



Pakistanis Say Musharraf Resignation Would Improve Stability

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[Full Report \(PDF\)](#)



A majority of Pakistanis (64%) say that stability and security in Pakistan would get better "if President Musharraf were to resign now," according to a new poll conducted by GlobeScan for BBC Urdu. One in four (25%) respondents believes that security would get "worse" if he were to resign.

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf in September 2006 (State Dept. photo/Michael Gross)

Nearly a third (29%) of respondents regard Pervez Musharraf's election as President last November as "valid"; while around half (49%) say it is "invalid" (22% did not provide an answer).

Almost two out of three Pakistanis (63%) agree that the "National Assembly should seek to reinstate Iftikhar Chaudhry as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court" following the general election, while 19 percent of respondents say the Assembly should not seek Chaudhry's reinstatement.

The poll of a nationally representative sample of 1,476 Pakistanis aged above 18 was conducted by Gallup Pakistan using in-home interviews from 27 to 28 January 2008. Detailed results of the poll are available on the special Election 2008 microsite on the BBC Urdu website, bbcUrdu.com.

Asked about the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, 16 percent believe the Pakistani government's contention that the Pakistani Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud and his al-Qaeda linked network are responsible. The largest number - 39 percent - believes that "the Pakistani security agencies or people linked to them" are responsible. Twenty-four percent say that some other party is responsible while 21 percent say they do not know. (*The poll was taken before the release of the Scotland Yard report largely affirming the Pakistan government's account of how Bhutto died.*)

Looking ahead, Pakistanis are divided about whether the general elections scheduled for 18 February will be "free and fair." Forty-four percent say they are "very" (11%) or "somewhat" (33%) confident that they will be free and fair. Forty-six percent say they are "not very confident" (27%) or "not at all confident" (19%).

Around half of Pakistanis polled show a level of optimism that the situation in Pakistan will improve over the next six months. Fifty-one percent say they are "very optimistic" (16%) or "somewhat optimistic" (35%) that conditions will improve. In contrast, 39 percent say they are pessimistic; 19 percent say they are "very pessimistic" and 20 percent agree they are "somewhat pessimistic."

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GlobeScan President Doug Miller, who worked with the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of

Maryland to develop and analyze the poll, says, "While many Western governments have supported President Musharraf in the belief that he offers the only hope of a stable Pakistan, average citizens in the country disagree with this assessment in large numbers."

Regional Variations

There were a number of variations among provinces. The belief that Musharraf's resignation would help to stabilize the country was held by majorities in all provinces, though in Sindh, the majority was not as strong (56% believe the country would stabilize).

The belief that Pakistani security agencies or those close to them are responsible for Benazir Bhutto's death was strongest in the Northwest Frontier Province (48%) and in Sindh (46%), and weakest in Baluchistan (30%).

Sindh was the least optimistic (38%) that conditions in the country would improve in the next six months and Baluchistan was the most optimistic (76%). Punjab and NWFP (53% each optimistic) were similar to the country overall.

Gallup Pakistan conducted 1,476 face-to-face, in-home interviews on January 27 and 28, 2008 across four provinces, including urban and rural locations in each province (details given below). The sample was weighted based on geography, the urban/rural ratio, and key demographics to reflect the distribution of the national population.