

COUNTRY ANALYSIS REPORT

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PREPARED BY



PREAMBLE

Accountability Lab Pakistan is examining Pakistan's social, political, and economic development indicators to analyze the impact of policy actions and highlights challenges concerning each sector. Amid current political uncertainty and a financial crisis, the Country Report gives an overview of developments in different sectors such as security, governance, and the rule of law. The report also focuses on human rights progress, including the rights of minorities, women, and children and examines the progress across various developmental indicators to promote citizen awareness of a socially connected, economically stable, and politically accountable Pakistan.

POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Jail Bharo Tehreek

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has initiated a movement called "[Jail Bharo Tehreek](#)" asking its followers to offer voluntary arrest as a protest aimed at safeguarding the fundamental rights of the people. The drive began from Lahore, in the east of the country. Through a [series of tweets](#), Imran Khan explained the motivation behind the peaceful and non-violent protest aimed at protecting Pakistan's constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights. He cited various concerns, such as the filing of false First Information Reports (FIRs) and non-bailable cases, incidents of custodial torture, and attacks on journalists and individuals on the social media platforms. [70 party workers](#) have been so far arrested in Gujranwala, during its drive in Punjab's city.

The Lahore central jail authority confirmed that several top leadership of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) were being [detained](#) in various prisons throughout Punjab for 30 days.

The arrests were made on charges of creating a disturbance of law and order and interfering with security arrangements for Pakistan Super League (PSL) teams.

Announcement of Election Dates

According to a press release from the President's Secretariat's Press Wing,

President Dr. Arif Alvi has unilaterally declared April [9th as the date for the general elections](#) to be held for the assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Supreme Court Suo Moto

After the dissolution of the provincial assemblies of Punjab and K-P, the top court took notice of the delay in the announcement of elections for these assemblies and took [suo motu](#) notice of the matter.

In an unexpected turn of events, a panel of five judges from the Supreme Court resumed the hearing of the [suo motu proceedings](#) related to the delay in announcing the date for elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on 27th February, 2023. This is notable as typically such hearings are conducted by a nine-member bench.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INDICATOR

Austerity Measures to Save \$766 million

Pakistan's economy is in distressing circumstances, and to address this issue, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has [implemented austerity measures](#). These measures require government ministers to relinquish their salaries, forego luxury vehicles, and travel in economy class, resulting in an annual saving of 766 million dollars for the government. The implementation of these measures coincides with heightened scrutiny from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and to secure a 1-billion-dollar tranche, the government is taking these actions.

International Monetary Fund and Pakistan's Economic Conundrum Continues

Pakistan is grappling with its economic challenges, and in order to receive the next tranche of financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the country must agree to adhere to strict conditions. Premier has [said](#);

"We have to accept unwillingly the strict conditions for the IMF deal".

In the past, Pakistan has increased the prices of energy and essential goods as part of efforts to revive its economy. In a recent development, Pakistan has pledged to raise its policy rate by 2 percent from the current 17 percent, in order to satisfy the IMF's requirements.

Pakistan's [reliance on external financial aid](#) is not a recent occurrence, as the country has sought assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) 23 times in the last 75 years. As the former Deputy Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan once remarked, "We are, in fact, the most loyal customer of the IMF." This statement leaves little doubt about the country's dependence on IMF assistance over the years.

Economic Woes

Pakistan is currently facing severe financial difficulties, with [weekly inflation rates exceeding 40 percent](#). Moreover, the country's [Parliament has approved increases](#) in taxes on luxury goods and services, and the general sales tax has been raised from 17 percent to 18 percent. The country's economic woes are the result of years of financial mismanagement, as well as political instability, and the impact of these issues is most felt by the common people.



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SECURITY AND RULE OF LAW SITUATION

Deadly Attack on Karachi Police Headquarters Amidst Ongoing Pakistan Super League Matches

The Police Headquarters in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, was the site of a [deadly attack](#), resulting in the deaths of two police officers, a ranger, and a civilian, with 14 others injured. The attackers, two suicide bombers, were both killed, with at least one having detonated his explosive.

The Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan has claimed responsibility for the attack. The incident is particularly alarming as it occurred in the heart of the city, while the Pakistan Super League matches are happening, [despite claims](#) of foolproof security measures from provincial and federal governments. The building was cleared within three hours of the attack.



Officials have stated that Pakistan [received assurances](#) from Afghanistan regarding its efforts to combat terrorism. However, the Afghan Taliban [has put forward a demand](#) that Pakistan covers the expenses associated with disarming the groups and relocating them away from the borders of Pakistan.



SOCIAL SECTOR INDICATORS AND DEVELOPMENT

WHO Warns of Global Cholera Outbreaks, One Billion People at Risk in 43 Countries

The World Health Organization (WHO) has [issued a warning](#) that a global increase in cholera cases has placed the lives of one billion people in 43 countries, including Pakistan, at risk. According to WHO's cholera team leader, Philippe Barboza, three countries reported outbreaks this week alone. In an unprecedented move, WHO is requesting assistance from donors to combat these outbreaks.

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Nutrition Education Provided to Children in Twin Cities

As [40.2% of children in Pakistan are facing stunted growth](#), the National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS) has initiated a program to provide nutrition education to schoolchildren in the twin cities, with the aim of raising awareness and improving their health. The department has launched these educational sessions at various schools in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, recognizing the critical state of nutrition indicators in Pakistan and the significance of promoting nutrition education at the grassroots level.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

IAEA Director General visits Pakistan to Explore Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy for Climate Change Mitigation

Nuclear energy can help address climate change due to its low carbon emissions, reliability and efficiency, energy security, cost-effectiveness, and advances in waste management.

The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Mariano Grossi, visited Pakistan for two days to strengthen collaboration on the peaceful application of nuclear energy in food, agriculture, and medicine, and to explore how nuclear energy can help mitigate the effects of climate change. During his visit, he met with the Chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) and the Chairman of the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA), who briefed him on Pakistan's nuclear security and regulatory regime. Grossi also inaugurated the National Radiation Emergency Coordination Centre (NRECC) at PNRA, highlighting Pakistan's five decades of experience in safe and secure operations of civil nuclear power plants in accordance with IAEA standards and guidelines.

Grossi noted that;

Despite being a low-ranking carbon emitter, Pakistan is disproportionately affected by climate change.

He acknowledged Pakistan's significant achievements in nuclear science and technology, which have contributed to the country's socio-economic development in areas such as cancer treatment, crop development, and food preservation.



STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Accusations of Private Jail and Dead Bodies Unearth Feudal System in Baluchistan, Pakistan

In a recent incident in Pakistan, the country's feudal system was exposed when the Minister for Construction and Communications in Baluchistan, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, was [accused of running a private jail](#) after the bodies of a woman and two boys were found in a well near his house. The woman's husband, Khan Muhammad, claimed that Khetran had imprisoned his wife and seven children in 2019 for not testifying in a case involving a conflict between Khetran and his son. While police later discovered that the dead bodies were not those of Khan's wife or children, the incident led to the arrest of the provincial minister, and a [search operation](#) conducted by the Levies Quick Response Force resulted in the discovery of Khan's wife and two children. The minister [has now been sent on a ten-day judicial remand](#).

Sexual Assault on a Woman in Federal Capital After She Sought Assistance in Finding Job from Two Men

In an unfortunate and woeful event, a woman in the Federal Capital was [raped at gunpoint](#) after seeking help from two men in finding a job. The men had previously offered her a job through their friend and [picked her up](#) from a designated location before taking her to a deserted spot to carry out the assault. The case has been registered in Shalimar Police Station, Islamabad after the case was lodged by the victim.



FOREIGN RELATIONS

Indo-Pak

Indian Foreign Minister Subramanyam Jaishankar [stated ahead of the G-20 countries foreign minister meeting](#) in New Delhi on March 1st-2nd that Pakistan must resolve its economic challenges on its own. He further stated that India's relationship with Pakistan does not directly impact the critical financial support required for Pakistan's economy. India's efforts towards establishing itself as a leading global power have also resulted in positive relations with other global powers.

Sino-Pak

Due to Pakistan's ailing economy, China has [extended a loan of 700 million dollars](#). It is important to note that Pakistan is already indebted to China and Chinese commercial banks for a sum of \$30 billion, and has now acquired another loan. This additional loan is expected to facilitate the release of bailout funds from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for Pakistan.

Afghanistan-Pak

In an [effort to address security concerns](#) and the recent closure of borders between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Spy Chief Lieutenant General Nadeem Anjum traveled to Kabul to engage in talks with the Taliban government. During the meeting, the Pakistani delegation, along with Afghanistan's acting Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, [discussed](#) economic cooperation, regional connectivity, and security matters that have been affecting Pakistan in recent months.



U.S-Pak

The 9th meeting of the Council of the US-Pakistan Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) was held, with a [focus on enhancing agricultural and digital trade](#). The meeting was led by US Trade Representative Katherine Tai and Pakistan's Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar. The US State Department emphasizes the significance of a strong trade relationship between the two nations to support Pakistan's economic stability. As they seek to expand beyond strategic engagement and defense ties, both allies are exploring new possibilities.

