

| Pakistan's political

Pakistan's political landscape is defined by institutional imbalance, deep political polarization, civil-military friction, and structural economic dependency. The political environment remains volatile following contested elections, high-profile opposition detentions, and shifting regional security dynamics.

Key Pillars of the Political Framework

- The Civil-Military Dynamic: The military establishment—often termed the "Establishment"—continues to act as the central arbiter of national policy, national security, and key diplomatic initiatives. While formal political institutions follow a constitutional democratic process, the military routinely exercises significant influence over governance.
- Coalition Politics & Institutional Friction: The governing national structure relies on a fragile coalition built primarily around the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). This coalition emerged to counter the widespread popular support of former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).
- Judicial & Constitutional Alterations: Recent legislative changes, such as amendments modifying judicial appointments and Supreme Court

oversight, have drawn intense debate. Critics argue these changes compress judicial independence, while proponents contend they restore balance to parliamentary sovereignty.

Current Political State & Key Dynamics

Core Political Friction Axes

Government Coalition vs. Popular Opposition (PTI)

Civil Governance vs. Military Strategic Authority

Federal Fiscal Autonomy vs. Provincial Mandates

Domestic Security Threats vs. Foreign Policy Goals

1. Public Mobilization & Electoral Legitimacy

Despite legal barriers, party bans, and the imprisonment of Imran Khan, PTI-aligned independent candidates secured the largest share of directly elected seats in the 2024 general election. Persistent claims of election-day manipulation and voter suppression have fueled an ongoing legitimacy crisis for the sitting federal government.

2. Internal Security & Regional Instability

Domestic politics is increasingly complicated by severe internal security challenges:

- Balochistan Separatism: Heightened activity by groups like the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) targeting infrastructure and security forces has exacerbated tensions between local populations and federal authorities.
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Volatility: Cross-border friction with Afghanistan and the resurgence of militant activities (such as Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) strain local law enforcement and military resources.

3. Foreign Policy as a Political Shield

The political leadership and military establishment have increasingly leveraged international diplomacy—such as mediating high-stakes regional dialogues (e.g., US-Iran tensions) and entering joint defense frameworks like the Mecca Joint Defense Agreement with Saudi Arabia and Turkey—to consolidate domestic legitimacy and secure external financial backing.

Strategic Political Analysis

Dimension	Primary Vulnerability	Political Consequence
Government Stability	Dependent on multi-party consensus and military support.	High vulnerability to internal friction (e.g., PPP-PML-N policy disputes).
Opposition Movement	Top-level leadership jailed; restricted political operating space.	Continued street mobilization and risk of sudden civil unrest.
Economic Governance	IMF bailout conditions require unpopular austerity measures.	Reduced public approval and rising inflation-driven discontent.
Federal-Provincial Relations	Resource distribution disputes (National Finance Commission award).	Strained center-province mechanics, particularly in KP and Balochistan.