

# The far-reaching effects of political instability in Pakistan

## Outline:

### 1. Introduction

#### Thesis statement:

Political instability is the hazard that halts smooth running of governance and enforcement of law and authority in a country. In Pakistan, it is posing several far-reaching effects in almost every field of life. However, a stable political system is helpful to mitigate these effects and attain progress in Pakistan.

### 2. Historical drawbacks of political instability in Pakistan

### 3. Causes of political instability in Pakistan

- Lack of Democratic culture
- Politicization of departments
- Effects of international political polarisation

### 4. Far-reaching effects of political instability

- Poor nurturing of democracy
- Hurdles in good governance
- Disharmony between center and provinces
- Unstable political stance in international arena
- Trust deficit among domestic and foreign investors cause economic loss
- Economic lapse due to ~~artificial price control~~ <sup>political point scoring</sup>
- Lack of long term project
- Re-emergence of terrorism activities
- Social evils due to lack of attention
- Buoden on military to overcome inefficiency of civilian government.

### 5. How to tackle <sup>effects of</sup> political instability

- By introducing true democracy
- By placing proper check and balances

c) By adopting national interest based policies  
instead to join any ~~block~~ political bloc  
international

b. conclusion

"Pakistan Future viability, stability and security lie in empowering its people and building political institutions" (Benazir Bhutto). These lines of Benazir Bhutto highlights the importance of people representation and strong political institutions for the development of Pakistan. Because these two things leads towards stable political environment which is necessary for continuous progress of a country. Unfortunately, in case of Pakistan these two things can not flourish significantly due to which Pakistan is facing Political instability. The main reasons of this political instability are lack of democratic culture, politicization of departments and effects of international political polarization. This environment of political instability is causing far-reaching political, economic, social and strategic effects on Pakistan. Some political effects are poor nurturing of democracy, hurdles in good governance, disharmony between center and provinces and lack of long term policies. Moreover, due to disharmony within the country causes unstable political stance in international political arena. All these political effects poses negative shadow on economy due to their interdependence. ~~and lead towards~~ some economic effects due to political instability are trust deficit among domestic and foreign investors, economic loose due to artificial price control and overspending to tackle law and order situation. In addition to this, due to political instability government attention diverts from social evils and evils like terrorism and corruption find space for their re-emergence. All this ultimately put burden on armed forces and

compel them to help civilian government. Political instability can be tackled by introducing true democracy, placing checks and balances and adopting national interest government policies. In a nutshell political instability in Pakistan is posing several negative effects in almost every field of life. It is the hazard that halts smooth running of governance and enforcement of law and authority in a country. However, a stable political system is helpful to mitigate these effects and attain the progress <sup>in</sup> of Pakistan.

Pakistan was created on the name of Islam and according to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, "Democracy is in the blood of the Muslims." <sup>However,</sup> After the death of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan, there was no leader which could develop strong political institutions. Therefore, political leaders started to use politics for their personal gains which resulted in political turmoil in Pakistan. This political turmoil led towards the separation of Bangladesh (East Pakistan). Moreover, due to this political instability Pakistan also witnessed martial laws which was the complete failures of civil governments. By taking into account the tenures of Pakistani regimes from 1947 to 2022, it is obvious that due to political disparity the country's economic growth remained low, corruption increased and unemployment and low production were witnessed.

There are multiple reasons behind political instability in Pakistan, but chief among them is lack of democratic culture. In true democratic culture, parliament has extreme superiority. Both government and opposition act as the representative of the people and work in collaboration. This factor is missing in case of Pakistan. In Pakistan, opposition instead to criticise government policies in parliament, likes to stage ~~their~~ its protest on roads. This lack of cooperation between government and opposition leads towards political instability in Pakistan. For example, the PTI government was removed from office with vote of no confidence in April, 2022. Resultantly instead to sit in opposition Pakistan Tehreek Insaf decided to initiate protests on roads which is causing political turmoil throughout Pakistan. Hence lack of democratic culture is the major cause behind political instability in Pakistan.

Along with lack of democratic culture politicization ~~also~~ of departments also effects political stability in Pakistan. The politicians use government department to suppress their opponents so they can not criticise their policies. Police, NAB, FIA and ANF are widely used to register cases on opposition leaders. This suppression compels opposition to stage protests against government which leads towards political unrest. One of the many examples of politicization of departments is that, during former governments four years tenure nine Inspector general of Punjab police was changed due to political clashes. Therefore, political involvement in government departments leads toward political instability in Pakistan.

Unnecessary political involvement in government institution makes them weak and these institutions can not tackle effects of polarization in international politics. These effect of polarization in international politics create division among politician within the country. In Pakistan, initially this division was due to pro-USA and pro-Russian poles. Now, ~~the~~ Competition between China and United States of America is causing this division. The so called cyber conspiracy is the clear example of this. In which, former prime minister Imran Khan alleged United States involvement in removal of his government. This claim on one hand caused bitter relation between Pakistan and United States and on other hand created a division between government and opposition and resulted in political instability in Pakistan. Hence effect of polarization in international politics directly effect political stability in Pakistan.

Political instability caused by these reasons is resulting several far-reaching effects in Pakistan chief among them is poor nurturing of democracy. The founder of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah was the staunch advocate of Democracy, but after his death political instability prevailed in Pakistan ~~due to~~ which resulted in poor nurturing of democracy. Due to inefficient civilian leaders, military dictators ruled Pakistan for almost thirty three years, resultanty democracy can not find space for its nourishment. According to The Economist's new intelligence index, Democracy index 2021, Pakistan ranks 104th out of 167. This poor ranking indicates poor nurturing of democracy in Pakistan.

As democratic institutions in Pakistan can not develop sufficiently, so in case of political turmoil they face hurdles in good governance. Good governance requires strong bonding between government and its citizen, but due to unstable political environment government can not pay attention to its citizen due to which hurdles arises in good governance. Same is the case with Pakistan due to recently prevailing political tensions in the country the politicians are busy to tackle opposition party and unable to focus on people. According to the Legatum prosperity index 2021 report, Pakistan is 124th out of 167 in the ranking of good governance. This indicates that political turmoil in Pakistan is causing hurdles in good governance.

Along with poor governance this political destruction is also causing disharmony <sup>between</sup> ~~among~~ center and provinces. The reason is that after 18th amendment there is a provincial autonomy in Pakistan. Therefore, to keep center and province united a strong interaction is required between them, but in case of different parties' government, they do not like to interact with each other which leads toward disharmony between center and provinces. For example, Sindh and Balochistan government refused to implement single national curriculum because it was introduced by Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf and in Sindh and Balochistan PTI was not in government. In this way it can be witnessed that political instability is causing dent to the centre-provinces harmony in Pakistan which is very destructive for the progress of Pakistan.

Dis harmony within Pakistan is resulting unstable stance in international political arena. In international politics there is no sovereign entity which governs relations between the states. Therefore, all dealing is done on the basis of commitment, which requires a firm stance in dealings. Unfortunately, due to political disharmony Pakistan is unable to take a stable stance in international politics. For example in 2022, Pakistan committed to IMF for surplus budget, but Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government wrote a letter to centre and refused to give surplus budget. This shows that political unrest affect not only national politics ~~interests~~ but also international politics.

In addition to all these political ~~loss~~ effects, political instability also poses several economic effects in Pakistan. One of them is economic loose due to Trust deficit due to foreign and domestic investor. Due to political instability there is a continuous threat of fall of government, which causes trust deficit ~~bet~~ among domestic and foreign investors and they hesitate to invest in Pakistan. ~~and~~ The trust deficit prevailed because the investors are afraid of change in business policies due to change in government. According to board of investment the foreign direct investment in Pakistan in 2019-20 was \$2.5 bn while in 2021-22 it reduced to 1.86 bn due to political turmoil in Pakistan. By this it can be witnessed that political destruction causes trust deficit among investors which ultimately results in economic loose in Pakistan.



Trust deficit of investors causes economic loose which poses performance burden on government. To overcome this burden government introduced protective policies which results in economic loose due to ~~political point~~ ~~secoring~~, artificial price control. Being a developing country Pakistan has limited resources, in case of low investment balance of payment and current account deficit increases which compel government to intervene. Government use subsidies to artificially control inflation and poverty which results in more economic loose. According to ministry of finance 669 billion PKR is allocated for subsidies in 2022-23 budget statement. Hence, in this way political turmoil causes economic lose which poses far reaching effects on Pakistan.

Furthermore, unstable political environment causes lack of long term projects in Pakistan. The reason is that, due to high temperature in politics government ~~becomes~~ ~~afraids~~ ~~with~~ to lose power, therefore, to show its progress it prefers short term projects. Long term projects requires continus attention and a large amount of investment, but in unstable political environment government lacks in ~~these~~ pre-requisite, therefore, ~~the~~ it can not initiate these projects. For example after 1990s Pakistan can not construct large dams, but on the other hand India has constructed a large number of dam due to which now Pakistan is facing water shortage. In this way, political turmoil causes lack of long term projects which in long run poses several destructive effects on Pakistan and leads towards further unstable environment in the country.

In addition to these political and economic effect political instability also poses several social negative effects in Pakistan, one among them is re-emergence of terrorism activities. Due lack of strategic depth and hostile neighbourhood, Pakistan is more expose to proxy wars. These enemies use politically and economically deprived people to conduct terrorism activities in Pakistan. The political turmoil diverts government attention from these factors and they find space for their re-emergence. The recent bomb attacks in Balochistan and re-emergence of Tehreek Taliban Pakistan in Swat is the perfect example of nexus between political instability and terrorism. Therefore, political instability also cause re-emergence of terrorism.

This lack of attention also results in emergence of social evils in Pakistan. Political clashes keep government busy in retaliatory activities against opposition and government can not place proper check and balance on departments and its leaders. This results in increase of corruption, unemployment, gender based violence and many other things, which ultimately cast far reaching effect in the development of Pakistan. According to Transparency International, Pakistan is the 140 least corrupt nation out of 180 countries (2021 corruption perceptions Index). Hence social social development of a country is directly linked with political stability in the country.

All these social, political and economic effects results in failure of

of government to control this hostile environment due to which military power is compelled to come and help civilian government which results in more burden on armed forces. Pakistan army always remains busy due to volatile Eastern and Western border, but the failure of civilian government to maintain peace within the country places more burden on ~~the~~ Pakistan army. Along with border security Pakistan army has conducted multiple operations against terrorists within Pakistan. Zarb e azb, Rah e nijat and Zarb e ahan are examples of operations which Pakistan army has ~~initiated~~ conducted against terrorists. This illustrates that political instability along with civilian government also affects Pakistan army which is not good for the survival of Pakistan.

By all this discussion, it is clear that political instability is causing several far-reaching effects in Pakistan, ~~but~~ <sup>however,</sup> these effects can be mitigated by adopting pragmatic approach. There are multiple steps which can be helpful, but one of them is introducing true democracy. A true democratic culture is ~~an~~ essential for Pakistan because by strengthening democracy politicians' trust in parliament can be repaired. When politicians ~~to~~ start to use parliament instead of road protests, then there will be less political instability and ~~prosperity~~ <sup>unrest</sup> in the country. According to Noam Chomsky, "one of the benefits of a properly functioning democracy is minority right and majority rule". Hence, democracy provides maximum participation in the government functions due to which people's grievances can be addressed in parliament. ~~as~~ Resultantly a stable political

system can be achieved in Pakistan.

A true democracy also helps in placing proper checks and balances on government leaders and departments which ultimately helps to create a stable political system. In a properly functioning democracy politicians and ~~govt~~ heads of government departments are answerable to public, therefore, they can not act against the will of people. According to Steven Aftergood, "It's a 'trust me' response. That's not good enough anymore. There needs to be an external check and balance to restore confidence in the system." A system of check and balance will help Pakistanis to examine government policies and in case of poor performance people can punish government (through voting). Resultantly, there will be no need to come on roads which will ultimately help in political stability.

Furthermore, adoption of national interest based political stance in international politics will also help Pakistan to bring stability within the state. There is always a division between political parties about establishing relations with international powers like USA and China. By adopting self interest based policies Pakistan can avoid its tilt towards one power which will ultimately remove division within the country. India is the perfect example in this scenario which has equal relation with both USA and Russia. In this way Pakistan can also attain stability within the state and also in international politics.

In a nutshell, the political instability, caused by undemocratic culture and several other means, is causing political, economic, social and strategic effects in Pakistan. These effects are causing destruction in almost every field of life due to which the progress of Pakistan is very slow. Although it seems difficult to overcome these effects, but a pragmatic approach can be helpful to tackle these effect. Therefore, there is a dire need to introduce a democratic culture and place check and balance of government departments. In this way Pakistan can come out from these drawbacks of political instability.