**Post Election Priorities**

**The debt and liabilities are increasing every year which will be posing a serious challenge to new government**

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Over 60 million voters participated in the 12th gener­al elections held on February 8, 2024. Several political parties across the country participated in the elections to elect representatives in the 265 national assembly and 590 provincial assembly constituencies. Whose so ever forms the government will have many challenges ahead of them. The biggest challenge faced by the country is economic crisis. The country is facing crisis in fluc­tuating foreign exchange reserves dropping rapidly which are barely enough to cover Pakistan’s debt pay­ment. Foreign exchange reserves need to meet the IMF target of net foreign assets. Situation may arise where paying back loans to IMF will be difficult.

Unfortunately, we have to borrow money to pay the in­terest on the debt. The debt burden has increased mani­fold in the recent years. The debt and liabilities are increas­ing every year which will be posing a serious challenge to new government. The budget deficit has grown over the last many years. Pakistan will have to continue with bail­out packages from IMF and friendly counties. Pakistan’s economy mainly depends on agriculture. Despite being an agriculture based economy and 8th largest wheat produc­er the country is facing food security issues. The COAS has given the Green Pakistan Vision to transform Pakistan into green by reclaiming waste and barren lands across Paki­stan. Green Pakistan Initiative already launched across Pak­istan and for the first time thousands of acres of barren land in Cholistan have been cultivated.

[In rare move, North Korea holds out olive branch to Japan for 'new future'](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Feb-2024/in-rare-move-north-korea-holds-out-olive-branch-to-japan-for-new-future)

Another issue would be addressing the issue of unemploy­ment. Various governments in the past promised creation of new jobs but never fulfilled their promises made during elec­tion campaigns. The youth employment is a big challenge as this has to be addressed through innovative approach. Infla­tion has become a serious issue as people are burdened by sky rocketing prices. The raise in oil prices has aggravated the fragile financial economic and financial situation. Tax collec­tion is yet another factor which is affecting Pakistan financial­ly. Only salaried class is paying taxes religiously but still ma­jority escape tax payment. They need to brought into tax net and there is requirement to improve tax collections across the country. Another major issue confronted by the country is ter­rorism which is threatening the security of the country.

There was 86 percent reduction in terror attacks before the take over of Afghanistan by the Taliban. There is a surge in terror attacks by banned terror outfit ‘TTP’ from the safe heavens inside Afghanistan equipped with latest US weap­ons. Pakistan has already paid a huge price on the war on ter­ror as more than 90000 Pakistanis have lost their lives. The unfortunate’s part is that Afghanistan’s Taliban Government is not cooperating with Pakistan. The issue needs to the ad­dressed by the new government in line with national securi­ty policy. There is urgent requirement of reorganization and upgradation of police mainly CTD to effectively combat ter­rorism. Police in KP and Baluchistan is facing burnt of terror­ism with bravery as first line of defence.

[Industrial sector emerges as cornerstone of Pakistan's economic recovery journey](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Feb-2024/industrial-sector-emerges-as-cornerstone-of-pakistan-s-economic-recovery-journey)

Therefore there is a requirement to enhance capacity of Po­lice across Pakistan in anti-terror operations. The politics in Pakistan have polarized to the extent that politicians are not ready to accept each other and carry mutual hatred towards each other. Politicians accuse each other with undignified words even families are not spared. Political parties need to demonstrate maturity and dignity in their political statements. It will be the responsibility of new government to take all po­litical parties on board while taking decision in the interest of the country. Another important issue is to control those youtu­bers and social media users who are maligning the state insti­tutions. Anti Army narratives are floated on social media which are detrimental to national security. Those maligning state in­stitutions are working on the agenda of our enemies. Anti Army narrative is always welcomed in India and Afghanistan.

In the prevailing scenario, the situation demands that in­stead of indulging in blame game and political point scoring better sense should prevail to come up with policies to con­front the economic and security challenges together suc­cessfully. The Pakistan nations except the elected political leadership / new Government to address some of the issues discussed in this article. The new government must take seri­ous and sincere efforts to make Pakistan stand on its own feet.