzes the role of regional powers and their potential influence on the events, emphasizing the complex interplay of internal and external factors.

Long-Term Challenges and Uncertain Future:

While the research offers diverse perspectives and recommendations for reform, it also acknowledges the uncertainty surrounding Pakistan's future trajectory. The potential long-term consequences include further polarization, weakened democratic institutions, and regional instability.

Implications for Pakistan's Future:

The research underscores the vital need to address the underlying causes of instability, including:

- Strengthening public trust through transparent governance and delivery of promised reforms.
- Fostering a more inclusive political culture, bridging elite divisions, and promoting dialogue.
- Addressing legal ambiguities and ensuring the rule of law through constitutional reforms.
- Engaging in critical self-reflection to learn from historical mistakes and avoid their repetition.

Implications for the International Community:

- The research calls for a nuanced understanding of Pakistan's internal dynamics and a move away from simplified narratives.
- It emphasizes the importance of supporting Pakistan's democratic transition while respecting its sovereignty and agency.
- It encourages international stakeholders to engage constructively with Pakistan's reform efforts and promote regional stability.

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