

## Pakistan Crisis Committee Background Guide

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### Committee History

Since Pakistan gained independence on August 14, 1947, the country has faced a plethora of administrative changes, economic challenges, and climate crises. Pakistan, a nation previously under British rule, emerged with a weak central government struggling with the balance of power under the leadership of the first Governor-General, Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Pakistan's decision to declare independence from India was rooted primarily in the religious divisions present among the people. The majority of citizens in Pakistan follow the religion of Islam, whereas Indian citizens primarily practice Hinduism. Though Pakistan was united as its own nation, it still faced elements of division within itself. The region of East Pakistan (modern-day Bangladesh) had a significant cultural and religious barrier with West Pakistan (the country's modern borders). The language barrier between East Pakistani (Bangla) and West Pakistan (Urdu) was the most noticeable of the many differences between their two countries. This caused East Pakistan to demand autonomy and break off to become its own independent state, which was accomplished after a long and brutal civil war. This war lasted for nine months before the Pakistani surrender, and millions of lives were lost on both sides. After this divide, the country worked towards creating a more democratic system, which involved creating a constitution. However, soon after these attempts, Iskander Mirza took control by force and shifted to a military government. Over time, the country slowly transitioned back to creating its present-day constitution in 1973.<sup>1</sup>

The federal cabinet of Pakistan was founded by Muhammad Ali Jinnah a day after the country's independence on August 15, 1947.<sup>2</sup> The cabinet's inaugural leader was Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, who governed a body of 6 other ministers (2 more were added shortly after). This committee worked to tackle the vast array of crises and difficulties that face a newly formed country and found a wealth of guidance from Governor-General Jinnah. Because of his support, the committee passed the "Objectives resolution" allowing Jinnah to help mitigate issues found by the provincial ministers. Mohammad Ali Jinnah always envisioned a democratic Pakistan, however, each of his successors struggled towards that goal. Instead, they focused on retaining their own personal power resulting in a history of political instability within their government. To this point, no prime minister of Pakistan has served their full five-year term, with the most recent example of this being Imran Khan who lost the confidence of the cabinet and was forced to step down earlier this year. Because of this, Pakistan's army has staged coups and maintained order for long durations of time during their history.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Pakistan." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., Accessed 24 September, 2023, [www.britannica.com/place/Pakistan](http://www.britannica.com/place/Pakistan).

<sup>2</sup> "First Cabinet (1947)." History Pak, 15 Mar. 2021, [historypak.com/first-cabinet-1947/](http://historypak.com/first-cabinet-1947/).

<sup>3</sup> Web Spider (pvt) Ltd, [www.webspider.pk](http://www.webspider.pk). "Liaquat Ali Khan: An Assessment." Hilal Publications, [www.hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/NzI3.htm](http://www.hilal.gov.pk/eng-article/detail/NzI3.htm). Accessed 25 Sept. 2023.

As we recollect in the modern day, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has been sworn in as the 32nd Prime Minister of Pakistan. Like the Prime Ministers before him, Kakar (the new caretaker PM) and his cabinet of now 18 Ministers will have to focus their efforts on finding sustainable solutions for the problems ahead of them while maintaining the power of the Pakistan government while the election process begins. Throughout the committee, the Cabinet Ministers will focus on tackling the issues Pakistan is currently facing as a nation. These conflicts are pressing, and Pakistan's future depends on correcting them. This cabinet aims to cross some of these hurdles by tackling the current issues Pakistan faces. Ultimately, deciding which way history will unfold, and answering the many questions Pakistan faces today.<sup>4</sup>

## Introduction

Pakistan is a country that has dealt with ethnic, sectarian, and political tensions for a large part of its history. Many times, these struggles have placed pressure on the country's social fabric.<sup>5</sup> Balancing regional issues and domestic stability, autonomy and representation are concerns in various provinces.

Creating economic growth while addressing inequality remains a key issue. Historical issues and limited resources require new policies.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, creating new policies and alliances in a complex geopolitical landscape requires diplomacy. This is important to manage relations with nearby countries, particularly India and Afghanistan.<sup>7</sup> Also, the changing threat of terrorism requires strategic solutions to ensure security and strength.<sup>8</sup> Simultaneously, extremism and radicalization require several-step approaches involving education, social outreach, and law enforcement.<sup>9</sup>

The Toshakhana case, a notable legal and political issue, sheds light on an additional layer of complexity. The Toshakhana, or state treasury, has been at the center of accusations relating to the acceptance of valuable gifts by government officials from foreign officials. These gifts were intended to strengthen diplomatic ties. However, they have raised questions about ethical conduct, financial transparency, and the integrity of government officials. The case further shows the challenge of addressing corruption within the government and the need for accountability. Solutions must ensure the ethical declarations of gifts and the proper payment of taxes.

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<sup>4</sup> "Pakistan: A Political History," *Asia Society*, Accessed September 25, 2023, [asiasociety.org/education/pakistan-political-history](http://asiasociety.org/education/pakistan-political-history).

<sup>5</sup> Stephen P Cohen, "Pakistan," In *Shooting for a Century: The India-Pakistan Conundrum*, 88–117, Brookings Institution Press, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7864/j.ctt4cg8gm.9>.

<sup>6</sup> Cohen, "Pakistan."

<sup>7</sup> Christian Wagner, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy between India and Afghanistan," *Sicherheit Und Frieden (S+F) / Security and Peace* 28, no. 4 (2010): 246–51, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24232772>.

<sup>8</sup> Syed Muhammad Ali Shah, "Pakistan and the War against Terrorism." *Pakistan Horizon* 60, no. 2 (2007): 85–107, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41500065>.

<sup>9</sup> Syed Muhammad Ali Shah, "Pakistan and the War against Terrorism."

Additionally, climate change is a new key challenge for Pakistan's sustainability and future development. Pakistan faces threats such as rising temperatures, changing rain patterns, and increased extreme weather events. These environmental changes deepen existing issues, particularly for marginalized communities.

Delegates will be responsible for handling the difficulties between economic growth, poverty reduction, and environmental stewardship. There will be a need to balance the nation's energy needs with sustainable practices along with investing in renewable energy sources. Policies to decrease the damages from climate-related risks will need to be implemented and are crucial steps towards securing Pakistan's future. By addressing these challenges, the committee can help Pakistan move toward a more sustainable and stronger future.

The region's geopolitical importance and the role of external powers also present difficult diplomatic dilemmas. Pakistan has had a historic alliance with the United States and economic partnership with China through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. These alliances add layers of complexity to foreign policy decisions.<sup>10</sup> With the world shifting its focus away from the Middle East to Europe and Asia, Pakistan must do the same with changing its international focus towards new developments in Asia. As the committee deliberates and responds to emerging crises, it is important to keep in mind the weight of Pakistan's history and the present challenges that face the country. The Pakistani Cabinet's mission is clear: to forge practical, forward-looking solutions that address both the historical and current issues that define Pakistan's narrative.

The committee holds the power to influence the course of the nation. This shows the potential for diplomacy to shape a more just, equitable, and peaceful future. Delegates will have the difficult task of dealing with challenges that have shaped Pakistan's identity.

## **Current Status**

### **The Toshakhana Case**

Imran Khan's rise to politics was unique and has contributed greatly to Pakistani culture. His success in cricket helped him increase his popularity. This popularity allowed him to transition to politics by creating his own political party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).<sup>11</sup> His conversion to a conservative form of Islam led to thousands of supporters who voted him into the Prime Minister's office. When elected Prime Minister in 2018, Khan's plans included stricter measures to limit corruption. Despite doubts surrounding his election and its legitimacy, he was truly the face of the nation.

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<sup>10</sup> Paul J Smith, "The China—Pakistan—United States Strategic Triangle: From Cold War to the 'War on Terrorism,'" *Asian Affairs* 38, no. 4 (2011): 197–220, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23526520>.

<sup>11</sup> Melissa, Albert, "Imran Khan | Biography, Pakistan, Cricketer, & Prime Minister." Britannica, Accessed August 9, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Imran-Khan>

As Prime Minister, Khan oversaw crucial action to improve Pakistan's economic crisis.<sup>12</sup> Due to a lack of faith in Pakistan's terrorism crackdown, the US withheld USD 300 million. As a result, Khan looked for investments from China and submitted emergency requests to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).<sup>13</sup> Moreover, Khan conducted major crackdowns on militants in Pakistan, shutting down religious schools and bringing the Taliban into negotiations with the US.

Relations with India also seemed to improve. After Pakistan shot down an Indian fighter jet in Pakistani airspace, the pilot was returned two days later. Khan called this "a peace gesture."<sup>14</sup>

Despite much reform, Khan's opponents tried to have him removed. His slow response to the COVID-19 pandemic, opting for the provinces to create provincial lockdowns instead of a national one, increased calls for his removal.<sup>15</sup> In late 2020, protests organized by his opposition called for more independent civilian governments, freed from the grasp of the military.<sup>16</sup> These protests accused Khan of being a puppet to the military, and for rejecting reform. Eventually, Khan lost the support of the military after a failed attempt to influence the top positions of leadership. This was seen as the end for Khan in the eyes of citizens and his opposition. On April 10, 2022, following numerous members of his party defecting and losing support of key members of his own party, Khan was ousted from power. He was the first Pakistani Prime Minister to lose a vote of confidence.<sup>17</sup>

After being removed from power, Khan turned to his voter base to maintain his political relevance. Declaring the US to be behind his removal from power, Khan began the first of many "long marches" throughout Pakistan.<sup>18</sup> His words seemed to have motivated the younger generations of Pakistanis, where anti-American sentiments are at an all-time high level. Additionally, the increased cost of living has fueled distrust in the government amongst this group of voters.<sup>19</sup> The goal of these protests is to call for immediate elections, which are not scheduled until late 2023.<sup>20</sup> His protests have been working, attracting major support and crowds, as the citizens have bought into his message.

In August 2022, members of the Pakistan Democratic Movement filed the Toshakhana reference case. In the Pakistani Government, Toshakhana is the department that collects and keeps gifts

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<sup>12</sup> Albert, "Imran Khan | Biography, Pakistan, Cricketer, & Prime Minister."

<sup>13</sup> Albert, "Imran Khan | Biography, Pakistan, Cricketer, & Prime Minister."

<sup>14</sup> Michael, Safi and Mehreen, Zahra, 2019, "Pakistan returns Indian pilot shot down over Kashmir in 'peace gesture.'" The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/01/pakistan-hands-back-indian-pilot-shot-down-over-kashmir-in-peace-gesture>

<sup>15</sup> "The pandemic deals a blow to Pakistan's democracy | Brookings." 2020, Brookings Institution <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-pandemic-deals-a-blow-to-pakistans-democracy/>

<sup>16</sup> Albert, "Imran Khan | Biography, Pakistan, Cricketer, & Prime Minister."

<sup>17</sup> Albert, "Imran Khan | Biography, Pakistan, Cricketer, & Prime Minister."

<sup>18</sup> "Former Prime Minister Imran Khan shot in the lower leg in a reported assassination attempt in Pakistan." 2022, CNN, <https://www.cnn.com/2022/11/03/asia/imran-khan-pakistan-rally-intl/index.html>

<sup>19</sup> "Former Prime Minister Imran Khan shot in lower leg in reported assassination attempt in Pakistan."

<sup>20</sup> Hussain, Abid. 2022, "Ex-Pakistan PM vows to 'keep up the fight' as 'long march' resumes." Al Jazeera <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/10/ex-pakistan-pm-imran-khans-party-resumes-long-march-to-capital>

received by dignitaries such as members of parliament or the prime minister.<sup>21</sup> Individuals who are considered dignitaries must report gifts or presents to this department.<sup>22</sup> Prosecutors in the case allege that Khan received land as a bribe for political favors. This land was supposedly routed through his third wife, Bushra Bibi's, Al-Qadir Trust.<sup>23</sup> The Toshakhana case was presided over by the Electoral Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to investigate the alleged improper disclosure of the land gift.<sup>24</sup>

On September 8, 2022, Khan admitted that he sold four gifts he received from different heads of state while he was prime minister.<sup>25</sup> In one instance, he was given a *Graff* watch, cufflinks, a ring, and an expensive pen. The other three gifts included four *Rolux* watches.<sup>26</sup> Khan claimed that he purchased these gifts for approximately PKR 22 million but sold these for PKR 58 million.

The ECP found Khan to be guilty on October 21, 2022. Under Article 63(1)(p), he engaged in unethical behavior while making false statements and erroneous declarations.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, the decision ordered the reference to be sent to the trial court to initiate criminal proceedings.<sup>28</sup> They sentenced him to a three-year jail sentence, along with a fine of PLR 100 thousand (USD 350).<sup>29</sup> Additionally, Khan was disqualified from running for public office for a five-year period.

Khan challenged the verdict on October 22, 2022.<sup>30</sup> He argued that he obtained all of the gifts legally from Toshakhana. The profits were supposedly used to repair a road leading to his house, which was also supposed to benefit his neighbors.<sup>31</sup> As precedent, he cited that previous leaders Mian Sharif, Yusuf Gilani, and Asif Zardari also purchased expensive gifts from Toshakhana. They purchased vehicles, which are historically not permitted, for less than 20 percent of the assessed price. Some gifts were even bought for between five to seven percent of the retail

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<sup>21</sup> "What Is the Toshakhana Case, in Which Imran Khan Has Been Sentenced to a 3-Year Jail Term?" The Indian Express, August 5, 2023, <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-global/toshakhana-case-imran-khan-3-year-jail-pakistan-8877951/>.

<sup>22</sup> Fahad Chaudhry and Tahir Naseer, "Imran Khan Disqualified in Toshakhana Reference," DAWN.COM, October 21, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1716149>.

<sup>23</sup> Farhat, Guinto, "Why was former Pakistan PM Imran Khan arrested?"

<sup>24</sup> "Explained: What's Toshakhana Case In Which Imran Khan Has Been Arrested, What's The Road Ahead For Him?" 2023, Outlook India,

<sup>25</sup> Fahad Chaudhry and Tahir Naseer, "Imran Khan Disqualified in Toshakhana Reference," DAWN.COM, October 21, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1716149>.

<sup>26</sup> Chaudhry and Naseer, "Imran Khan Disqualified in Toshakhana Reference".

<sup>27</sup> "Imran Disqualified," The Express Tribune, October 21, 2022, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2382771/ecp-disqualifies-imran-in-toshakhana-reference>.

<sup>28</sup> "ECP Disqualifies Imran Khan in Toshakhana Reference," The Friday Times, October 21, 2022, <https://thefridaytimes.com/21-Oct-2022/ecp-disqualifies-imran-khan-in-toshakhana-reference>.

<sup>29</sup> "Explained: What's Toshakhana Case In Which Imran Khan Has Been Arrested, What's The Road Ahead For Him?"

<sup>30</sup> "PTI Challenges ECP's Imran Khan Verdict in Islamabad High Court," Brecorder, October 22, 2022, <https://www.brecorder.com/news/40204549>.

<sup>31</sup> "PTI Challenges ECP's Imran Khan Verdict in Islamabad High Court".

price.<sup>32</sup> In Khan's scenario, he bought the items for 50 percent of the assessed value.<sup>33</sup> As a result of his frustration, he organized the 2022 Azadi March II that began on October 28, 2022 to protest the verdict.<sup>34</sup> During his protest, on November 3, 2022, Imran Khan was shot in the leg during a meeting with supporters.<sup>35</sup> One other supporter tried to tackle the shooter, but was shot dead.<sup>36</sup> Khan was rushed to a hospital and released three days later.<sup>37</sup> Khan blamed Shehbaz Sharif, the interim Prime Minister, and other senior officials for this attempted assassination.<sup>38</sup>

On November 21, 2022, the ECP released the results of the criminal proceedings against Khan. The decision stated that Khan "intentionally and deliberately violated the provisions contained in sections 137, 167 and 173 of the Elections Act, 2017."<sup>39</sup> This was because he submitted a "false statement and incorrect declaration to the ECP in the details of his assets and liabilities filed by him for the year 2020-21."<sup>40</sup> After the proceedings were stalled for months due to religious holidays, the trial was scheduled for August 5, 2023. During this time, Imran Khan continued to be a dominant figure in Pakistani Politics, appearing to be building for another campaign in 2023.<sup>41</sup>

However, these ambitions wavered when Khan was arrested in May 2023 on charges of corruption. While appearing in court to submit biometric data, Khan was swarmed by over 90 armed Rangers who broke into the building to arrest him.<sup>42</sup> Almost instantly, protests began across the nation, with a protester even killed by the police amidst the chaos.<sup>43</sup> In a shocking reversal, the Supreme Court ruled this arrest to be illegal, and ordered Khan to be released. In an official statement, the Court described the arrest as "invalid and unlawful" and had violated his right to justice.<sup>44</sup> Shehbaz Sharif, the interim Prime Minister, and his government declared the

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<sup>32</sup> Fahad Chaudhry and Tahir Naseer, "Imran Khan Disqualified in Toshakhana Reference," DAWN.COM, October 21, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1716149>.

<sup>33</sup> Chaudhry and Naseer, "Imran Khan Disqualified in Toshakhana Reference".

<sup>34</sup> "Kaptaan Marches Again: What Next?," The Express Tribune, October 28, 2022, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2383653/kaptaan-marches-again-what-next>.

<sup>35</sup> "Former Prime Minister Imran Khan shot in lower leg in reported assassination attempt in Pakistan."

<sup>36</sup> Robert Kennedy and Federica Marsi, "Latest Pakistan Updates: Imran Khan Shot and Wounded at Rally," [www.aljazeera.com](http://www.aljazeera.com), November 7, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2022/11/3/live-news-ex-pakistan-pm-khan-shot-and-wounded-at-rally>.

<sup>37</sup> "Imran Khan: Pakistan Ex-Prime Minister Wounded at Protest March," BBC News, November 3, 2022, sec. Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-63496202>.

<sup>38</sup> "Former Prime Minister Imran Khan shot in lower leg in reported assassination attempt in Pakistan."

<sup>39</sup> "Toshakhana Reference Sent to Trial Court against Imran," The Express Tribune, November 14, 2022, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2386284/toshakhana-reference-sent-to-trial-court-for-criminal-proceedings-against-imran>

<sup>40</sup> "Toshakhana Reference Sent to Trial Court against Imran".

<sup>41</sup> Baloch, Meer, and Hannah Ellis. 2023. "Pakistan supreme court rules arrest of Imran Khan was illegal." The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/may/11/pakistan-army-deployed-across-country-as-unrest-triggered-by-imran-khan-arrest-continues>.

<sup>42</sup> Ellis, Baloch, "Pakistan supreme court ruled that the arrest of Imran Khan was illegal."

<sup>43</sup> Sophia Saifi and Jerome Taylor, 2023, "Imran Khan, Former Pakistan Prime Minister, arrested by paramilitary police." CNN, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/05/09/asia/imran-khan-arrest-intl/index.html>.

<sup>44</sup> Ellis Baloch, "Pakistan supreme court ruled that the arrest of Imran Khan was illegal."

Supreme Court decision to be incorrect, stating that his re-arrest was looming in the immediate future.<sup>45</sup>

Khan was arraigned in the Toshakhana case, investigating the mismanagement of his assets, and allegations of corruption. Ultimately, on August 5, 2023, the Courts found Khan guilty, sentencing him to three years in prison and a fine of PKR 100 thousand.<sup>46</sup> Imran Khan's disqualification means he will not be eligible for office until 2028. This has large ramifications for Pakistan, as the nation already struggles to combat rising food instability, an economic crisis, and government instability.<sup>47</sup> His removal from power creates a vacuum in the scope of Pakistani politics. Individuals once connected to him are now competing for control as the interim government reaches the end of its term.

Specifically, the army has a chance now to reassert itself on the course of the nation's politics. With the selection of Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar as the designated caretaker prime minister amidst the process of scheduling new elections, the military has shown approval of their chosen candidate.<sup>48</sup> Shehbaz Sharif ended his term on August 10, 2023, thus prompting a caretaker to be chosen. In the Pakistani government, a caretaker must be appointed to oversee the next general elections.<sup>49</sup> Regarding Kakar, a political analyst stated, "he is undoubtedly the choice of the establishment," referring to the military establishment.<sup>50</sup> In addition to this diplomatic backing, the military also was in the news following their harsh crackdown on Imran Khan's protestors when they protested in response to his arrest earlier in August. The military's actions have solidified their status and power over the nation during this time of chaos.

Usually, elections are held 60–90 days after the dissolution of Parliament, however due to a new census needing to be drawn, and with it, new electoral boundaries, it is unlikely that the election will happen before the end of 2023.<sup>51</sup> In light of this, the Kakar administration will lead these projects, using the IMF funding arrangement designed for this process.<sup>52</sup> This has freed the major candidates, such as Shehbaz Sharif, and allowed them to run for office again.<sup>53</sup> Representing Pakistan Muslim League, he is strongly pro-US, a departure from the Imran Khan

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<sup>45</sup> Baloch, "Pakistan supreme court ruled that the arrest of Imran Khan was illegal."

<sup>46</sup> Umer Burney and Imran Gabol, "Imran Arrested after Islamabad Court Finds Him Guilty of 'Corrupt Practices' in Toshakhana Case," DAWN.COM, August 5, 2023, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1768528/toshakhana-case-imran-khan-found-guilty-of-corrupt-practices-handed-three-year-jail-sentence>.

<sup>47</sup> Javed Farhat, and Joel Guinto, 2023, "Why was former Pakistan PM Imran Khan arrested?" BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-65541518>.

<sup>48</sup> Salman Masood, and Christina Goldbaum, 2023, "Pakistan Names Caretaker Prime Minister, Paving Way for Elections." New York Times. New York Times. August 12, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/12/world/asia/pakistan-prime-minister-elections.html>.

<sup>49</sup> Masood, Goldbaum. "Pakistan Names Caretaker Prime Minister, Paving Way for Elections."

<sup>50</sup> Masood, Goldbaum. "Pakistan Names Caretaker Prime Minister, Paving Way for Elections."

<sup>51</sup> Masood, Goldbaum. "Pakistan Names Caretaker Prime Minister, Paving Way for Elections."

<sup>52</sup> Raghavan, TCA, 2023, "In Transition, Pak Set for More Turbulence." Hindustan Times. August 11, 2023. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/opinion/in-transition-pak-set-for-more-turbulence-101691719772771.html>.

<sup>53</sup> Raghavan, "In Transition, Pak Set for More Turbulence."

Administration.<sup>54</sup> While his re-election looms large, his stances could bring about a greater era of peace, while threats to the electoral process in Pakistan could bring back another era of military rule. Much will be determined in the next six months. The results of this new round of elections could determine the future of Pakistan's progress towards a stable democracy.

Due to upcoming elections, a new caretaker administration, headed by Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar, has been put in charge.<sup>55</sup> This action is done in accordance with Pakistani Law, where elections are due to be held less than 90 days after the dissolution of the National Assembly. As of now, no official date has been given for an election, and delegates should note the shifting ground under which the Pakistani Government is currently operating.<sup>56</sup>

### **Status of Kashmir**

The roughly 85 thousand square mile region of Kashmir, located between mountain ranges and deep valleys, has been the subject of decades of conflict between the two countries.<sup>57</sup> As an ethnically diverse area, the region has been subject to numerous conflicts and disputes over the legal ownership of the area. Today, Kashmir is legally divided, with territories recognized as Indian-controlled Kashmir and Pakistan-controlled Kashmir.<sup>58</sup> However, this has not stopped either country from attempting to claim complete control over the region to show their dominance over the other. On August 5, 2019, tensions in the region increased again when India revoked Article 370, a clause that had given Kashmir relative autonomy.<sup>59</sup> It appears the region will once again be facing further tensions and scrutiny.

Violence has been a constant issue in Kashmir on both the Indian and Pakistani side of the border. Between 2014 and 2018, nearly 1.7 thousand terrorist attacks were reported in the regions of Jammu and Kashmir, the official Indian regional title.<sup>60</sup> This number represents the warzone nature of the region, and the constant chaos surrounding it. There are a variety of factors that fuel the violence in Kashmir. However, no division amongst the population is as complex or common as religious divisions. The region's main populations are roughly 68 percent Muslim and 28 percent Hindu.<sup>61</sup> The religious divide is a major factor in the larger battle over identity,

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<sup>54</sup> Purkayastha, Shorbori, April 10, 2022, "Who Is Shehbaz Sharif, PML-N Leader Elected as New Pakistan Prime Minister?" TheQuint, <https://www.thequint.com/news/world/who-is-shahbaz-sharif-the-man-who-is-likely-to-pick-up-the-reins-in-pakistan#read-more>.

<sup>55</sup> Al Jazeera, "Pakistan Election Body to Draw New Boundaries as Polls Likely to Be Delayed," [www.aljazeera.com](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/17/pakistan-election-body-to-draw-new-boundaries-as-polls-likely-to-be-delayed), August 17, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/17/pakistan-election-body-to-draw-new-boundaries-as-polls-likely-to-be-delayed>.

<sup>56</sup> Munir Ahmed, "Pakistan Elections Could Be Delayed as Election Body Needs 4 Months to Draw New Constituencies," AP News, August 17, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/pakistan-parliamentary-elections-delayed-2051fe07f0f16666b03c4494d37c999b>.

<sup>57</sup> "Kashmir | History, People, Conflict, Map, & Facts." 2023. Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kashmir-region-Indian-subcontinent>.

<sup>58</sup> "Kashmir: Why India and Pakistan fight over it." 2019. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/10537286>

<sup>59</sup> "Kashmir: Why India and Pakistan fight over it."

<sup>60</sup> Manya Rathore, 2022, "India - number of terrorist incidents in Jammu and Kashmir 2018." Statista, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1036078/india-terrorist-incident-numbers-jammu-kashmir/>

<sup>61</sup> "Kashmir profile." 2023, BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11693674>.



especially as India embraces a more alt-right Hindu nationalism with Narendra Modi as Prime Minister.<sup>62</sup> Since the election of Prime Minister Modi, India has implemented tighter restrictions on religious freedom.

Additionally, the climate and national conversation over religion in India has become more belligerent since his election. Muslim minority communities have been attacked more often by violent crowds of Hindu nationalists.<sup>63</sup> While Muslims still make up a majority in Kashmir, the national rhetoric and governance from New Delhi has made their lives more difficult as they struggle to adapt to discriminatory policies. Attacks have occurred against Muslim men in Kashmir along with police crackdowns on Islamic holiday celebrations.<sup>64</sup> The local regional government has also been pressured to implement laws such as penalizing cow slaughter by up to 10 years in prison.<sup>65</sup>

India's current legislative situation will only add fire to the growing concerns amongst the Muslim majority. Kashmir had operated under Article 370, a statute that granted Kashmir relative autonomy regarding its freedom, until 2019. While it gave up communications, foreign affairs, and defense to the national government, the region could appoint its own flag and set its own policies.<sup>66</sup> One of the crucial sub clauses was Article 35(A) which created a "local special citizenship law." This was in reference to a special citizenship status for only the local population. In this case, it is related to government jobs and residencies in the region, which were only for the use of the local population. By revoking Article 370, India has eliminated this sub clause.

The elimination of the sub clause has left the local population with no legal autonomy. Almost six months later, nearly 25 thousand non-Kashmiri residents have been given the same type of special citizenship. Locals are concerned that their current life will become too similar to the ongoing Palestinian crisis. Badur-Ul-Islam Sheikh, a citizen of Kashmir, said "the decision to provide non-Kashmiri residents with a domicile certificate is certainly the beginning of the end. This is the beginning of Kashmir becoming another Palestine."<sup>67</sup> Sheikh's words represent the greater sentiment shared by Muslim citizens of the region. By having non-Kashmiri residents enter the region, they would obtain the same coveted jobs and residencies once allocated only to Kashmiris.<sup>68</sup> This would drive the region to the verge of chaos. The true locals of Kashmir will find themselves not represented fairly. Kashmir has been a topic of hot concern for decades, with

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<sup>62</sup> "Kashmir profile."

<sup>63</sup> "Kashmir profile."

<sup>64</sup> Office of International Religious Freedom, "2022 Report on International Religious Freedom: India," U.S. Department of State (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2022), <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/india>.

<sup>65</sup> Office of International Religious Freedom, "2022 Report on International Religious Freedom: India".

<sup>66</sup> "Kashmir Muslims fear demographic shift as thousands get residency." 2020, Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/6/28/kashmir-muslims-fear-demographic-shift-as-thousands-get-residency>.

<sup>67</sup> "Kashmir Muslims fear demographic shift as thousands get residency."

<sup>68</sup> "Kashmir Muslims fear demographic shift as thousands get residency."

the legal status of ownership still yet to be fully decided on. However, the people at the end of the day must have their rights respected, regardless of who is in charge.

Kashmir in the modern day represents the crucial difference between India and Pakistan. Two nuclear-armed adversaries have jockeyed for control in the region since their founding. One has the ethnic majority; one has legal ownership. The major world leaders have advocated for human rights, with the US President Joe Biden quoted as saying “India should take all necessary steps to restore the rights of all the people of Kashmir”.<sup>69</sup> This statement hits a major point. It has become clear that the rest of the world views the Kashmir conflict as one that is resolvable. However, resolving this division is dependent on both countries being willing to make concessions to each other. Ownership aside, both Pakistan and India must come together to ensure that above all else, the citizens of Kashmir aren’t losing their rights, that they are treated as equals, not as pawns in a much larger game.

### **Internal Instability 2018–2023**

Over the past five years, Pakistan has been navigating a complex landscape of political tensions and dynamic shifts in leadership that have contributed significantly to internal instability. The country’s political arena has witnessed a series of dramatic transitions as different political parties have risen to power through elections or other means.<sup>70</sup> Pakistan has recently concluded a five-year parliamentary term, the third since its 2008 transition from military rule. The previous term was characterized by internal political turmoil and significant military involvement. This period saw two successive ruling coalitions. The first coalition was the Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from August 2018 to April 2022. The second one was the Shehbaz Sharif-led Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) from April 2022 until August 2023.<sup>71</sup>

Following his removal, Khan led a nationwide protest, alleging a conspiracy between Bajwa and the US government to orchestrate a regime change. He called for an election and advocated for Hameed to succeed Bajwa as army chief.<sup>72</sup> This created a significant challenge to Pakistani military unity. In late 2022, Hameed was passed over for army chief in favor of General Asim Munir. This led Khan to target Munir to undermine his credibility, and pressure him to dissolve the ruling coalition government. Due to Khan’s actions, rumors spread that some military figures were siding with him. This led to Khan’s arrest and subsequent attacks on military facilities by his supporters.<sup>73</sup> The military’s response and punishments for officers helped Munir maintain control and influence over policy. This solidified his position as an influential political figure by the end of the parliamentary term.

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<sup>69</sup> “Kashmir Muslims fear demographic shift as thousands get residency.”

<sup>70</sup> USIP. “The Current Situation in Pakistan.” United States Institute of Peace, January 23, 2023. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/01/current-situation-pakistan>.

<sup>71</sup> Asfandyar Mir. 2023. “Pakistan’s Parliamentary Period Ends as Election Uncertainty Looms.” United States Institute of Peace. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/08/pakistans-parliamentary-period-ends-election-uncertainty-looms>.

<sup>72</sup> Asfandyar Mir. “Pakistan’s Parliamentary Period Ends as Election Uncertainty Looms.”

<sup>73</sup> Asfandyar Mir. “Pakistan’s Parliamentary Period Ends as Election Uncertainty Looms.”

Yet political issues aren't the only facts that have contributed to internal instability in Pakistan. The economic challenges Pakistan has faced over the last five years have deepened the internal instability within the country. High levels of inflation have raised prices for necessities such as food, gas, and oil, leading to protests.<sup>74</sup> The economic crisis from 2022–2023 has continued to contribute to Pakistan's ongoing political turbulence. This adds on to the country's long history of neglecting fundamental issues such as bureaucratic inefficiency, poor monetary policies, and failures to manage government debt.<sup>75</sup>

Despite attempts to stimulate economic growth, GDP growth is consistently below potential. One major problem that continues to hurt government stimulation is the continued difficulty of attracting foreign investment. Foreign business investors constantly look for low-risk countries to make investments in. The political turmoil and poor economic performance make it hard for Pakistan to market itself as a good destination for foreign direct investment. Additionally, the lower GDP is also due to a lack of revenue generation and a lack of confidence from both consumers and producers. This in turn slows the progress of critical sectors and investment opportunities.<sup>76</sup>

As the government focuses on stimulating economic growth and creating jobs, other important sectors such as education and healthcare can receive less attention.<sup>77</sup> In terms of creating jobs, young Pakistanis are the most impacted. Unemployment has also remained a constant issue, primarily among young people entering the job market. The lack of job opportunities has led to frustration, further fueling social tensions.<sup>78</sup> Civil unrest amongst young college graduates and unskilled workers remains high and has been a motivating factor in why recent political protests have become so violent in Pakistan.

The lack of work for workers continues to harm confidence in Pakistan's economy, reinforcing the brutal cycle of less GDP growth and less jobs available. The same problems apply to government services. Less GDP means less taxable income, products, and services. As a result, the government has a harder time generating revenue to fund public services, further harming the quality of life for its citizens. The continued cycle of government instability, combined with economic uncertainty, has further contributed to a hostile business environment.

However, Pakistan has been searching for solutions to its economic problems. The international community's engagement with Pakistan has played a vital role in shaping the country's internal struggles. Foreign aid packages and trade agreements with China have provided opportunities

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<sup>74</sup> Ahsaan A. Khokar. 2023. "Pakistan's Economic Challenges and Way Forward." Daily Times. <https://dailytimes.com.pk/1102248/pakistans-economic-challenges-and-way-forward/#>.

<sup>75</sup> Ahsaan A. Khokar. "Pakistan's Economic Challenges and Way Forward."

<sup>76</sup> Ahsaan A. Khokar. "Pakistan's Economic Challenges and Way Forward."

<sup>77</sup> Moni Mohsin. "Pakistanis are leaving our country in droves due to inflation and job losses - who can blame them? | Moni Mohsin".

<sup>78</sup> Moni Mohsin. 2023. "Pakistanis are leaving our country in droves due to inflation and job losses – who can blame them? | Moni Mohsin." The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/mar/07/pakistanis-leaving-country-inflation-job-losses-crisis>.

and challenges. In February 2023, Pakistan received a USD 700 million loan from China to build up foreign exchange reserves to prevent bankruptcy.<sup>79</sup> Collaborative efforts between Pakistan and its global partners have aimed to strengthen economic growth, reform systematic issues in the government, and allow Pakistan to become self-reliant.<sup>80</sup>

While recent political instability and economic troubles have only gotten more severe, security concerns have remained a major issue facing Pakistani internal stability. The recent collapse of the Afghan government to the Taliban has complicated Pakistan's western border with Afghanistan. After the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, the relationship between the countries broke down as more attacks were launched from the FATA region against Pakistani civilians and soldiers.<sup>81</sup> The Taliban have attacked public spaces, religious gatherings, and government buildings across western Pakistan.<sup>82</sup> These acts of violence have caused loss of life and widespread fear, while diverting resources and attention toward maintaining order.

India has also proved to be a constant threat, as the two nations have exchanged retaliatory attacks and accusations of terrorism.<sup>83</sup> Shooting incidents across the Line of Control in Kashmir peaked in 2020, with a record of four thousand reported crossfires in that year.<sup>84</sup> There have been attempts at easing tension, with the infamous capture and return of the downed Indian fighter Pilot Abhinandan Varthaman. Varthaman was shot down amidst a sortie in Pakistani airspace in 2019.<sup>85</sup> This event occurred as a result of a communication failure on Varthaman's aircraft which caused him to accidentally fly into Pakistani airspace. The current Pakistani Prime Minister, Imran Khan, returned the pilot two days afterwards as a peace gesture. This was made in an announcement to the Pakistani parliament. However, reports emerged of alleged interference from the US and China utilizing back-channel diplomatic negotiations to urge Pakistan to return the pilot.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Asif Shahzad. 2023. "China lends Pakistan further \$700 mln to shore up FX reserves." Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/markets/asia/china-lends-pakistan-further-700-mln-shore-up-fx-reserves-2023-02-22/>.

<sup>80</sup> Asif Shahzad. "China lends Pakistan further \$700 mln to shore up FX reserves."

<sup>81</sup> Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema. "The Afghanistan Crisis and Pakistan's Security Dilemma." *Asian Survey* 23, no. 3 (1983): 227–43. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2644271>.

<sup>82</sup> Michael Levitt, Lee Hale, and Sacha Pfeiffer. 2023. "How a suicide bombing in Pakistan shows spillover effect from Taliban's Afghanistan." NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2023/07/31/1191164588/how-a-suicide-bombing-in-pakistan-shows-spillover-effect-from-taliban-s-afghanis>.

<sup>83</sup> Edith M Lederer, 2022, "India, Pakistan envoys trade heated accusations of terrorism," AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/pakistan-india-united-nations-hillary-clinton-terrorism-4b56ace894fadd0d0bc1199ec9b0b613>.

<sup>84</sup> "Conflict Between India and Pakistan | Global Conflict Tracker," 2023, Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-between-india-and-pakistan>.

<sup>85</sup> Kunal Gaurav. 2021. "When Abhinandan Varthaman shot down Pakistan's F-16 fighter jet. How it happened." Hindustan Times. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/when-abhinandan-varthaman-shot-down-pakistan-s-f-16-fighter-jet-how-it-happened-101637573096733.html>.

<sup>86</sup> Jeffrey Gettleman and Suhasini Raj, "Pakistan Frees Indian Pilot Who Was Beaten by a Mob and Then Served Tea," The New York Times, March 1, 2019, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/01/world/asia/india-pakistan-plane-abhinandan-varthaman-india.html>.

The need to prioritize security measures can often overshadow other important areas of governance, making it difficult for the cabinet to effectively address issues such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure development.<sup>87</sup> As a result, the government's response to the many needs of the population can become fragmented, contributing to a sense of instability.<sup>88</sup>

While many threats to Pakistan's internal stability are man-made or influenced by the actions of people, natural disasters have also threatened domestic stability in the country. Pakistan is prone to several disasters including earthquakes, floods, and droughts.<sup>89</sup> These disasters disrupt communities, strain resources, and divert government attention and resources toward emergency response and recovery efforts.<sup>90</sup> The sudden and unpredictable nature of these events can disrupt long-term planning and development projects, contributing to a sense of vulnerability and instability.

The July 2023 flash floods are just the latest blow in a very long history of natural disasters. However, the floods in the summer of 2022 were the most devastating for the country. These floods caused widespread damage, leaving many people homeless and disrupting the education of countless children.<sup>91</sup> While various governmental and non-governmental organizations are working constantly to repair the damage, the magnitude of the task is large, requiring time and concerted efforts.<sup>92</sup> In one region, the floods resulted in the changing of river courses and the destruction of water supply systems. This led to difficulties in accessing clean and safe drinking water, exposing the population to health risks due to the drinking of contaminated water.<sup>93</sup>

The aftermath of the flooding saw an increase in waterborne diseases, posing a significant challenge to public health. In another part of the country, the floods had a devastating impact on agriculture. Interestingly, there was an unexpected positive outcome where the floods carried nutrient-rich soil that actually improved the quality of farmland.<sup>94</sup> However, this did not mitigate the short-term food scarcity that followed, and there is a concern that similar situations could recur in future disasters.<sup>95</sup>

Overall, several factors have greatly affected the public's image in Pakistani stability. From political turmoil to devastating floods, faith in the country's leadership has been at an all-time low. Navigating Pakistan's future will be a difficult road, especially for future cabinets. A critical decision must be made by the cabinet's ministers. Solutions towards confidence building and

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<sup>87</sup> Sameer Akhtari. 2023. "For its economy's sake, Pakistan must cut military spending." FairPlanet. <https://www.fairplanet.org/editors-pick/for-its-economys-sake-pakistan-must-cut-military-spending/>.

<sup>88</sup> Sameer Akhtari. "For its economy's sake, Pakistan must cut military spending."

<sup>89</sup> Al Jazeera News Team. 2023. "Dozens killed as flash floods hit Afghanistan and Pakistan." Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/7/23/dozens-killed-as-flash-floods-hit-afghanistan-and-pakistan>.

<sup>90</sup> Al Jazeera News Team. "Dozens killed as flash floods hit Afghanistan and Pakistan."

<sup>91</sup> Riazat Butt. 2023. "After devastating floods in Pakistan, some have recovered but many are struggling a year later." AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/pakistan-flood-anniversary-ebd91932d0452d47c3b0c4bd2a656f38>.

<sup>92</sup> Riazat Butt. "After devastating floods in Pakistan, some have recovered but many are struggling a year later."

<sup>93</sup> Riazat Butt. "After devastating floods in Pakistan, some have recovered but many are struggling a year later."

<sup>94</sup> Riazat Butt. "After devastating floods in Pakistan, some have recovered but many are struggling a year later."

<sup>95</sup> Riazat Butt. "After devastating floods in Pakistan, some have recovered but many are struggling a year later."

stability maintenance are necessary. Yet, this also requires cabinet officials to set aside their personal goals to work together on developing and implementing solutions. Only through a unified cabinet will Pakistan be able to forge a strong path towards a more stable future.

## **Bloc Analysis**

### **Points of Division**

Amidst the backdrop of a complex and evolving landscape, several key points of contention emerge between members of the Pakistani Cabinet, shaping the direction of Pakistan's future.

First, cabinet members have differing opinions on economic policy and the future of the country's development. Some cabinet members advocate for a robust push towards industrialization and technological innovation, viewing these as key drivers of economic growth. Others emphasize the preservation of traditional sectors, concerned that rapid modernization could deepen inequalities. Disagreements may also arise over the level of foreign investment and engagement in the economy. While some one faction sees increased foreign investment as crucial for development, others caution against potential loss of sovereignty and economic control. With limited economic resources, it is important that the cabinet agrees how to allocate resources to ensure the prosperity of the country for centuries.

Second, there are different viewpoints regarding regional stability and security. Some members advocate for a diplomatic approach to address conflicts, while others advocate for a more assertive and militaristic approach to safeguard national interests. Some emphasize creating strong ties with traditional allies, while others emphasize a more pragmatic approach of diversifying partnerships to maximize diplomatic and economic gains. As past events have shown, conflict in Pakistan is not uncommon and can occur at any time. Thus, it is important that the government is prepared to address future conflicts to reduce long-term impacts.

Third, members in the cabinet differ in their views on social and cultural dynamics. This primary division relates to the preservation of cultural heritage versus the push for modernization. Some members stress the importance of preserving Pakistan's rich cultural traditions, while others argue for embracing change to align with global norms. There are also disagreements regarding women's rights and gender equality. Some cabinet members are eager to promote greater gender inclusivity and rights, while others emphasize the need to balance these efforts with the preservation of traditional values. Looking into the future, cabinet members play an important role in shaping societal values. As a result, members must consider how to best represent their population for the new generation of Pakistani citizens.

Lastly, a profound point of division revolves around nationalism and globalization. Some members champion a strong sense of nationalism, advocating for policies that prioritize domestic interests over global engagement. On the other hand, others emphasize the importance of integrating with the global community to take advantage of opportunities and address shared

challenges. Additionally, the question of media freedom and regulation sparks intense debates. While some cabinet members advocate for a free and open media landscape, others express concerns about maintaining control over narratives and information dissemination. Freedom of the media is an extremely important topic, often included in other countries' constitutions. Members of the Pakistani Cabinet must carefully consider how they want to address this issue for the future of the country.

The Pakistani Cabinet serves as a representative group of the broader society, reflecting the diverse perspectives that shape the nation's trajectory. Delegates must grapple with the delicate task of finding common ground among differing viewpoints. It is through debate and compromise that the future of Pakistan will be shaped—a future that relies on the ability to bridge divides, forge compromises, and chart a collective path toward progress, stability, and prosperity.

### **Traditionalists**

The Traditionalists represent conservative ideals in Pakistan, which ultimately favors military presence. Since its inception, Pakistan has seen three military coups control the government.<sup>96</sup> All three have been preceded by administrations that were corrupt, power hungry, and inefficient. These coups, despite appearing to be hostile takeovers, have often created new thought and stability. For example, under General Musharraf's rule from 2000–2007, Pakistan's GDP grew by six percent per year.<sup>97</sup> This was a significant increase from the GRP growth of 3.9 percent per year in 1999.<sup>98</sup> Additionally, Musharraf's policies centered around empowerment of women, deregulation and privatization, and devolution of power.<sup>99</sup>

Members of this bloc believe that the military functions as a check to ensure the government's effectiveness. The act to counterbalance the progressive thoughts of other members, ensuring radical ideas are balanced with meaningful actions. General Asim Munir is a member of this bloc, as he represents the concept of traditionalism. He has nearly 40 years of service, representing the military in Pakistan. This contrasts with the principles of other politicians.<sup>100</sup> Another member of this bloc is Khawaja Muhammad Asif, the current Pakistan Minister of Defense. He is a member of the Pakistani Muslim League, a notorious conservative winged party. As a result, his views align with those of traditionalist views.

Overall, the Traditionalist bloc believes in results. Coups, while harmful and dangerous to democracy, are effective at enacting change. Therefore, the Traditionalist bloc will aim to enact

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<sup>96</sup> "How Pakistan's Military Dictated the Country over the Years," Outlook, March 23, 2023, <https://www.outlookindia.com/international/how-pakistan-army-dictated-the-country-over-the-years-news-267470>.

<sup>97</sup> "Pervez Musharraf: A Bittersweet Era for Pakistan." The Express Tribune. February 9, 2023. <https://tribune.com.pk/article/97688/pervez-musharraf-a-bittersweet-era-for-pakistan>.

<sup>98</sup> "Pervez Musharraf: A Bittersweet Era for Pakistan."

<sup>99</sup> "Pervez Musharraf: A Bittersweet Era for Pakistan."

<sup>100</sup> Hussain, Abid. 2022. "Who is Asim Munir, Pakistan's new army chief?" Al Jazeera.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/24/who-is-asim-munir-pakistans-new-army-chief>

legislation that will have an instant impact. They will often prioritize short-term crises that could occur in Pakistan, ensuring that they are addressed quickly and efficiently.

### **Economic Reformists**

Members of this bloc often prioritize economic prosperity of the country in future decades. However, a balance between long-term meaningful change and short-term goals is one that must be struck by ministers and the government. Pakistan faces numerous major threats, with the World Bank stating that Pakistan currently suffers from “low foreign reserves, a depreciating currency, and high inflation.”<sup>101</sup> These issues require careful thought to ensure that they do not occur again for future generations.

One member of the bloc is the Minister of Finance, Ishaq Dar, who orchestrated a USD 1.17 billion bailout from the IMF before his self-imposed exile.<sup>102</sup> While he has been accused of numerous allegations of fraud and corruption, his career and stature render him a strong figure in saving Pakistan’s economy. He embodies a forward-looking mentality, aiming to prevent and address any long-term issues that Pakistan could face. Another member of this bloc is the Minister of Maritime Affairs, Faisal Subzwari. He has a crucial role in expanding Pakistan’s port infrastructure and trading capabilities, affecting long-term relationships with other countries. For example, the Karachi Port handles 60 percent of the country’s cargo.<sup>103</sup> By efficiently managing this port, Subzwari will be able to significantly affect relationships with other countries.

Ultimately, Pakistan’s ability to enact government reform is hindered by its financial ability to fund these programs. This bloc represents those with a keen interest in reforming the economy, both in the future and in the present.

### **Diplomats**

Members of this bloc prioritize the difficult task of creating and editing foreign policy for the country. Pakistan faces numerous aversive conditions abroad, both at its own borders and beyond. Facing constant border crossfire with Indian troops, a relatively unknown entity in Afghanistan post-Taliban, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the need for diplomacy is at a crucial high.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Rana Sanaullah are two members of this bloc. Bhutto comes from a storied background, whose family name could well be synonymous with Pakistan Royalty. Bilawal Bhutto is the current extension of the family name, serving as the Minister of Foreign affairs. His views are forward-facing, with goals of de-escalating Indo-Pakistan relations and

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<sup>101</sup> “The World Bank in Pakistan,” World Bank, 2023. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/pakistan/overview>.

<sup>102</sup> Hussain, Abid. 2022. “Ishaq Dar takes oath as Pakistan’s new finance minister.” Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/28/ishaq-dar-takes-oath-as-pakistans-new-finance-minister>.

<sup>103</sup> Karachi Port Trust, “Karachi Port Trust | The Gateway to Pakistan,” [kpt.gov.pk](https://kpt.gov.pk), accessed September 24, 2023, <https://kpt.gov.pk/pages/20/port-in-general>.



negotiating mutually beneficial peace talks with Afghanistan.<sup>104</sup> While Bhutto is primarily outward-facing, Sanaullah focuses on internal affairs. As the Minister of Interior, Rana Sanaullah is focused on the implementation of internal policies, security and assisting with territorial affairs. These two positions highlight two important roles of diplomacy for Pakistan.

The Diplomats exist on a spectrum. Differing in powers and impacts, they are bound together by their ability to shape Pakistan's trajectory. Forging new bonds abroad, passing new legislation at home, the Diplomats can accomplish immense good, provided they embrace the diversity of their powers and positions, and understand the scope of their impact.

### **Committee Mission**

At its core, the Pakistani Cabinet serves as a vital advisory body to the Prime Minister. It is a council of accomplished individuals. Each member brings to the table their expertise and helps with addressing the nation's most intricate challenges. The Cabinet's primary function is to provide guidance and insights to the Prime Minister, assisting in policy formulation, strategic planning, and the implementation of key initiatives. Each minister is responsible for their own sector of the executive branch of the government. While each minister oversees their own agency, the overall collaboration and coordination between all agencies is essential to guide the country through various crises.

The Prime Minister handpicks individuals who they believe have diverse skills and experiences to serve on the Cabinet. This results in a diverse group of ministers tackling various issues. However, the makeup of the cabinet is always subject to change and if a minister was to be replaced. To do this, a formal process unfolds. The Prime Minister may propose the removal of a Cabinet member by a letter asking for their resignation. Likewise, new appointments require parliamentary approval, allowing the parliament to check the Prime Minister's power.

The Cabinet of Pakistan will be tasked with tackling a variety of near term and long-term crises. In the near term, sudden crises such as natural disasters, military confrontation, and extremist attacks will require quick work by the Cabinet. Natural disasters will impact Pakistani cities and rural areas more frequently as climate change becomes more severe. The ministers in the cabinet will need to collaborate deeply amongst different agencies to ensure the lives of Pakistani citizens are protected from severe floods and storms. Military confrontation with India over the Kashmir region will also arise. However, ministers will need to address confrontations with extreme caution, as any misinterpretation of military actions could lead to a major armed conflict. Lastly, extremist attacks will continue to be an issue as Taliban solidify their rule in nearby Afghanistan. The Cabinet would need to react quickly, taking quick action to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

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<sup>104</sup> Weymouth, Lally. 2023. "Pakistani Foreign Minister: 'Democracy Is the Only Way to Take on Terrorism.'" Washington Post. Washington Post. January 19, 2023. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/01/19/bhutto-zardari-pakistan-interview/>.

In the long term, economic crises and ensuring the country can sustainably manage its debts will be essential for economic growth. The Cabinet must find a way to ensure that balance-of-payment crises do not continue to hold the country back from significant development.

Questions about religious extremism will also arise throughout the committee. Ministers will need to find ways to uphold the Islamic culture and history of the country while working to ensure religious extremism does not affect Pakistani society. Lastly, ministers must ensure the long-term stability of the country's political system. Not only is it critical for domestic stability, but it is also an essential part of ensuring that the country is able to address long term challenges.

Overall, the Pakistani cabinet is in a challenging position. The Cabinet must address both short term and long-term crises. Each of these crises is equally concerning, and all require in-depth collaboration across the entire government. It is up to the leaders of Pakistan to choose between two paths. They can either stick to their beliefs and become fragmented or make compromises for the greater good of the country.

### **Research and Preparation Questions**

1. Given the current instability experienced by the government, what steps can the government take to rebuild trust and bring peace to the country?
2. What role does your minister have to play in the conflicts in the nation? Does your minister stand to benefit from the going unrest?
3. What is the overall governing philosophy of your minister? Can Pakistan sustain with its current political framework or is significant change necessary to move forward?
4. Does your minister believe Imran Khan, former prime minister of Pakistan, should have been removed from power or not?
5. How can Pakistan work to manage the threats that it faces from its neighbors? Similarly, what allies can Pakistan call upon in a time of need?
6. What are your ministers' ties to the military, if any? How might that shape their perception of corruption in the country?
7. Has your minister made any statements about the more autonomous regions of the country? Do they present a stability or security risk to the government?

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