

2. Elections are the only solution to the multi-pronged problems in Pakistan

1. Introduction

Thesis Statement: In these challenging times, Pakistan faces numerous problems for which free and fair election seems to be the only wise solution. Elections promotes stability and ends the political crisis ^{which also} increases the trust level of people in the government as it is necessary keeping in mind the ongoing situation of Pakistan.

2. The co-relation between elections and problems of Pakistan

3. How elections are the only solution to the problems of Pakistan

- a. Elections will end the on-going political instability
- b. It will help in making new deals and commitments with international organization
- c. A proper prolonged action would be taken against the rising militancy in Pakistan
- d. A new government with its policies and reforms would avert the current economic crisis
- e. Countries globally prefer engaging and making relations with elected governments only.

4. How election does not seem to be the only solution to the problems of Pakistan

- a. Political instability can also be ended in the caretaker set up if all parties end their differences
- b. International organizations give more importance to honouring deals and commitments whether they are new or old.
- c. Waiting to take an action due to elections would worsen the situation
- d. Policies can also be introduced in the caretaker setup

- e. Not necessary as many engagements and commitments have been made in the caretaker setup.
- f. Elections are not the solution but they are the only solution to the problems of Pakistan.
 - a) Most of the political uncertainty is due to ~~non~~ elections not taking place on time.
 - b) The new deals come up with prolonged conditions which can only be carried forward with elections.
 - c) If elections take place on time it would help disbursing funds to state agencies to fight military.
 - d) Policies can be introduced in the caretaker setup but their continuity only takes place in an elected setup.
 - e) Prolonged engagements are mostly done with elected governments.
- g) Conclusion

"If Pakistan was a person, he would be humorless, paranoid, insecure, eager to take offense and suffering from self-righteousness, self-pity and self-hatred" (Christopher Hitchens). This shows that our nation suffers from problems that are diverse yet very simple to solve and if these problems are ^{taken} seriously, Pakistan can reach its maximum potential. In these challenging times Pakistan faces numerous problems for which free and fair elections seem to be the only wise solution as elections promote stability, end political crisis and increase the trust level of people on the government as it is necessary keeping in mind the ongoing situation of Pakistan. Elections seem to be the only solution to the problems of Pakistan as elections will end the ongoing political instability, will help in making new deals and commitments with international organizations and elections would help in taking proper action against the rising military. However, elections sometimes do not seem to be the only solution as political instability is at the hands of political parties which they can solve anytime. Similarly, International organizations give more importance to commitments rather than giving importance to elections and if waiting to take an action against military would worsen the current situation. Nevertheless, elections are the only solution as the main political uncertainty exists due to elections not taking place. Moreover, the new deals come up with prolonged conditions which can only be carried forward by an elected government and if elections take place on time it would ensure continuity in disbursing funds to the forces to fight against military.

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The last elections took place in 2018 and soon afterwards a new government was formed which helped in solving problems of Pakistan of that time. Pakistan faces many problems including political, social and economic problems. According to the data of State Bank 2023, the total public debt has rose to 743% of GDP at the end of financial year 23 from 73.9% a year ago. The relation between problems of Pakistan and elections is that elections brings a government for the next five years and in these five years there can be a continuity in policies which helps in solving all major and minor problems of Pakistan.

Elections are the only solution to ^{the problems of} Pakistan as elections will end the ongoing political situation in Pakistan. The political crisis had started after the removal of Imran Khan from ~~the~~ premiership through vote of no confidence and since then elections had to be conducted to end the uncertainty. When elections are conducted it will end the instability as elections would show the true popularity of a political party and the support of people. The political uncertainty for example can be seen today and in the year of 2023, even in the coalition government of PDM and the demand of elections by every political party shows that elections would end the uncertainty. Therefore elections would end the political instability which is one of the major problems Pakistan faces today.

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Moreover, elections are also the only solution as elections will help in making new deals and commitments with international organization which are very crucial for Pakistan. Pakistan has signed many agreements with the International Monetary Fund, and have to sign many agreements in future too help avert the economic crisis. A new government through elections would sign and ensure disbursement of funds to Pakistan's exchequer. "Elections need to be taken place for smooth transition of payment by the IMF and too the IMF" (Malecha Lodhi, Democratic crisis, Aug 2023). Therefore, elections are the need of the hour.

Similarly, a proper action against the militants would be taken place if elections are conducted. Pakistan currently faces many attacks by the militants on the armed forces and even on the (militants) politicians of Pakistan. Elections taken place on time would ensure the authorization of a operation against the militants and also the disbursement of funds to fight militants. "Almost 1100 people including 365 security personnel, lost their lives to militant violence in the first nine months of the year and this can end with a proper operation launched against the militants" (Zahid Hussain, A surge in terrorists attacks, Oct 2023). Therefore, election taken place on time seems to be a major solution to this problem.

Additionally, a new government with its policies and reforms would avert the current economic crisis. Any policies being made in the caretaker setup cannot be deemed as permanent because the caretaker set up is (permanent) temporary and cannot avert the economic crisis in the longer term. For example, elections would form a new government and the new government would effectively utilize the resources of the state as they would want to win the next election as well. This would help our country to come out of the current economic turmoil. Hence, election is needed as a new government will introduce new policies and reforms that would help avert the economic crisis.

Likewise, countries globally prefer engaging and making relations with elected government only. The reason for this is that an elected government shows the will of people in the government and an elected government tenure is way longer than any temporary setup. Countries, including your neighbouring countries prefer to make an agreement with an elected government as it last longer. For example, the on-going caretaker set up has failed to make any prolonged commitments with other countries as their stay in the government is temporary. Therefore, only election is the solution as the elected government can enhance and improve relations with other countries of the world.

Nevertheless, those who think elections are the only solution, fail to realise that there are many problems of Pakistan that can be solved without an election for example political instability can also be ended in the caretaker setup if all parties end their differences. Political uncertainty exists because parties fail to reconcile their differences between themselves, if they solve their problems political uncertainty can end once and for all. "Political uncertainty exists because political parties have failed to solve ^{their} differences between themselves" (Hijaz A Nizamani, Political aggression Nov 2023). Hence, if political parties solve their differences between themselves, political instability can end.

Moreover, international organizations give more importance to honoring deals and commitments whether they are new or old. International Organizations like the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund, give more importance that the country honors its commitment and they are least concerned with who does it. For example, IMF has laid strong emphasis on fulfillment of terms and conditions and they are being done by the caretaker setup and afterwards will be done by the elected government. Therefore, what is important to them is that the terms and conditions of the agreement must be fulfilled, no matter who does it.

Similarly, waiting to take on action due to elections would worsen the current situation. The military is on the rise and elections are not the only thing that can solve it. The caretaker setup should authorize the forces to eliminate and dismantle the militants and the responsibility of this is on the armed forces as they have taken an oath to protect us and the boundaries of our nation. "The militants won't wait till the elections, they would continue to harm the state and all its functionaries" (Anwar-ul Haq Kakar). This shows that it is a serious problem and waiting for elections in this scenario will further exacerbate the situation.

Likewise, policies can also be introduced in the caretaker setup and those policies can be used to solve the multi-pronged problems of Pakistan. These policies can be carried forward by the elected government and this does not mean election is the only solution of it. For example, the reforms of strengthening borders and deporting Afghans took place in the caretaker setup. This resulted in mass deportation of Afghans from Pakistan as many of them were illegally residing and this brought our currency to become stable. Therefore, reforms and policies can also be introduced by the caretaker setup.

Additionally, it is not necessary that all the engagements are made by ^{the} elected government with other countries. Countries globally engage with other countries depending on the urgency of the situation and many countries have engaged and made agreements with the caretaker set up of Pakistan. For example, UAE, Saudi Arabia and China agreed to disburse funds to Pakistan against agreements. These agreements took place while the caretaker set up was in charge. Therefore, it is not necessary that all the engagements are made by the elected government with other countries.

However, elections seem to be the only solution to the problems of Pakistan as most of the political uncertainty is due to elections not taking place. Constitutionally, elections would have been taken place after 90 days when the assembly was dissolved but they did not take place and this increased political, economical and social instability. This can only be solved if elections are conducted on time without any delay. For example, political instability due to elections being not conducted decreased all foreign investments in the country as well as destroyed the economy of our country. Political crisis is interlinked and connected with many other issues and the elections being conducted is the only solution.

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Moreover, the new deals come up with prolonged conditions which can only be carried forward with elections. The deals and commitments with International Organizations involve several terms and conditions and those conditions have to be fulfilled slowly and gradually and this is only possible with an elected government in hand. "Elections are necessary for securing financial grants from the IMF as free and fair elections ^{is} ~~are~~ a condition expressed by the IMF" (Aminah Umar, Free Grants, Dec 2023). Hence, in order to make the economy stable and get access to new plans elections are necessary.

Similarly, if elections take place on time it would help disburse funds to state agencies to fight militancy. Elections bring in a government and that government gives funds to arm forces, agencies etc. and funds are necessary to fight any war. Elections would ensure smooth disbursement of funds without any delay to the armed forces and this would strengthen their morale to fight against the militants. For example, during Zarb-e-Azab smooth disbursement of funds played a crucial role in the success of the operation. Hence, elections are the only solution to the existing militancy in Pakistan.

Furthermore, policies can be introduced in the caretaker setup but continuity only takes place in an elected setup. Pakistan, due to inconsistency in its policies has wasted huge amounts of money as the coming government in order to benefit its political friends would dismantle all existing reforms and policies and introduce new ones. Pakistan has majorly failed economically because of lack of continuity in policies" (Maleeha Lodhi: Political Uprising, June 2023) This shows that continuity in policies is vital for ending problems of Pakistan and this can only take place in an elected setup.

Likewise, prolonged engagements are mostly done with elected governments as an elected government in Pakistan can stay up to five years after being elected. Countries who are looking for engagements that are longer and would take years to bear fruit are most likely to engage with an elected government as an elected government gives confidence to even investors that the country has a government that is chosen by the people. For example, if we look in the past, no caretaker ^{government} has set up new agreements with other countries as it exceeds its domain. This shows that it is ~~not~~ in the domain of elected governments to make agreements with other countries.



Conclusively, one may say that elections are the only solution to the multi-pronged problems in Pakistan as elections end the political crisis, elections help in making new deals and commitments with international organizations and with the help of an elected government a proper long operation can take place against the rising militancy of Pakistan. However elections does not seem to be the only solution to the problem of Pakistan as political instability can also be ended in the caretaker setup if all parties settle down their differences. ^{similarly,} International organizations give more importance to honouring deals and commitment whether they are old or new and waiting to take an action due to elections would worsen the situation. Nevertheless, some majority of times elections seems to be the only solution of Pakistan as political crisis exists due to elections being not taken place and the terms and agreements of the new deals and commitment can only be fulfilled by an elected government.