

# Post-election Pakistan

## BOTTOM LINE



BARRISTER HARUN UR RASHID

*Nawaz Sharif could not complete his full term as prime minister in 1990 and in 1997, and returns as prime minister for the third time. For now, Nawaz Sharif is the winner in Pakistan and it is up to him to meet the economic and political challenges, including a powerful Taliban insurgency, facing the country.*

THE election results show that Mian Nawaz Sharif is set to become the prime minister for a third term. He was prime minister first in 1990 and then in 1997.

The May 11 Pakistani elections brought in a civilian government that will be tested by the following challenges:

- Whether Pakistan will cooperate with the US in the US-led war on terror in its border areas;
- Whether Pakistan will have warmer relations with India, saying that its soil will not be used for attacks on India;
- Whether the powerful military will not only refrain from interfering with the government on foreign policy and security issues, but will also pull back from manipulating politics and accept civilian government.

The election was historic. In a country where the military ruled for half of its history, the outgoing government, led by the Pakistan People's Party of President Asif Ali Zardari, had survived a full five-year term and handed power to an elected successor.

Analysts say that the PPP government survived because it allowed the generals to control Pakistan's main foreign-policy and security issues. "That government had given up most of its power. There is not a single issue on which it had not withdrawn in the face of the military," said Ayesha Siddiqi, a Pakistani author and analyst of military affairs.

During the election campaign, Nawaz Sharif said he would end the country's involvement in the US-led war on terror if elected. Former cricket star Imran Khan, the head of PPI, whose party emerged as a major force, has gone even further,

saying he would order the army to shoot down American drones. The Taliban, in turn, have refrained from attacking PML-N and PTI rallies.

Sharif reportedly said that he would work to improve ties with New Delhi. He said to the CNN-IBN in an interview: "If I become the prime minister, I will make sure that Pakistani soil is not used for any such designs against India."

"Previously, we said that until the issue of Kashmir was resolved, there would be no economic relations with India," said PML-N Senior Vice President Sartaj Aziz, who served as finance and foreign minister in Mr. Sharif's governments in the 1990s. "But this has changed now. All of our leaders want to have good relations with India now."

During the election campaign Nawaz Sharif repeatedly stressed that he would ensure that the military knew its rightful place: implementing the civilian government's decisions -- an approach he tried to pursue when he was last in power.

"There was a policy of hands-off," said retired Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas, who served until last year as the military's chief spokesman. In the current Pakistani election, he adds, "there are not at this point in time any favourites, as far as the institutional support is concerned."

"The military has taken a back seat, and the judiciary has taken the front seat in this election," said Gen. Durrani, adding that the treatment of the former army chief Musharraf has been "an embarrassment for the military."

Sharif is likely to temper his approach towards the military, predicted retired Maj. Gen. Mahmud Durrani, who served as national security adviser in the PPP government. "If you have to negotiate with the Taliban, you must do it from a position of strength -- doing it from a position of weakness is very foolish," he said.

It is noted that Army Chief Gen. Kayani and Supreme Court Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry are both scheduled to retire before the end of this year.

Gen. Kayani assumed office in 2007 and worked on repairing the military's reputation, which was tainted during the Musharraf years. There is reportedly growing discontent with Gen. Kayani within the ranks, with many senior generals questioning his cooperation with the US. The unprecedented extension of Gen. Kayani's term in 2010 particularly dented his popularity within the military.

That the military is a powerful institution was recently demonstrated by the blocking of internet sites showing mocking of the Pakistan army by a rock-band. Analysts say that whatever the make-up of the government, the military's powers will likely be circumscribed.

Observers say the outgoing PPP government was widely perceived to be particularly incompetent and corrupt. Should such mis-governance persist after the elections, the military may not sit idle, said retired Brig. Shaukat Qadir, who taught many senior Pakistani generals at the country's National Defence University.

The dismissal of Chief Justice Chaudhry by former President Musharraf triggered widespread protests and turned Justice Chaudhry into a national hero. If anything, the country's activist judiciary has curtailed the military's traditional role, disqualifying thousands of candidates -- including General Musharraf, who has been barred from politics for life and placed under house arrest.

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In a White House statement, President Obama congratulated the Pakistani people on the successful completion of parliamentary election and said his administration looked forward to continuing cooperation with the new government of Pakistan. The Sharif government may not be easily amenable to the strategic needs of the US. However, stability in Pakistan -- the world's fifth-largest democracy -- is crucial to the US, especially as the US will withdraw its combat troops from neighbouring Afghanistan by the end of next year.

The writer is a former Bangladesh Ambassador to the UN, Geneva.



## Why equal pay is a bad thing

A financial expert explains it to me: what do you think?

AN ECONOMIST FRIEND was tearing his hair out.

He was trying to analyze a trend started by someone he scornfully described as "a billionaire who thinks we all live on one planet".

I broke the news to him gently. "We DO all live on one planet. Except for Kim Jong-un, Kanye West, George W Bush, my boss, my neighbor, Lift Lurker, and pretty much everyone else I encounter in my daily life."

"Not in economic terms," he said.

(It seems that economists and humans apparently don't live on the same planet. But then I guess most of us have long suspected this to be true.)

He explained that Japanese garment tycoon Tadashi Yanai (pic at top) had started paying all his staff the exact same wage, even if they lived in poor countries.

Tadashi thinks all bosses should do what he has done at his popular Uniqlo fashion store chain, which is spreading fast around the world.

This got me thinking.

I told him about TRUE STORY which happened some years ago in Sri Lanka.

Everybody at the US Embassy in Colombo got a pay rise.

Someone

noticed the toilet-cleaner had been missed, and wrote to Washington.

A functionary 14,000 kilometers away looked up the average wage of sanitary workers in the US and added it to embassy payroll.

The Sri Lankan toilet cleaner instantly became the richest man in his village. He had his own car and chauffeur.

(Who drove him to the toilets he still had to clean.)

Anyway, the economist, a Brit working for a Japanese bank, gave me a sneak peek at the future.

Say Tadashi uses Australia as a base. A toilet cleaner there gets the equivalent of US\$16.45 an hour.

In many countries, wise Prime Ministers would rush to get jobs as Uniqlo toilet cleaners.

Toilet cleaners, pushed out of the market, might lower themselves to becoming Prime Ministers, trying their hands at running countries.

Who knows? They might do a good job. (They couldn't do worse.)

"But I can't work out who's going to pay for this revolution," the economist said.

Two days later, this columnist found the answer.

My daughters came home with three bags of clothes from Uniqlo. I'm paying for it.



# The future trend of education

ASIF MAHFUZ

BANGLADESH, though it is predicted to be one of the rising economies in the next 20 years, has two major problems, poverty and unemployment. Arguably, more than 40% of the population lives in poverty and the unemployment rate is one of the highest in the world.

But there is a way to solve both the problems together. Because of the changing demographics of the developed world, the increasing demand for cheap, competitive and skilled labour and its own demographic dividend, Bangladesh can play a global role as premier worker supplier.

On one hand the country can earn foreign currency and on the other it can alleviate poverty. The need for skilled labour internally is also increasing, as Bangladesh is emerging as a major exporter of RMG, leather and other products. Korea has already set up exclusive export processing zones; China is considering relocation of labor intensive industries to Bangladesh. The demand of skilled manpower is increasing, since developed economies are experiencing shortage of skilled manpower due to ageing populations and expansion of economic networks.

Bangladeshi migrants' remittances and their impact on economic and social structures have become significant force for the country's economy and employment. Last year, Bangladesh earned US \$14.2 billion as remittance and from July to March 2012-13, earned US \$ 11.2 billion. A total of 575,389 persons went abroad in 2012, ten thousand more than the previous year, despite the decrease in some of the major employer countries. The worldwide increasing demand for skilled labor is provid-



ing Bangladesh a chance to establish itself as the premier supplier of labor worldwide. But to do this it has to turn its human resources into skilled workers.

Currently, there is a lack of skilled, educated workers in Bangladesh. Though over the last decade the progress of primary school enrollment was impressive, the increase in the drop-out rate was also significant. Over 50 % of the primary school students drop out before passing class five, mainly to join workforce for earning. As a consequence more than 50% of Bangladeshi workers have no education and less than 0.5 % has received vocational or technical training. Without proper education or skills, these workers get low paid, informal sector jobs at the best.

For improving skills, emphasize has to be given to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Since TVET students come from underprivileged background it helps to alleviate poverty as well. TVET institutions can respond to the training need different than that of the traditional and targets the youth, poor and vulnerable of the society. Being work-oriented, it focuses on training employable skills and can help to raise the skilled and entrepreneurial workforce that Bangladesh needs to get out of poverty.

All over South Asia there is a renewed emphasis on the role of TVET in national development among policy-makers and the international donor community. China, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam have

formed regional Cooperation Platform (RCP) for Vocational Teacher training and international knowledge exchange among TVET research, industry and providers. All institutions of these countries will follow similar curriculum and a standardized qualification framework to facilitate labor mobility.

About 67% of the schools of the ASEAN countries are including TVET in the mainstream education systems and planning full integration by 2015 at the secondary school level. Indonesia is turning roughly two thirds of senior secondary education to technical and vocational education by 2025. In the recent RCP conference held in Indonesia, Underprivileged Children's Education Program (UCEP) attended from Bangladesh.

Recognizing the importance of TVET, a number of international donors and development partners have put special emphasis on helping Bangladesh government and other TVET providers in order to improve the sector. ILO's TVET reforms project is in operation, similar projects of ADB and World Bank are about to come. The TVET Reform Project emphasizes on reviewing and strengthening policies; ensuring relevance and quality; strengthening institutions; establishing linkages between public and private organizations to enhance productivity and relevance to industry; ensuring access of underprivileged groups. Hopefully, with these reforms in place more people will get employable skills and earn through jobs or self-employment. On the private sector DFID (UK) and EKN (Netherlands) is already funding TVET programs of UCEP, training 5000 students every year on 22 trades, CIDA (Canada) is now considering to fund. ILO & UCEP have collaborated to train underprivileged children in several skills, which is now taught in several

UCEP technical schools.

The scenario is changing slowly but surely in Bangladesh. The number of SSC vocational institutes increased 4 times in the last 12 years from 427 in 2000 to 1726 in 2012; annual enrollment increased from 10000 to over 100000. In 2003, 2.92 % of the SSC examinees were from vocational schools; in 2012 it was 8.8 %.

There are 64 public schools providing HSC vocational technical education having a total intake capacity of around 17000 students. 129 public and 1597 private Institutes with intake capacity of 1,25,000 students are providing SSC vocational degree in a wide range of skills. The biggest in private sector, UCEP runs 12 technical schools. Last year its schools obtained the top four positions in the country in SSC vocational exam.

There are still a lot of challenges; students should be placed in job by the institutions through developing linkage with the employers. UCEP provides job to more than 95 % of their graduates. The most demanded skills abroad have to be identified and included in the trades to be trained; linkage should be maintained with international agencies for exchanging technical knowledge. Syllabuses should be updated reflecting the market demand; training facilities should be established for teachers.

Providing TVET requires more funds than general education; the government has to consider it as a long term investment. The payment issue of VET graduates is a long neglected issue; this has to be addressed. And above all the community still considers TVET as second tier education; this perception has to be changed.

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**ACROSS**

1 Healthful retreats

5 Meadow

8 "So be it"

12 Hay storage area

13 Plant bristle

14 Trade-marked symbol

15 Emanation

16 Corral

17 Stench

18 Third-place medal

20 Honolulu's island

22 Waste time

26 Unexpected victory

29 Started

30 Nay

31 Opposer

32 Recording

33 Crazy

34 Pack away

35 One of the Brady Bunch

**DOWN**

36 Starts

37 Jerry Herman musical

40 Comic

41 Brother of Andrew and Charles

45 Reed instrument

47 Pal of Wynken and Blynken

49 Wings

50 Gloomy

51 Run-down horse

52 Frost

53 Connect the

54 Exist

**Solution time: 25 mins.**

**Yesterday's answer 4-4**

**CRYPTOQUIP**

JXIFOPNUO REITJQM DM MKI

JXJQM TJIGJU MN PI XIFO

KDRRO DM MKJ TDGJ MHGJ.

PO VKIJE VNHQVHUIQVJ.

**Yesterday's Cryptquip: I RECENTLY REALIZED I'VE SAVED UP SO MANY CITRUS PEELS OVER TIME THAT I HAVE ZEST FOR LIFE.**

**Today's Cryptquip Clue: P equals B**

**BEETLE BAILY**

by Mort Walker

ON YOUR WAY TO WORK, DROP THIS OFF AT THE MAJOR'S HOUSE

WHY?

YOU WORE IT HOME AFTER HIS PARTY LAST NIGHT

GREG MORT WALKER

**HENRY**

by Don Trachte

CRACK

**QUOTABLE Quotes**

**Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)**

"Religion is very easy and who-ever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way. So you should not be extremists, but try to be near to perfection."

**Sahih Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 2, Number 38**