**Pakistan Zindabad**

**In Pakistan, there is no difference between family business and national politics.**

[Najm us Saqib](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/najm-us-saqib)

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[Opinions](https://www.nation.com.pk/opinions), [Columns](https://www.nation.com.pk/columns), [Newspaper](https://www.nation.com.pk/newspaper)

Finally, the general elections were held in Pakistan on 8 February. Firstly, five interesting facts:

One: Commissioner Rawalpindi’s ‘de­layed’ confession that massive rig­ging took place under his nose further increased doubts about the whole election process. Sounding more like Sparta­cus than a trained bureaucrat, he provided the last proverbi­al twist to an otherwise standard commercial movie.

Two: It is widely believed that PTI was given the government on a platter in 2018. After securing a sizeable num­ber of seats in 2024 and that too while playing David against Goliath, the par­ty can now safely claim ‘legitimacy’ in Pakistan’s socio-political milieu.

Three: MQM (P) underestimated its ‘competence’ in the overall context of the elections. They wish the party had fielded its candidates all over Paki­stan. Looking at the party’s popularity, it could have easily formed government in Islamabad as well as in all the prov­inces – perhaps entirely on its own.

[Thousands in Gaza suffering 'cruelty of hunger and malnutrition': UN](https://www.nation.com.pk/23-Feb-2024/thousands-in-gaza-suffering-cruelty-of-hunger-and-malnutrition-un)

Four: The elder brother has convenient­ly passed on the continuing mess to the younger brother. The interesting part? In Pakistan, there is no difference between family business and national politics.

Five: Ideally speaking, the Maula­na, being the President of PDM, should have been considered for the PM slot. Interestingly, he was not even invited to attend the first meeting of the partners.

Five basic factors as to why the 2024 elections could not address the ongoing political uncertainty:

One: The initial game plan backfired. The PTI supporters surprised every­one. However, even if the chosen PM had got the expected results, political uncertainty would have further deep­ened. Either way, the already polarized nation would have felt frustrated and disheartened. The idea? Replace the present mess with a new one.

Two: The objective of major politi­cal parties never seemed to be bringing ‘certainty’ in the political arena. As al­ways, the objective was to form the gov­ernment or get as many seats as possi­ble. PTI wanted to prove a point or two. PML (N) and Jahangir Tareen forgot that all predictions made by the metrological department don’t come true in Pakistan. Hoping against hope, BBZ kept working towards becoming the PM in any future setup. No political leader had the exact idea about the results. However, all of them were aware of one thing. This was a stage-rehearsal for the next elections.

[18 students held in Punjab University clash](https://www.nation.com.pk/23-Feb-2024/18-students-held-in-punjab-university-clash)

Three: PDM-I proved to be a disas­ter. At best, the logical outcome of the elections was the emergence of PDM-II. Rest assured that even PDM-XI will not be able to address the ongoing politi­cal uncertainty. How could you expect four roosters to lead the hen cage freely, particularly when there is a cat around twenty-four-seven?

Four: Notwithstanding the X-factor, the political forces in Pakistan have created this mess almost on their own. On the other hand, none of the parties-in-pow­er could improve the general standard of living in the country. Ask yourself a sim­ple question: who does the ongoing po­litical uncertainty suit in the long run? Where there is a will, there is a way. As there was no will, there was no way…!!

Five: As Khan had to be removed from the scene after he crossed the Ru­bicon, he was convicted in three cases in quick successions thereby prolong­ing his incarceration for an indefinite time while his party lost its electoral symbol. All requisite steps were taken to make it look like a genuine legal pro­cess. However, the political situation took an unexpected dramatic turn. In­stead of addressing political uncertain­ty, the election debate became a tussle between pro-Khan loyalists and anti-Khan forces. Subsequently, the unex­pected results swayed everyone away. In a head-on collision between wishful thinking and reality, the entire nation is still searching for a clear winner.

[Two killed in petrol agency fire incident](https://www.nation.com.pk/23-Feb-2024/two-killed-in-petrol-agency-fire-incident)

Two basic factors why at present a weak government suits the country:

One: The country has already been provided with its vision of 2030. Hence, for the next six years, Pakistan needs a pliant government to follow the SOPs in letter and spirit. It has been proved be­yond any reasonable doubt that good governance is not a politician’s cup of tea. A stubborn leader or a strong gov­ernment would invariably create hur­dles in the way of economic recovery plans. Perhaps, right now, the coun­try needs implementers and not think­ers. Some extremely important steps need to be taken to receive at least $ 80 to 100 billion in investment through the SIFC. The tax to GDP ratio needs to be increased from eight to fifteen per­cent through the FBR reforms. The pro­posed privatization process involving the SOEs particularly PIA requires our urgent attention. Above all, the not-so-friendly ghosts of IMF are hovering around. Meanwhile, the ‘relevant’ polit­ical parties have been given time to un­derstand their homework while keep clinging to ‘democracy’. Finally, certain foreign policy initiatives are needed to be taken including the one proposed by the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: We should show the beautiful face of Pakistan to the world.

[Pneumonia claims five more lives in 24 hours](https://www.nation.com.pk/23-Feb-2024/pneumonia-claims-five-more-lives-in-24-hours)

Two: Under the circumstances, there was no possibility of producing a major­ity government or a strong and mean­ingful coalition. Hence, apparently, the people of Pakistan have ‘decided’ to give a dangerously split mandate to a seri­ously divided group of political parties. They would rather wait for the air to clear before reposing confidence in only one party. They have also understood that the security of Pakistan comes first and addressing the menace of terrorism is our top priority. They also know that it was during the caretaker government that the dollar’s flight was halted; the gas and electricity thieves were appre­hended; smuggling was controlled; and two brotherly neighboring countries hugged each other soon after firing a few missiles on each other’s territories.

Two basic factors why it would take a hundred years for Pakistan to become an Asian Tiger:

One: No country can even dream about progress without an educated citizenry. Just count the number of chil­dren who are out of schools. Around twenty-three million OOSC - age five to sixteen – forty-four per cent of popula­tion in this age group …!! Ask any leader if they even know the existence of Arti­cle-25A of the Constitution of Pakistan which requires the State to provide free and compulsory education to all chil­dren between age five to sixteen.

[LHC orders one period per week for raising awareness about environmental issues](https://www.nation.com.pk/23-Feb-2024/lhc-orders-one-period-per-week-for-raising-awareness-about-environmental-issues)

Two: Power politics has produced power-hungry politicians. Unless the aim remains to be in the power corri­dors and to make more money, there is no way this country could see prosperi­ty. Enquire about the basic qualification for entering politics or getting a party ticket. The answer? You must have one of these five traits: You can ‘spend’ lav­ishly or gather impromptu crowds or have connections at the right places or can be a perpetual and loyal servant or you are – simply - a relative. As for a leader, either it is qabooliyat (accept­ability) or maqbooliyat (popularity). Nowhere would you see qabliyat (qual­ification) as a prerequisite to become a leader. You don’t have to be a soothsay­er to predict the country’s future.

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