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The Political Landscape of Pakistan: A Journey of Turmoil and Transition and prelude to Global Unrest?

Pakistan's recent elections have stirred up controversy and uncertainty, reflecting the deep-seated political turmoil within the country. With allegations of rigging and widespread dissatisfaction with the military's influence, the nation stands on the brink of internal conflict. However, the implications of Pakistan's instability extend beyond its borders, potentially contributing to global unrest. In this article, I delve into the complexities of Pakistan's political landscape and examine the broader ramifications for regional and international stability.

Since its inception, Pakistan's political landscape has been marked by a complex interplay of power dynamics, with the military often wielding significant influence over the country's governance. This essay delves into the intricate web of political events, power struggles, and external influences that have shaped Pakistan's electoral history and the potential for future turmoil.

From the outset, the military establishment has maintained a firm grip on power in Pakistan. Prime ministers who dared to challenge or defy the military's authority have met dire consequences. Examples abound, from Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's execution to Benazir Bhutto's assassination. Even popular leaders like

Imran Khan have faced allegations of corruption and imprisonment when they crossed the military's path.

Despite Imran Khan's electoral victory and his promises to reduce the military's influence, the reality remains stark. His party faces numerous restrictions imposed by the military, highlighting the enduring power dynamics within Pakistan's political arena. Khan's unexpected overtures to Russia, including a meeting with President Putin, have raised eyebrows in Western capitals, particularly in the United States and Britain, which have historically wielded significant influence over Pakistan's military.

Moreover, reports of electoral rigging and constraints on political freedom have cast a shadow over Pakistan's democratic process. Khan's controversial stance on terrorism, perceived as sympathetic to Pakistani terror groups, has further strained relations with anti-Taliban factions in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Currently, a lot of rigging is reported from the Pakistan election. Independent candidates allied with Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party have won 97 of 265 National Assembly seats, according to an Al Jazeera tally of results announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan. Ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has won 75 seats while the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) secured 54. It is still unclear who will form the government as a simple majority of 134 seats is required for a party or coalition to come to power. Police have threatened a crackdown as PTI and other parties protest, alleging widespread rigging of the vote. Results from four provincial assemblies, whose elections were also held on Thursday, are still awaited.

Most likely, there would be internal tension and clashes between the army and the people, especially among young educated Pakistanis who support former Prime Minister Imran Khan. They believe that the main cause of Pakistan's backwardness is the domination and influence of the military in the country's political structure. The backward economy, widespread poverty, and other challenges faced by Pakistan have been attributed to the army's control, ISI's involvement, corruption, and dominance since its partition from the Indian continent. While India has progressed significantly in various fields, Pakistan remains mired in corruption and economic struggles, unable to adequately address the needs of its population. This dissatisfaction among the Pakistani youth is fuelling demands for an end to the military's longstanding control over the country's politics.

Therefore, Pakistan finds itself in an unprecedented chaotic situation, with the army losing popularity among the younger generation. Calls for a reduction in the military's interference in politics and governance are growing louder, as people

seek to break away from the traditional power structures that have been dominated by the military since the country's establishment. This desire for change is also fuelled by Pakistan's role as a haven for exporting terrorist groups to the region, exacerbating tensions with neighbouring countries.

Additionally, the division within the Taliban in Afghanistan and the influence of neighbouring countries have further complicated Pakistan's control over Afghanistan. The presence of a middle-age clergy group like the Taliban, primarily composed of individuals educated in Deobandi religious madrassas established during British colonial rule in India, underscores the challenges Pakistan faces in maintaining its influence over the region.

Amidst these internal tensions, Pakistan finds itself caught in the crossfire of geopolitical rivalries between Western and Asian powers. Countries like India, China, Russia, and Iran are increasingly asserting their influence in the region, challenging the traditional dominance of the United States and Britain. This geopolitical tug-of-war exacerbates Pakistan's internal strife and complicates efforts to chart a stable path forward.

Looking ahead, the future of Pakistan appears uncertain, with the military's waning popularity among the younger generation signalling a desire for change. Calls for reducing the military's role in politics and addressing systemic issues such as corruption and poverty resonate strongly among Pakistani youth. However, achieving meaningful reform will require navigating treacherous political waters and overcoming entrenched power structures.

In conclusion, Pakistan stands at a critical juncture, grappling with deep-seated political challenges and external pressures. The outcome of this struggle will not only shape Pakistan's future but also have far-reaching implications for regional stability. Whether Pakistan can break free from its turbulent past and emerge as a beacon of democracy and prosperity remains to be seen. However, one thing is certain: the journey ahead will be fraught with challenges and uncertainties.

Pakistan grapples with internal strife and the erosion of democratic norms, the world watches with growing concern. The convergence of geopolitical rivalries and internal dissent paints a grim picture for the future of the region. Moreover, the volatile situations in countries like Israel, Ukraine, and Pakistan serve as potential flashpoints that could ignite widespread and uncontrollable global conflict if not managed with wisdom and restraint. It is imperative for international stakeholders to recognize the urgency of addressing these simmering tensions before they escalate into catastrophic consequences for the entire world.

Reference for election result:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2024/2/11/pakistan-election-results-live-wait-for-final-tally-three-days-after-vote>