

## **Political History of Pakistan: An Outlook of Corruption Mantra 2008-2013**

By

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### **Abstract**

*This paper analyzes Iranian foreign policy from 2005 to 2020, examining the interplay between religious ideology and pragmatic strategy. It argues that while religion plays a significant role in shaping Iran's worldview and justifying its actions, pragmatism is the dominant driver of its foreign policy decisions. Through case studies of Iran's relations with Syria, Azerbaijan, and various non-state actors, and its policy towards Chechnya and Xinjiang, the paper demonstrates how Iran prioritizes national interests and strategic goals, even when they conflict with its foundational principles. The analysis covers the presidencies of Ahmadinejad and Rouhani, highlighting the continuity of pragmatic approaches despite differing political styles. The paper concludes that understanding Iranian foreign policy requires acknowledging the complex interaction of religious rhetoric and strategic calculation, with pragmatism ultimately guiding Iran's pursuit of regional influence and its engagement with the international community.*

### **Key Words**

Iranian foreign policy, pragmatism, religious ideology, Middle East, Syria, non-state actors

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## **Introduction**

Corruption is one of the menacing threats facing Pakistan since its inception as an Independent State. The prime reason is colonial inheritance with weak governmental institutions, political instability and absence of accountability. Without knowing the history of Pakistan, the main reasons of money making in the governmental affairs with corrupt practices can never be understood. Corruption had been used as a lethal weapon to materialize various interests in the country. The far-reaching consequences of corruption have weakened the very existence of the Pakistan. According to various reports and different statistical surveys from 2008 to 2013, Pakistan lost almost 8.5 trillion Rupees. This regime was criticized as the most corrupt Government in the history of the country. Local Media and political opposition played a vital role to expose the corruption cases in the generation and management of energy, Rental Power Project, Hajj Scandal, Pakistan International Airlines, Pakistan Railways, etc.

Corruption is an illegitimate act and it has various dimensions. It has been characterized in different courses, for instance, straightforwardness global characterized it as the abuses of depended control for private pick up. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, ‘Corruption is an illegal, dishonest or bad behavior, especially by the people in positions of power or authority. This is an expansive definition that can incorporate a scope of open and private degenerate practices. Corruption is one of the biggest issues in third-world countries. Pakistan is a corruption-riddled state and very prone to corrupt practices owing to the shaky accountability institutions. This restriction between society and the individual, or between the general population and the private circle, is to be found in many meanings of debasement. All things being equal, most scholarly talks on debasement will recognize little scale, “vast scale or individual defilement and foundational defilement, which one can discover on a bigger scale in the whole nation.” The international watchdogs have presented a very dark picture of corrupt practices in Pakistan. As indicated by the defilement discernments file arranged by Transparency International Report (TIR), Pakistan is the 34th most degenerate nation out of 178 assessed, slipping eight spots from its past positioning.

Even though the PPP government restricted the report of Transparency International on different grounds, however, Media spotlighted the wrongdoings of the government. Transparency International itself made it clear what was being estimated "the general degree of defilement and fumble of fund (recurrence and/or size of fixes) in the general population and political area," which implies. It was the restricted determination of a specific political government and it took a gander at general debasement in the State hardware. However, it is argued that whatever was the “Misinterpretation of Transparency International in its description of corruption

index, there was also a reality to consider. It's fairly obvious there was no smoke without a fire."

The account of widespread defilement has remained a matter of grave worry in Pakistan. Government high-ups and pioneers, while at times recognizing that defilement exists, have done nothing to address this difficult issue genuinely. In this domain, the flimsy responsibility measures and foundations advanced defilement in Pakistan. The chairmanship of the General Society Accounts Council (GSAC) was in the hands of the pioneer of the resistance in the National Assembly. However, it was watched that he stayed quiet on the making of the guaranteed National Accountability Bureau (NAB), so there was next to no done to elevate adherence to precludes set by the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority.

It was, however, incumbent upon the government to overcome such illegal practices in collaboration with the opposition. Opposition leader Ch. Nisar Ali Khan, who was the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee was more active in tracing out the corrupt elements. There was a scandal of NLC's misuse of its authority during the PPP rule. In corruption cases, all the institutions were found corrupt in their dealings. In this case, more than 85 retired Military officials including some of the Generals were found involved. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq from PMLN was the director of the National Assembly standing panel on railroads and issued reports including one of them about Musharraf's administration and allocation of the place of Pakistan Railways to extravagance Golf Club. In this agreement, the debasement was found around sixteen billion rupees. "Retired Pakistan Armed Force Generals including a previous ISI boss were discovered associated with that outrage."

On the 'Floor of the House' and Electronic and Print Media, highlighted Corruption and misuse of the government authorities. Moreover, International Media emphasized the mismanagement of government led by PPP. The institutions, which were responsible for overcoming mismanagements and mishandling of finances were total crippled and dominated by people nominated or selected by these institutions. Their hands were in gloves to loot and plunder the wealth of the nation. Senator Malik Rafiq Rajwana of PMLN highlighted the mismanagement and corruption in the Pakistan Railways as follows: "Four dinning autos of four trains are being controlled by private people with no activity and with no delicate allegedly a gigantic loss of crores of rupees have been caused to Pakistan Railways." He requested that the relevant Minister accountable for Railways issues ought to have surrendered, rather than confronting the general population and saying that we require endowments. In Pakistan, despite charges of irregularities and incompetence, minister stays and never realize their failure whereas in a democratic state. Former Prime Minister (PM) Yousaf Raza Gilani's wife Fauzia was also found involved in corruption. She was accused of "receiving loans of millions of rupees from National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and Agricultural Developmental Bank of Pakistan (ADBP) and these loans were never returned with interests."

Following are a few of the major corruption scams and scandals reported and exposed in the regime of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), 2008-2013;

**Hajj Scandal:**

Notwithstanding, the endless story of corruption does not end here. Hamid Saeed Kazmi the religious minister of PPP was found involved in the corruption scandal. This time the charges were very serious and unopposed. The Hajj scam was one of the biggest scandals of hoarding millions of rupees from the hajjis.

“A triangular nexus has been built up between Moulana for religious issues Hamid Saeed Kazmi, DG Haj activities Rao Shakeel Ahmad and Ahmad Faiz, the last is a Pakistani national utilized by the religious issues service for enlisting convenience for

travellers, he denied the national exchequer of Rs200 million, Investigation officer Javed Shah Bukhari educated the court.”

The genuine allegations of defilement were built up against him so, "He was arrested on March 15th, 2011 by FIA. Yet in August 2012, he was allowed safeguard by the Court.”

The Chairman of NAB, Qamar Zaman Chaudhary has said regarding corruption:

“He is not under any obligation to two individuals- (Former) Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif or Syed Khurshid Shah, who have selected him for the job, and assured that all corruption cases would be pursued on merit besides correcting the past wrongs of NAB.”

In a meeting with a press correspondent, the Chairman NAB Qamar Zaman further put aside all the impressions that he would act at the beck and call of anybody's man or be a compromised chairman. He said that he has already given instructions to his team for the details of all the pending cases of corruption against all the leading personalities including politicians and bureaucrats. “There would be no closed and pending files or cases in the NAB anymore. He ensured; that he would pursue all the accountability as per the law without any political victimization.”

The chairman of NAB was asked if he would precede the cases against the incumbent Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, both of whom are having cases in NAB but also have appointed him for the job. The answer given by the chairman of NAB was: “Without doing into any specific names, let me assure you that NAB would pursue all corruption cases on merit and as per the law.” The chairman of NAB also apparently tried to distance him from the political high-ups

and declared that his appointment is not the result of any individual but the trust on merit.

### **Rental Power Project (RPP)**

Pakistan has been facing a shortfall of electricity for decades. The rental Power Project (RPP) begins in Pakistan to overcome the energy crisis in 2006. Projects were highlighted by the media for bribery and corruption, in which the top-level ministers and high officials were involved. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf as the Minister of Water and Power was also apparently involved in that money-making and kickbacks. He was the one of them, who

obtained approval from the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) and the cabinet for an increase in payment to the companies related to “Rental Power Projects and the increase made from 7% to 14% amounting to 22 Billion Rupees, for which he has been accused by opposition parties.” Simultaneously, Supreme Court ordered to arrest of all the respondents and report the case within 24 hours to the authorities to implement the orders of the court to tackle the case of corruption in the country. Meanwhile, Supreme Court mentioned in a report that National Accountability Bureau (NAB) will be responsible if any of the respondents manage to escape from the country by any excuse. After it was emphasized strongly in Electronic and Print Media. “The chief justice ordered that all concerned, regardless of their rank, which have been booked in the case be arrested and if someone leaves the country, then chairman of NAB will be held responsible along with his investigating team, lawyer Aamir Abbas told AFP.”

PM Raja Pervaiz Ashraf after the hearing in the court further mentioned that it’s nothing more than a character assassination campaign that has been started by the media and was never accepted by a politician. However, Mr. Ashraf was accused of corruption during his term of government as Minister of Water and Power and obtained approval from the Economic Coordination Committee and the lower rank authorities for an increase in down payment to the companies from the amount of 22 billion Rupees meanwhile, companies used to give 7 to 14 percent from that money on the instructions of Mr. Ashraf.

It was told to the press that the (Former) Prime Minister was not called and mentioned by name Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhary. During these days Karachi Stock Exchange was the talk of the town because of this case and mostly Highline by the local televisions, which was not a good omen for the economy. The KSE 100 index lost 453.46 points or 2.74 percent in little over half an hour to stand at 16633.18 just before the ending time. When Tahir-ul-Qadri was protesting for electoral reforms in the capital, Islamabad, the people and the participants were happy with the decision of the Supreme Court and were chanting

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the slogans “Long Live Supreme Court”. These days the protesters were calling PM Ashraf Raja Rental, he was accused of taking kickbacks on rental power projects. “He was also accused of buying property in London from money earned through different scams.”

## **Energy Crises**

The infrastructure of Pakistan had been poorly managed especially in the field of energy and it is still in the development process. Pakistan was suffering from the worse kind of shortfall in demand and supply. Meanwhile, transmission losses due to outdated infrastructure, poor billing management, and the harsh cold, and warm weather have made the circumstances entirely unsatisfactory. Hence, with the increase in demand load shedding became a common problem, all over Pakistan. “Energy crisis, which started in 2007-2008 made the situation very serious in every city. Within a year energy supply declined per capita by 0.64 percent. It was comparatively less than 3.09 in the previous years.”

“Economic activity in the country leading to an increase in the rate of unemployment said Former Chief of Jamaat-e-Islam Qazi Hussain Ahmed at a seminar titled ‘Energy Crisis and its Solutions’, a national consensus was the only means for solving the problems of the nation.”

Further, he argued that:

“And the crippling power shortfall is just one then. Thousands have been laid off as a large number of industrial units had to be shut down simply just because there was no electricity to keep them functioning.”

In the discussions, the experts put forward several ways to produce around 40000 Mega Watt (MW) of electricity at low costs. It was dependent on the potential of the government that how to make the present production from 800 to 8000MW from Water resources alone. Pakistan can solve the problem of the energy crisis at the domestic level. “For this, we need to establish smaller dams and promote solar and wind energy production”. Meanwhile, Taj Haider mentioned about Pakistan-Iran Gas Pipeline Project (PIGPP) that the project was approximately completed, and the remaining part was just to connect it with local gas infrastructure.

He further said:

“The government was pursuing a strategy for reducing dependence on foreign countries for meeting local energy needs. He said that the 18th constitutional amendment stipulated the provinces would share their produced energy with other areas only once their own energy needs had been met.” “But Sindh uses only 38 percent of its total energy production of 70 percent and is compelled to share the

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rest with other sectors, even though its fertilizer plants and power-producing companies are suffering.”

According to him, the Sindh province was also bearing the ‘Pak-Iran project Gas Pipeline’ and Sindh will share the project, not to gain anything from the project either economically or in the shape of power.

“Gas reserves of 850mmcf/d have been located in Sindh and the province can produce around 40000MW with wind energy alone.” He mentioned the Chinese firm on the hydel power projects in Sindh: “By December 2012, 2000MW would be added to the national grid, while another 2000MW would be added next year.”

Sui Gas field is the biggest field of natural gas in Pakistan. It produces 6 percent of the total gas for Pakistan. However, the system of supplying gas is not well managed, gas is being wasted due to leakage, and in Punjab leakage was on height. It is believed that around 450mmcf/d gas is wasted on daily basis only in the province of Punjab. Meanwhile, in the desert areas of Sindh, Thar Coal Power Project (TCPP) covers an area of 9600 sq. km and is estimated to produce 175 billion barrels of oil. The managing director of TCPP, Dr. Muhammad Shabbier, mentioned during that period, he said it is because of load shedding that more than 400000 people are jobless. “Every year Pakistan is losing Rs. 230 billion, which was an excessive drawback for the economy of Pakistan.”

“Energy expert Masood Abdali said by 1947 around 66 Oil and Gas wells were operating in the country. Right now, 232 wells have been dug and all of them are operational.”

Pakistan Muslim League Q (PML-Q) was in opposition. They demanded the Minister for Water and Power, clear his position on the earlier statements about the power projects in the country. This was a daunting task for the Minister of Water and Power because he was already facing cases on several corruption charges. Many ministers from the Pakistan people’s party (PPP) also asked the same question as inquired by the opposition leader during the debates in the National Assembly. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf could not answer any questions about the six power stations with a power generation capacity of 1965MW, which had been added to the power system during the last five years. Meanwhile, Power and Infrastructure Board (PIB) processed 40 multiple fuel projects with a cumulative capacity of 11021MW throughout the country in the private sector during the same period. The minister further told to representatives that “three projects launched by the previous regime with a cumulative capacity of 615MW were expected to start electricity generation.” These questions were considered a good omen for the opposition, as they became active with this and start a campaign against the government for its failure in making efficient projections and management for tackling the energy crisis. Riaz Pirzada and Ameer Muqam inquired to Mr. Ashraf to put forward the details on the floor of

the house regarding his earlier assertions. The previous government had not started even any power project to increase the power sector on the national level. However, Mr. Pirzada said that he had been listening from different sources and even the minister on different talk shows claim that the government did nothing to generate electricity. Criticizing Mr. Ashraf, Ameer Muqam said that the Minister of Water and Power has confused the house as well as the nation, what should we believe, what Mr. Ashraf had been stating for a long time in written replies, which Pervaiz has given to the house. The house and the nation are confused in a way that the minister is at the same time saying that “No Power Plant or Project has been started by the previous government and on the other hand, saying that more than 2000MW electricity, which was being generated by the (former) Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and his government.”

The opposition parties were unsatisfied with the answers given by relevant ministries. Interestingly, they said that the present government is following the steps of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto’s footprints in dealing with the energy issues and claimed “The projects being launched by the present PPP government would generate 3700MW of electricity.” When PPP came to government in 2008, the country was facing a great amount of serious energy crisis especially load shedding of Electricity and Gas. Eighteen hours of load shedding of electricity, causes serious damage in the country especially, in the most populated and agricultural hub of Pakistan, the province of Punjab. Large demonstrations were held and those protests were backed by the opposition parties to defame PPP. Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif (Nawaz Sharif) the president of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) in a meeting, which was conducted by the Pakistan movement worker trust and the Nazaria-I-Pakistan trust for the 102nd anniversary of the founding of All India Muslim league said: “The gas prices too are coming down in the world over but in Pakistan, the situation is just the opposite making the poor man unable to afford such a situation.”

## **Conclusion**

It is really hard to make progress and development when the governmental missionary itself is involved in making money by using unfair and corrupt means. The absence of fair accountability has further made the situation more deteriorated. The corruption mantra in Pakistan is as old as the history of the country. Furthermore, the failure of democracy, delayed Constitutionalism and military interventions, hampered the leadership to move forward with accountability measures. Until now, political leaders are not seemingly on the same page regarding the measures and ways of eliminating corruption in Pakistan. This is however because of their involvement and their past track record of making money by unfair means. Hardly any inquiries about the institutional defilement of the security powers, which arrogate to themselves amazing benefits. The legal higher and lower level is broken and overflowing with the stories of debasement. How is feasible for

an institution to end such practices if it is itself associated with illicit sort of inclusions. The same goes for the state hardware engaged with the administration's conveyance and for the police compel. In this scenario of corrupt practices, there are long-standing problems. Political instability is one of the major reason that the situation is not improving over the decades in the country. Structural reforms in the governmental operational system, long term policies, fair and accountable judicial system is needed to startup a relatively fair system in the country.

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