



## REGIME CHANGE IN PAKISTAN 2022: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STABILITY

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### Abstract

*It is a succinct allegory meant to highlight the significance of political stability for the advancement of an economy. Democracy in the Arab world was thought to have been strengthened by the Arab Spring uprisings. A similar atmosphere of unrest and rallies in a practicing democracy like Pakistan reflects identical elements of uncertainty that depress economic destabilization, despite the unexpected Arab Spring which further disrupted the Middle East. The article briefly discusses political crises that occurred while the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government is in power (10 April 2022) to make a case for how political instability stifled economic progress in Pakistan, though momentarily. Political stability is necessary for any country to bring prosperity to itself and provide peace and employment opportunities for its people. Unfortunately, Pakistan has been suffering from political instability for the last eight months. Political parties in any country play a role in the development of that country. Unfortunately, Pakistani political parties are not engaged in the development of their country but in fulfilling their egos and own interests, which is causing harm to the country but not the parties because the parties make fools of the people by accusing each other, but the loss that the country suffers is directly from the people, and this loss will not be remedied in thirty or forty years.*

**Keywords:** Regime change, Political stability, Economic, Pakistan



## **Introduction**

Governments are generally unstable in underdeveloped nations. Either by a coup or the army seizing control, a new administration is installed overnight. A new set of regulations for commercial operation are introduced by the new government. It is greatly hindering these nations' progress and causing significant problems. To maintain social cohesion and governmental legitimacy, political stability is crucial. It is crucial for social integration, and economic development and the rule of law is supreme in a state. The processes of building a nation and a state are directly impacted by the political system's stability. For both of them to flourish and expand, stable political institutions are necessary. Without a solid and well-organized system of politics, a nation or state cannot develop. Political instability can be defined in at least three ways: first, as a proclivity for the regime or government change; second, as the occurrence of political disorder or violence in a society, such as killings; and third, as how instability affects economic growth. (JAVEDab, 2017). Pakistan has plunged into a major political crisis after the April 10 removal of ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan following a successful no-confidence motion against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government. Imran Khan has tenaciously accused the US government of plotting his ouster from power with the help of local politicians and the establishment (Samina Bashir and Dr. Ammara Farukh, 2002).

Throughout his interview, Imran Khan repeatedly stated that his administration was deposed as a result of his visit to Russia on February 21, 2022, and his resounding (absolutely not) response to the United States' request for military sites in Pakistan for mentoring in Afghanistan. The United States of America has denied Khan's assertion, but the large majority of Pakistan tends to believe Imran's allegation, giving his popularity a new boost (Khaliq, 2022). Soon after being ousted, he started a protest and an election campaign as well, to see the public's reaction and get their support for the next election. Khan started new, energetic, and powerful rallies all over Pakistan. He pledged to transform the nation and establish a "new Pakistan." He frequently emphasized "change in Pakistan) in speeches and interviews. He used the word "election demand," exposing current government and previous opposition corruptions, discussing the reasoning of his ouster, political victory, and foreign interference (which dominated his whole media and public address). Khan frequently used ambiguous words and phrases to get people's attention, like (WO KON THA"—who was he?

## **Background**

In 1996, the renowned former cricketer-turned philanthropist launched the PTI, a small party. Khan was only able to gain one seat in the 2002 election. He was not popular in politics until 2011, but he was known as a national hero to the people of Pakistan because he was a famous cricketer around the world and the founder of a large cancer hospital (Shaukat Khanum Hospital). He didn't organize the country's first substantial rally until 2011, when he attracted a record-



breaking large crowd motivated by his anti-corruption complaint (Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate).

Aside from the assistance of the military, Khan had established a support network in politics that would help him win 36 seats in the 2013 elections. Khan initially accused someone of wrongdoing, claiming that electoral fraud prevented his party from receiving a far bigger percentage of the parliamentary budget. With the support of the military, Khan's party took to the streets and staged a month-long sit-in, demanding that Nawaz Sharif resigns as Prime Minister to back up his claim. Over the following four years, the PTI persisted in putting pressure on the Sharif administration in the Panama Papers scandal; Sharif was overthrown from office and permanently barred from holding public office as a result of a Supreme Court decision supported by the military establishment; an official investigation found no evidence. The military's fifth cycle of attempting to dominate the political system of the nation came to an end with the collapse of the hybrid government, and the system was once again rebooted back to the constitution process. This last attempt is in contrast to the hybrid government, and the system is once again rebooted back to the constitutional process (Manage from behind the scenes). The opposition and the majority of independent observers viewed the outcome—which the military had already started to prepare for as highly problematic because it allowed Khan's PTI to more than double its seats and form a government. According to pro-military observers, the military was successful in establishing a strong third political force known as the hybrid regime. This new political system was centred on a populist party that was believed to be (on the same page with the military regime and had been propelled to power through election rife (Bokhari, 2022).

On the day when Imran Khan was being removed from the government, millions of Pakistanis were sitting in front of their televisions watching these scenes, how the door of the Supreme Court was opened at twelve o'clock at night and how the prisoner van had come in front of the Prime Minister's House. As long as Imran Khan was in government, the people were disappointed with him. This was the first public reaction in the history of Pakistan that came after the ouster of any prime minister. Imran Khan gave the people his power, and they created barriers for the PDM government.

### **Political crises in Pakistan**

The past 10 weeks have been particularly volatile in Pakistan, even by the country's notoriously unstable political standards. Imran Khan was removed from office by a vote of no confidence on April 11, and Pakistan now has a new government. From the motion's filing on March 8 to the voting on April 10, the weeks leading up to the vote were dramatic and exciting. One of the main causes of the political upheaval in Pakistan is the upcoming election, which must be held by the summer of 2023. Imran Khan wants to hold elections before the scheduled date, but the PDM is opposed. Khan has made it clear that he wants to harness his existing support to win the



upcoming election (Afzal, 2022). After suffering defeats in mid-month special elections for 20 constituencies in the nation's heartland province of Punjab, Pakistan's current government, an unwieldy multi-party coalition led by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif of the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) party, experienced a new setback in July. A Supreme Court decision on July 26 overturned earlier precedent and mandated the election of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, a supporter of former Prime Minister Imran Khan, to the position of the chief minister, despite the PML-N coalition's attempts to maintain control of the provincial government through manoeuvres in the provincial assembly. The PML-N government's attempts to consolidate power after Khan's dismissal in April have been hampered by the court's decision and past electoral defeats, raising new concerns about its viability. Khan and his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party may be barred from running for office after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) determined on August 2 that they had broken campaign funding laws (Almeida, Cookman, Rafiq, Salikuddin, & Siddiqui, 2022).

On July 28, 2022, National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf accepted the resignations of only 11 PTI legislators who had left their positions following the vote of no confidence in the outgoing prime minister. The party subsequently went to the Supreme Court and requested that it overturn the IHC judgment because it was "vague, superficial, and against the law." The Supreme Court's ruling on the PTI's appeal is still pending. On December 29, 2022, Raja Pervez Ashraf informed a PTI delegation that the party's MPs would be called in individually for the resignations' verification because the latter insisted on them being accepted in one go (Guramani, 2023). when Imran Khan declared that the NA's vote of confidence would be used to gauge the resolve of PM Shehbaz Sharif. In a distinct step, the PTI committed to rejoining the NA on the condition that the Parliamentary Leader, Leader of the Opposition, and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee are all PTI members. For the PDM government, this is a significant challenge. The purpose of going to the assembly in a limited number was to relieve Raja Riaz of the position of the opposition leader, otherwise, there is no representative of this National Assembly to return to it, at that time, Shahbaz Sharif's government has lost the support of 172 people, and I will return to save the government depending on. Ch Fawad Hussain (@fawadchaudhry) January 24, (Virk, 2023). After the announcement of Imran Khan going to the assembly, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf suddenly started accepting the resignations of PTI members. This caused a constitutional problem to arise in the country because the speaker of the national assembly had previously said that he would call all the members one by one and accept the resignations. The PTI will move the court against the acceptance of the resignations, which will create new problems within the country. All these politicians are doing is humiliate each other. All these politicians are fighting for their own interests; no one is thinking about the country, otherwise, what is the reason for suddenly accepting the resignation against the constitution? There is already chaos in the country. Economically, the country is close to bankruptcy. Politicians may benefit from such things, but the country has no benefit.



## **Constitutional Crisis**

When the National Assembly's deputy speaker, Qasim Khan Suri, rejected a motion of no confidence against prime minister Imran Khan during a session where it was scheduled to be put to a vote, claiming that foreign involvement in the regime change violated Article 5 of the Pakistani Constitution, a political and constitutional crisis developed in Pakistan from April 3 to April 10, 2022. In a televised address a short while later, Khan claimed that he had counseled President Arif Alvi to dissolve the National Assembly. Under Article 58 of the constitution, Alvi followed Khan's recommendation. Imran Khan successfully staged a constitutional coup, as a result of which the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) took suo moto notice of the current situation, resulting in a constitutional crisis. Four days later, the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) decided in a 5-0 vote that the National Assembly's prorogation, dissolution, dismissal of the no-confidence resolution, Imran Khan's recommendation to President Arif Alvi to do so, and all following measures were unconstitutional. The Supreme Court further ruled that the National Assembly had not been prorogued and that the speaker must call it back into a session as soon as possible on April 9, 2022, no later than 10:30 a.m. The National Assembly was reassembled on April 9; however, the resolution was not put to a vote right away. The vote did not start until after the session had continued all day. The speaker and deputy speaker both announced their resignations shortly before midnight. On April 10, just after midnight, the National Assembly voted to remove Khan from office by passing a motion of no-confidence with 174 votes, a majority. This is the first time in Pakistan's history that its first prime minister has lost his position due to a vote of no confidence. This night's Pakistani political scenario was completely altered because, for the first time, Pakistanis were opposed to military policies, and millions of people supported Khan. Imran Khan claimed on numerous occasions that a foreign conspiracy was attempting to overthrow his government. He claimed that the United States was "conspiring against his government" in a speech to the nation, although he did not offer any proof. The Islamabad High Court ruled on March 30, 2022, that it would be against Khan's oath of office and the Official Secrets Act of 1923 to publish the contents of a diplomatic cable from the departing Pakistani ambassador, which Khan said contained "threats from the United States."

## **The Threat of Journalists and the Killing of Arshad Sharif**

When the regime change operation took place in Pakistan, many journalists strongly opposed it. The prominent names among them were Sami Ibrahim, Shaheed Arshad Sharif, Imran Riaz Khan, and Sabir Shakir. The establishment wanted any means to back down from its position. When many journalists did not back down, they started harassing them by making cases against them in different cities in Pakistan. They still did not back down from their stand, so their houses were raided and their families harassed. Harassed many journalists to the extent that they were forced to leave the country; one of them is Shaheed Arshad Sharif who is no longer in this world.



Arshad Sharif specializes in investigative journalism, covering many domestic political events for national and international news outlets, including in the UK. On March 23, 2019, he was awarded the Pride of Performance Award by Pakistani President Arif Alvi for his contributions to journalism. Sharif was the presenter of ARY News' Power Play show. He served as news director for AAJ News. Before joining AAJ, he led Dunya News' news team as news director and was the host of the show Kyun. As a supporter of former Prime Minister Khan and a critic of the military, Sharif made many enemies. Before leaving Pakistan, he may have been charged with sedition, and his TV show was banned after he alleged the military was involved in Khan's deportation in April. Claims of his assassination fly around, and various figures hold press conferences to spread their theories. Faisal Vauda, a former minister in Khan's government, claimed that Sharif was killed in Kenya but that the plot was conceived in Pakistan. The former prime minister himself said he learned of the plot to kill Sharif earlier this year and suggested he leave Pakistan. And in a highly unusual move, the country's director of military intelligence, Lt. Gen. Nadeem Ahmed Anjum, contacted journalists and said he was aware of Sharif's movements and may have been somehow connected to them, naming many people, including senior media officials (Igunza, 2022).

### **The Economic Crises and the Strategic Neutrality of the Military**

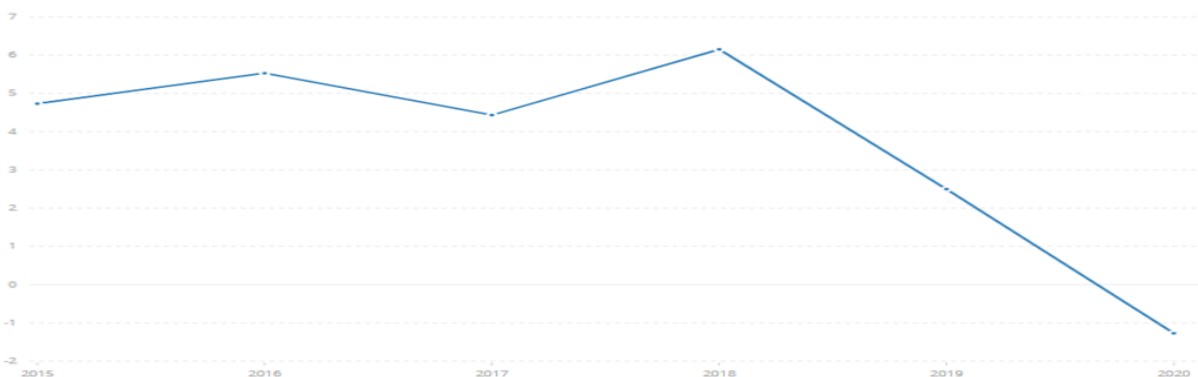
The Pakistani rupee will be Asia's worst-performing currency in 2022, and the country is on the brink of economic collapse. At the same time, the tide of political instability embedded in the ruling system, due to power asymmetries in favour of unelected national elites (military and judicial heads) and elected representatives of the people, is gaining momentum relentlessly. The latest sign of that is July 27, 2022, Pakistan Supreme Court ruling, which resulted in Hamza Shabaz of the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) being ousted from the post of Chief Minister of Punjab. The Supreme Court's current decision relates to a highly controversial ruling of May 17, 2022, that disqualified 25 "opposition" MPs from Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI). Stripped and voted for Shabazz in the prime minister's office. Punjab parliament. Political manipulation by the military and the politicization of the judiciary are enduring features of Pakistan's political landscape. With each term of elected civilian government, the military establishment and judiciary have perpetuated political instability and unrest in some way. The current episode of political instability began in April 2022 when the Pakistani parliament ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan and elected the new Speaker of the House, Shahbaz Sharif. Khan and his deputy spokesperson attempted to prevent a no-confidence vote with a quasi-constitutional measure that was later overturned by the Supreme Court.

On the one hand, the sacking of cricketer-turned-politician Khan can be seen as a continuation of a recurring feature of Pakistani democracy in which elected prime ministers fail to complete their terms. But at the same time, Khan's expulsion marks a new beginning in the country's democratic history. Khan will be the first prime minister to be removed by a parliamentary process (a "no-



confidence vote") rather than by an open military coup or judiciary intervention. After nine long years of Pervez Musharraf's military rule, "democracy" returned to Pakistan in 2008. The PPP and PML-N came to power from 2008–2013 and 2013–2018, respectively. Both are considered "traditional" mainstream parties due to their dynastic political styles. That means the top positions in the party remained with his two ruling families, Bhutto and Sharif. Moreover, both families have been accused of "corruption" whenever they clash with powerful military installations.

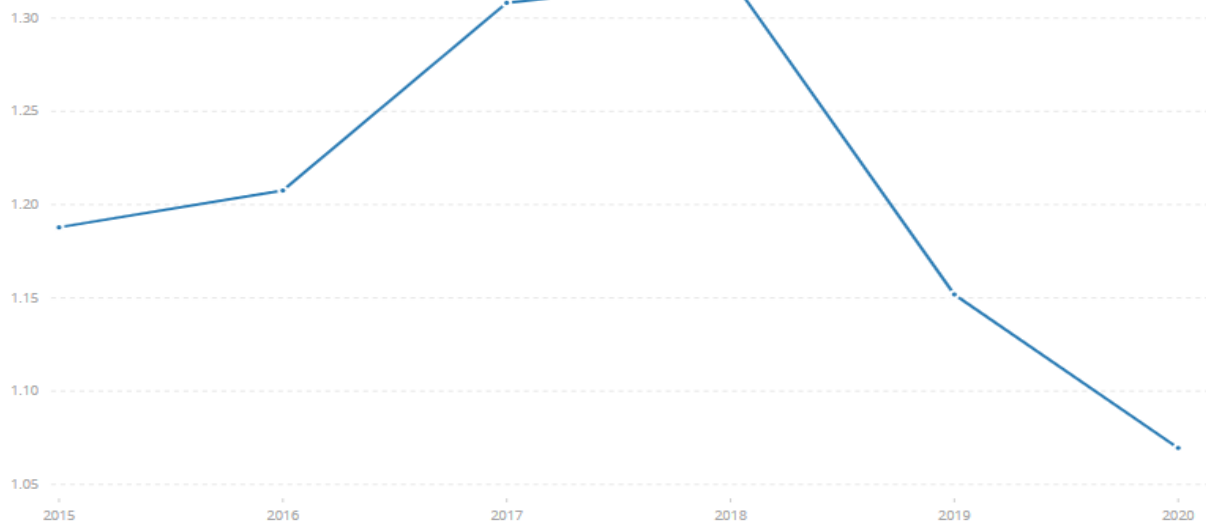
To resolve this contradiction, in 2018, the military attempted a new experiment with a PTI-led hybrid regime. The PTI (Khan) is universally popular among military families, so the top military officials have decided to publicly support the PTI. Pakistan's "soft" image as a "normal" democracy Eager to project, the military assumed (or rather hoped) that the PTI government could change its perception of inherent "conflict" and distribute it among elected civilian governments and the army. Pakistan will be able to increase the credibility of democracy on a global scale. Since 2008, the military has blocked two previously elected governments, the PPP and the PML-N. On the contrary, they openly appreciate the economic and political performance of PTI. In effect, it has diluted the autonomous identity of the military establishment in public perception, both at home and abroad. Thus, as the economic situation deteriorated under the PTI government's rule, the PTI government's discredit spread to the military establishment as well. Gross domestic product growth slowed from 5% to 1% and inflation increased from 4% to 11% even before the COVID-19 pandemic, according to TIP (see Figure 1). Similarly, per capita income fell by more than 20% (see Figure 2). Furthermore, the Pakistani rupee has depreciated by more than 40% under the PTI government. Prices for basic foods such as wheat, sugar, and cooking oil have doubled. And Pakistan's stock market performance remains far below its 2017 peak.



**Figure 1 Gross domestic Product of Pakistan in Percentage (Data sources: World Bank)**



**Figure 2 Consumer Price Index of Pakistan in Percentage (Data sources: World Bank)**



**Figure 3 Per capita Income in US dollars (Data sources: World Bank)**



As a result, public resentment, especially among workers, traders, and farmers in the informal sector, has increased dramatically, not only towards PTI but also towards antagonism. Mixed-mode architect: Military facility as a result, the military establishment has begun to rebalance its position since the end of 2019, striking deals with the opposition parties, the PML-N and the PPP. For example, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who is serving a prison term, was "allowed" to leave the country for medical treatment despite the reluctance of the PTI government. The political situation began to improve for opposition parties in late 2019 as the military gradually began to strategically withdraw from the combined test. Things took a turn for the worse in PTI's view in October 2021, when Khan did not fully agree with senior military leaders on the assignment of commander in chief. Khan wanted to keep General Faiz Hameed as Director General of Joint Services Intelligence (ISI) but was assigned by the Army Corps Commander as the Commander of the Peshawar Corps. Many believe that Khan wants General Hameed to stay at the ISI to provide political support for him, and in return, Khan is likely to appoint him as the new army commander in November 2022. After General Hameed withdrew from the ISI, Khan felt growing political pressure, and he chose to be brave in the field of foreign relations to keep the tension at his core. This further angered senior military leaders, who felt it was reckless for Khan to politicize the country's foreign relations. Collectively, these factors have created a separation between the top military leadership and the PTI government.

In fact, the current economic structure discourages long-term investment in manufacturing and agriculture. As a result, Pakistan's exports may struggle as long as cheap rents in the land economy remain. With elites taking control of the state, reforms in the urban and rural land economies are unlikely shortly. As a result, Pakistan's macroeconomic difficulties, especially the current account deficit, are expected to continue. Not to mention that Pakistan's contemporary economic situation is extremely fragile; inflation and recession have resulted in economic hardship for the working and middle classes. In addition, the country faces a severe shortage of foreign exchange reserves due to high oil prices and stagnant export earnings. A new round of shock therapy from the IMF, subsidy cuts and tax hikes mean inflation is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Economic "recovery" takes time, and it will be a painful process, especially for the working and middle classes, assuming neo-liberal logic still prevails in the political process of economic recovery. It is therefore in the military's interest to stay away from the policies of the elected government(s) during the recovery phase of the economy. While the probability of a new hybrid system is much higher than a direct military takeover, that also seems unlikely in the near future (Khan, 2022).

### **Deteriorating Debt Situation**

Alongside the smoldering political crisis, Pakistan's biggest problem is its growing external debt. Foreign debt has increased to \$119.8 billion for him as of December 2021. For \$93 billion in 2018, in return, he paid off \$6 billion of debt. In 2020, foreign debt payments will exceed \$12



billion. Just five years ago, in 2017, Pakistan's total debt service was 39% of her FBR tax. Today our Gross Debt Settlement consumes 75% of FBR tax. The debt ratio has increased from 76% in 2018 to over 90% now. Similarly, regarding the debt-to-export ratio: In 2018, it paid 19% of its exports for debt service. In 2021, we have paid more than 35% of our exports for debt service. Based on current interest rates, debt payments will eat up 100% of the FBR tax by 2025. Pakistan will become dependent on the bank and non-bank borrowing and foreign aid.

As of the end of December 2021, approximately 47% of the country's total debt consists of multilateral loans, 31% bilateral loans, 14% commercial loans and 9% Eurobonds/Sukuk. Although borrowing from commercial sources has increased relatively in recent years, multilateral and bilateral sources still cumulatively account for 78% of the external sovereign debt portfolio (Khaliq, Pakistan: Regime Change, Political Turmoil and Deepening Debt Crisis, 2022).

**Table 1 Pakistan External Debt Profile**

	Dec-2020	Dec-2021
	\$ million	\$million
I+II External Public Debt	82,406	90,633
Government External Debt (a+b)	74,9288	83,900
a- long term(>1 year)	74,012	82,623
Paris Club	11,547	10,146
Multilateral	33,165	34,634
Other Bilateral	14,602	17,929
Euro/Sukuk Global Bonds	5,300	7,800
Commercial Loans	9,009	10,218
Naya Pakistan certificates	129	1,414
Local currency sec (PIBs)	192	419
NBP/BOC deposits/PBC	69	63
b-Short term(<1 year)	915	1,277
Multilateral	573	1,067
Local currency sec(T-bills)	340	210
II From IMF	7,479	6,732
Federal Government	2,966	3,372
Central Bank	4,512	3,360



Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs, State Bank of Pakistan & Debt Policy Coordination Office, Ministry of Finance.

### **Flood Effect Economy**

The future of the global economy is more uncertain than ever, and this uncertainty is sensitive to the uncertainty associated with various economic policy decisions made by all parties, including governments. Natural climate risks directly interact with key macroeconomic factors and can rapidly affect economic development and market performance (S.N. Jonkman, 2008). Better GDP growth could help citizens reduce the impact of floods by improving facilities, warning networks, and flood risk preparation and protection measures. Damage to facilities (infrastructure) and fatal accidents are the primary tragedies, with secondary disasters, such as the death of workers, plunging families into poverty. The risk of a second catastrophe could be higher than the first. The risk of natural disasters and the socio-economic instability of the people pose a major threat to Pakistan's government system. Massive flooding in Pakistan in August made headlines as it affected an astronomical number of people. Floods affected 33 million people, and more than 1,730 people lost their lives. They especially hit the poorest and most vulnerable districts. The situation continues to change, with floods stagnating in many areas, waterborne and vector-borne diseases prevalent, and more than 8 million displaced people now facing health crises. This crisis is therefore at risk of serious and lasting consequences for lives and livelihoods. Losses of household income and wealth, rising food prices, and disease outbreaks are affecting the most vulnerable groups. Women suffer huge losses in their livelihoods, especially those related to agriculture and livestock. The assessment estimates the total damage to exceed USD 14.9 billion, and total economic losses to reach about USD 15.2 billion. Estimated needs for rehabilitation and reconstruction in a resilient way are at least USD 16.3 billion (RELEASE, 2022).

### **Pakistan and US Relations**

There was a very good relationship between Pakistan and the United States during President Trump's administration in the United States. When former Prime Minister Imran Khan visited the United States, Donald Trump gave him a warm welcome. During this mediation, Donald Trump even said that he would mediate between Pakistan and India to resolve the Kashmir issue. He not only kept the US and Taliban on track in Pakistan, but he also provided a safe exit route for the US military from the Afghanistan war. A good relationship was formed between Pakistan and America. Trump's government ended in the United States, and a new government under Joe Biden came. The Biden government was not happy with the policies of the government of Pakistan, due to which the relations between Pakistan and the United States began to deteriorate. When Imran Khan's government was overthrown, Imran Khan accused America of overthrowing his government, which further worsened relations between Pakistan and America. After being



expelled from the government, Imran Khan held more than 60 rallies across Pakistan, and he took a strong stand against the United States in every rally and procession. Khan was accused of being thrown out by the US through Donald lu. Imran Khan is trying to use anti-American sentiment to mobilize supporters, says Said Maleeha Lodhi, Pakistan's former envoy to the United States and the United Nations. Khan's loyal group of supporters is ready to reject the facts and believe his outlandish conspiracy narrative, even though there is no evidence to support it (Saifi, 2022). Whether this support will be enough to bring Khan back to power remains to be seen. What is clear, however, is that Shahbaz Sharif's government, more than a month into its term, has done little to stem the rising inflation and deepening economic crisis that led to Khan's downfall. It means no. The government lifted the cap on fuel prices on Thursday, making a much-needed deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but Karachi-based financial journalist Ariva Shahid said the power struggle would only make things more difficult.

## **Conclusion**

When a nation wants to become a country, it makes sacrifices for generations so that the next generation will be happy and live as a proud nation in the world. This is the belief of Muslim women in the subcontinent: their mothers sacrificed millions of lives to save their children. As we look at this country from 1947 to 2023, it can be seen that the country's politicians and military rulers have done so much damage to this country that no external enemy could have done. We should only give a glimpse in this paper of the great loss the country has suffered due to one mistake. Today there is chaos everywhere in the country, there is no food in the country, and the treasury of the country is empty. When you make a mistake, you make another mistake to cover it up, and you have no idea how much you can pay for that mistake. When the establishment realized that they had made a mistake by changing the regime and that as a result of their mistake, the distance between the people and the army began to grow, instead of repairing it, the establishment forced the people and media persons to be harassed, resulting in the greatest loss: the people who kept their eyes, the people became hardened in front of the army, and as a result, the love that was in the hearts of the people began to diminish. The fact that IK rejected General Qamar Javed Bajwa's (QQJB) proposal to replace the chief ministers of Punjab and KPK did not sit well with the latter. The issue reached a boiling point when, in defiance of the constitution, QJB announced the replacement of the DG ISI, who reports directly to the PM but, in reality, has always been filled by a serving army general, save for two times. According to the constitution, only the PM has the authority to replace a serving DG ISI. IK ordered QJB to follow the constitutional process after calling him out. This further strained the relationship, as QJB implied in several forums. It is commonly believed that QJB actively supported the PDM's No Trust Motion, which was a completely legal constitutional manoeuvre to remove a sitting PM. Shahbaz Sharif, the younger brother of the ousted Nawaz Sharif, took IK's post when the no-confidence motion was successful. From 2008 to 2018, Shahbaz developed a reputation for being a very capable Chief Minister of Punjab. Unfortunately, he had



the same reputation for corruption as his older brother did. He was facing charges of money laundering in Pakistani courts at the time of his inauguration as prime minister and was out on bail. The PM and almost 60% of the rest of his present cabinet are all free on bail after being charged with corruption. Despite the excellent work the party had done to bolster the economy during the COVID-19 onslaught, high inflation throughout his three-and-a-half-year mandate was PTI's Achilles heel and had eroded most of the public's support. Before PDM took over, there was a definite decline in public support for PTI. Since taking office, the PDM coalition's policies have caused an unprecedented wave of runaway inflation that has broken all prior records. In contrast to the PDM's performance, it is not surprising that the PTI's inflation figures are now regarded as a job well done under extremely trying conditions. The party's support has increased as a result of just one aspect. IK's stance on defying American attempts to subjugate Pakistan to the US's global interests has resonated with a significant portion of the populace, especially among the intelligentsia. It's curious why Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and his cabinet are reluctant to approach Russia to buy much cheaper oil and gas, even though India, their neighbour, imports both, for fear of upsetting the USA. It appears to support and bolster IK's claim that the US conspired with the Sharifs and Zardaris to bring about a regime change by causing a significant increase in gasoline prices, which is the primary cause of the unchecked rise in inflation. The claims of foreign conspiracy in the handling of the no-trust motion are being accepted by the court more and more.



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