

Political Party Manifestos: Reform Paradox in Pakistan



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A precise manifesto serves as a yardstick to measure performance of political parties against pledges. However, the culture of meaningful debates remains elusive in Pakistan's politics. Manifestos presented by the political parties in 2024 General elections reflect a wish-list having tall claims but no strategy of resource mobilization, and making the economy self-driven without the IMF borrowing.

Importance of Manifesto

A political party's manifesto is a manuscript that chalks out a party's vision, goals, and plans—aligning the aspirations and needs of the public. Commonly, it signifies the policy package a political party uses to attract voters at election time. It also helps form a coalition government process, as political parties are more likely to form a coalition if the policies expressed in their manifestos are similar [1].

The manifesto usually frames the broader policy proposals to address various societal issues. Political parties mostly release it right before the election as a symbol of democratic value. It serves the voters to make informed choices about whom to vote for or not, based on political parties' ideologies, agendas, and commitments. The political parties commonly make debates, sell their narrative, and engage the public in the electoral process through their intended policy proposals. It helps the voters to make political parties accountable for their promises and proposals.

In the grand auditorium of democracy, a manifesto is the opening act that captivates minds, and fuels discussions. A distinctive manifesto broadly covers the following components [2]:

- An overarching vision of a political party to address core country issues.
- Policy proposals to discourse various issues, i.e., economy, domestic and foreign policy, society, social infrastructure, etc.
- Promises and commitments made by a political party to win public trust, i.e., job creation, salary rise, tax cut, health, education, etc.
- Competing agenda of political parties to showcase their ideology by differentiating them from other political parties.
- Guide voters closest to their ideal policy package and enrich them that how political parties visualise the real world.

A well thought out manifesto significantly impacts the election campaign by influencing the public, particularly the open and swing voters. Along with serving as a yardstick by the electorate and the political parties to measure political parties' performances against the pledges. The political parties in deep-rooted democratic societies regularly inscribe their policy priorities and plans. However, in countries like Pakistan devoid of such practices, voters are unclear about what manifestos actually are. In the absence of which, most political parties adopt the approach of pleasing the electorate by often making vague commitments and unrealistic promises. Despite knowing that their promises are not practically implementable.

A well-precise manifesto significantly impacts the election campaign by influencing the public, incredibly the open and swing voters. It also serves as a yardstick for a ruling party to measure its performance against pledges. The political parties in deep-rooted democratic societies regularly inscribe their policy priorities and plans. However, in countries like Pakistan, it is unclear to a voter what manifestos actually are. Here, most political parties adopt the approach that the audience is considered willing to buy. Keeping in view, political parties often make vague commitments and unrealistic promises just for the sake of populism despite knowing that their promises are not practically implementable. The coalition government could be another factor where ruling parties compromise their ideologies.

Box 1: [Manifesto/Jalsas/Debates- The Missing Link](#)

Pakistan still lacks a systematic approach towards the validation of claims and promises made by political parties during election campaigns.

The only approach in Pakistan's political setup is holding of rallies and Jalsa's, by gathering enthusiastic supporters (often paid for) to showcase of strength and power. The whole show revolves around the charismatic leaders making grand promises, and attendees (often bought crowd) cheering in response.

The culture of meaningful debates remains elusive and the conversation revolves around character assassinations of opponents and political vilification, grand promises, etc. Politicians even lack training for meaningful debates and exchange of ideas.

Debates clarify vision, policy, and ideology of the party along with rationalizing the grand promises through cross-questions. However, politicians avoid cross-talks and prefer in holding jalsas.

The economic cost of holding Jalsa's is very high—above 440 billion rupees in 2018 election. Instead debates cost less and would be more informative.

Manifesto Politics in Pakistan

Historically, Pakistani politicians have used symbols and slogans to gain power and influence. They usually claim they have a well-clear plan, but after electing, they fail to materialize it by providing a concrete roadmap. There are multiple reasons, including incompetency and a dictator mindset in political leadership.

In the history of Pakistan, voters were given the right to select the members of the National Assembly on December 7, 1970. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto came with the slogan of significant improvement for the "underprivileged" and Shaikh Mujeeb with the symbol of Bengali

grievances [3]. Bhutto promised that the government would not work for a small elite. However, once the party gained power, they behaved differently by grabbing more power for the Prime Minister than was provided in the constitution. Despite federalism commitment, the government of two provinces was dismissed [4]. History shows that Islamic Socialism, *Roti, Kapra or Makan*, and Nizam-i-Mustafa were the most pleasing slogans in the 1970 and 1977 elections.

Political parties were essentially latent during Zia-ul-Haq's rule (1977-88). He promoted religious parties to counter PPP's socialist narrative and to fulfill Afghan Jihad agenda. In the politically unstable 1990s, the PPP and PML(N) dominated the political landscape, alternating as the governing parties. Both parties got government in twice, and they overrode the political stability by imposing allegations against each other, i.e., corruption, power misuse, etc. The civil and military establishment, and the judiciary were also part of this intrigue. The public lost faith on the democratic process as the country faced five elections in just twelve years.

Over time, all the political parties apprehend particular economic challenges, i.e., sluggish economic growth, unsustainable fiscal challenges, rising debt, etc. Considering global economic dynamics, many of them also changed their ideology over time. For example, the PPP adopted a different approach in the latter compared to its 1970s politics by recognizing the role of the private sector and deregulation.

Over the last three decades, almost every political party in its manifesto listed the economic challenges with its reform wish-list, i.e., raising the tax-GDP ratio and resolving energy crises. They also made convincing commitments improving governance, i.e., sovereignty of Parliament, provincial autonomy, and the local government system and addressing social issues, including health and education. However, after gaining power, they largely failed to provide a roadmap.

The most significant gap in manifestos' precise role is its implementation. A few common challenges of the political parties are as follows:

- Mostly, the political parties avoid publically inter-party cross-debates on thoughtful societal issues. They merely use popular slogans to attract the voters to address the local issues (i.e., street soling, electrification, etc.) rather than building a narrative on national and international policy issues. The commitments made by most of the MNA/MPA electives relate to the local government rather than legislation in nature.
- Despite commitment in their manifestos, political parties largely avoid authorizing Parliament and democracy even within the party by managing intra-party elections. The dynastic politics gain momentum over time.
- All the political parties show unity on one agenda: abandoning the local government tier. Due to the political parties' stubbornness, the local government tier is non-functional in the country. Simply they don't want to devolve their power and financial resources.
- Despite mounting commitments, every ruling party has historically followed the 'Brick and Mortar' and 'Haq-HAG' model by spending PSDP to build physical infrastructure with poor intention to uplift social and soft infrastructure.

- Modern policy suggests that growth happens because of the 'software' of society, such as productivity, management, policy, innovation, and institutions [5]. However, political leaders show reluctance to broaden the tax base, reduce government size, and implement civil service reforms. Resultantly, exports shrank, and productivity declined.
- Every government seeks foreign projects and loans to finance budget and building infrastructure projects. Foreign and domestic loans have become an integral part of government financing with no strategy to repay the loans. The debt servicing is rising day-by-day, and the public is bearing its cost with more taxes
- Donors/lenders are at the main seat of the drive to run economic agenda of the country. The country has faced trillions of losses due to donor-driven Independent Power Producers (IPPs) contracts in the energy sector. The social safety net is another area where unsustainable donor-led expansion is up day-by-day.
- After winning the election, none of the political parties is attentive to long-term policy formulation. Ruling parties' MNAs and ministers are interested in short-term projects of 3-4 years by giving jobs and building roads in their constituencies. More than 70% of the federal and provincial ministries even lack a policy document just to show it on

Box 2: PIDE's Proposed Governance, Democracy and Civil Service Reforms

Political stability is not the sufficient condition to overcome deep-root governance challenges. First the political parties comprehend democracy within the party by **discouraging dynastic and family politics**. It requires regular intra-party elections.

- To make the election's supportive to democracy and administration, **every year should be an election year**: one year general election, followed by elections of Senate, provinces and local government in each year.
- **Limit the Cabinet to 20 members** having half of them professionals
- Reduce the constitutional term of **parliament to 04 years** and **Senate election directly**.
- The MNA/MPAs should act only as the legislator and fully empower the local government. There is **no democracy without local government....!**
- **Abolish** to colonial civil service – **CSS** and **monetize all the perks of civil servants** by abolishing permanent jobs by introducing performance-based contracts
- **Reduce government size** by placing it one officer and one supporting staff. currently the ratio is 1:3.2

Source: PIDE Reform Manifesto: Transforming Economy and Society (2024)

the shelf.

- Every sector has a rising subsidy culture, i.e., fertilizer, wheat, electricity, utility stores, and many others. They usually tag the names of public sector programs with political identity, i.e., *Benazir card*, *Insaaf card*, *Khadme Alla*, etc. This culture of subsidy has distorted the market efficiency and functionality.

Manifestos and 2024 General Elections

A recent study of PIDE reviewed the social media campaign and manifestos of three leading political parties (PMLN, PPP, and PTI) in the 2018 election and found that public discourse of political parties is predominantly centered on tall promises, opponent-bashing, personal and family matters rather than sensitizing the public on national challenges. It reveals a disheartening trend of limited engagement with substantive issues outlined in their

Box 3: The 2024 Manifestos and IMF

- The economic mess of the country is deep-rooted with rising external and internal deficits.
- The economy is close to default and now ruling party celebrates IMF agreements and loans. There is no other option except borrowing more and more...
- So far country signed 24 programs in 76 years with no economic improvement, increasing productivity and improving investment. Half of the budget now goes to finance interest payments.
- Political parties are much happier to build highways, expansion in BISP, giving more subsidies, and many others; however, none of the leading political party (PML-N, PPP, and PTI) has presented a roadmap:
 - to get rid from donors/lenders advices and no more outsourcing of economy
 - a clear strategy to repay debt by cutting inefficient government expenses, i.e., protocol, huge cabinet, monetize all perks, removal of subsidies for elite.
 - endogenous solutions for economic recovery.

manifestos [6].

With Pakistan's general elections looming on 8th February 2024, it is time for political parties to publicly announce their economic objectives and policy intentions to attract voters. Only the ANP released its manifesto six months ago, and the leading political parties (PMLN, PPP, and PTI) revealed it at the 11th hour just few days before the election (Table 1). A number of political parties, i.e., PML-Q, Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, PML-Functional, and many others has even not worried to announce their manifestos, reflecting that they have no clear ideology and agenda for their voters and general public.

As usual, by following past practices, political parties are running an idyllic campaign in their rally/jalsa with popular slogans and counterfeit pledges rather than narrating their ideology and presenting the manifestos at the gross root-level. Perhaps they don't want to educate the public and would like to play with public sentiments on street politics, i.e., job offers, electrification, road/street building rather than talking on national issues and crises. It is worth mentioning that Press Information Department (PID) organized few seminars by inviting the political parties to come and present their manifesto in front of media. However, not a single party ensured their representation. And that's why public by and large have a poor faith on the capacity and capability of political parties to resolve their issues.

The released manifesto documents across political parties vary in size, from 4 pages to 168 pages, and each of them claims to improve the lives of citizens by resolving all economic issues. We have reviewed all these documents; some are comprehensive, and some are generic. Overall, we found the following broader caveats:

- Manifestoes are mostly paternalistic offering to give people subsidies of all kinds without the realization that country is in a deep financial crisis.
- Political pronouncements seek to alleviate poverty not by offering people opportunity or by clearing the path for investment growth and employment but by a term that they have coined that they will give people relief, i.e., subsidies and giveaways like cash transfers, free electricity and other public services, free education without concerning quality, and other freebies.
- Then there is the perennial thrust for more brick and mortar infrastructure most of which revolves around subsidies to cars or to builders to build assets that are poorly utilized.
- They vow to solve every crisis in the country. However, most of their declarations appear as a wish list with no concrete proposals and practicality, leading to doubt about the party's goals and ability to deliver on its commitments.

Hardly any of the political parties made grass-root consultations while devising the manifesto. In several Western democratic countries, the manifesto simply summarizes the discussions and recommendations of the party policy forums. However, a political party in Pakistan mostly tasks a few groups of people to prepare the document to fulfill a formality, and it mostly goes to the shelf with no public debates. Most often the party leadership does not know what is in the manifesto. And the manifesto is soon forgotten after the election.

Table 1: Date of Manifesto Release in 2024 General Elections

Political party	Announcement date	Announcement days before election
ANP	06-AUG-23	180
JI	09-Jan-24	30
MQM	04-Jan-24	35
PMLN	27-Jan-24	12
PPP	27-Dec-23 <i>(with a more detailed document released on January 27, 2024)</i>	43
PTI	28-Jan-24	11
TLP	04-Jan-24	35

- There is no public debate of manifestos on electronic media and rallies of political parties. The three largest political parties — the PML-N and PTI revealed their election manifestos less than two weeks before the forthcoming election ([Table 1](#)).
- In democratic nations, political parties talk to public through media platforms on their ideologies. Media manages cross-talks and conversation to generate debates and thoughtful discussions. However, in Pakistan, media is silent to moderate serious

discussions and debates. Political parties have also no interest and they prefer to talk with public through a one-way conversation.

- A manifesto should not act as a wish list. Several commitments are either a wish list or bearing huge costs. We found no back-end working of political parties and resource mobilization strategy on such points.
- The manifestos should chalk out the implementation framework and monitoring system. Most of them lack priority agendas to be addressed in the short, medium and long-term.¹

Box 4: PIDE's Proposed Economic Reform Manifesto

The economy requires a stable growth with a rising productivity capacity and diversified value-added export base. Unlike to the political parties manifestos, the cost associated with the following proposed reforms is negligible and it requires just willpower for implementation

- Invest on building **soft and social infrastructure** and society to strengthen societal and economic fundamental rather than opting an old strategy to build roads, building and hard infrastructure.
- Abolish tariff protection based import substitution policy and allow the industry to be part of global value chain. It requires **improving R&D to promote innovation**, productivity, branding, and marketing.
- Let's the **market to grow and compete**. All this requires reducing government foot-print in economy in the shape of subsidies, NOCs and permissions.
- Cities are engine of growth and provide job opportunities. Our cities are only for elite and favor the car owners. City zoning must support walkability, recreation for public through parks, art and libraries.
- city centers have huge public land and urban sprawl requires controlling through encouraging high-rise
- Donors/lenders control the country's policy agenda. let's devise indigenous thinking and agenda by appointing technical bests in technical departments through performance-based contracts

Source: PIDE Reform Manifesto: Transforming Economy and Society (2024)

¹ For details see <https://www.dawn.com/news/1788634>

An Analysis of 2024 Manifesto

PIDE believes that political parties should avoid popular slogans, and manifestos should be seen as an instrument of integrity and accountability. We have scrutinized seven manifestos (details in [Table 1](#)) based on broader seven dimensions and consider that these dimensions cover the broader country's economic and governance issues and expect that a political party has well-crafted these issues in its manifesto along with the roadmap. The framework and indicators used in the evaluation are listed in [Table 2](#).

Using the indicators mentioned in [Table 2](#), we have developed a heat map showing a graphical analysis of the adequacy of coverage of reforms & pledges in the manifesto by a political party for the 2024 general elections. Here, we have reviewed the adequacy of the manifesto based on four broader parameters:

- Vision, plan, and homework of a political party to address a particular issue
- Roadmap and prioritization of issues by a political party, i.e., short, medium, and long-term along with the possible ways to address the issue. Also, devising performance indicators to track progress.
- Do the statements mentioned in the manifesto have some depth analysis, or are they just generic?
- Categorization of statements into three groups:
 - **Reform** is defined as proposing something new and innovative, i.e., directly electing the Prime Minister, reducing tenure of the Parliament, etc.
 - **A cost-less promise** is mere a statement with nothing new, and the general public has been listing it for years, i.e., local government, improving education and health, strengthening NFC, etc.
 - **Cost-related reforms:** A wish-list of reforms, promises, or commitments where significant cost is involved, i.e., expanding social protection, extending subsidies, free electricity, etc.

Table 2: Evaluation framework of Political Parties Manifestos

Sr. No.	Reform Dimension	Reform Indicators
1.	Governance & democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliament and electoral reforms, intra-party elections • Autonomy of local government and resource distribution • Civil Service Reforms, efficient government • Regulation, public wealth management
2.	Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debt management • Government size and taxation • Domestic commerce, export and productivity • Pension, saving and investment • Sectoral growth, i.e., agriculture, industry, services. • Energy, including oil, gas, renewable, circular debt, regulation • Automobile industry • Markets
3.	City & Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making cities competitive for economy • Inter-city and intra-city transport • Land, real estate, financial markets

4.	IT & Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • E-commerce, freelancing • Digital Pakistan, IT exports, Internet for all
5.	Law & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case law management • E-courts and digital data • Reforms to provide efficient justice
6.	Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health, education • Social protection • Society and community • Population management • Civic life opportunities, i.e. parks, library • Gender and youth
7.	Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing environmental degradation • Making environment green

We found that most political parties have not well-crafted the ongoing economic issues and their solutions in the manifestos. Our analysis shows that PMLN has covered a better economic analysis in its manifesto, whereas the PPP's largely covers social protection and inclusion (Table 3). Overall, the majority of the manifestos tend to incentivize the public through subsidies and social protection initiatives, but most of them are silent on structural economic issues, including;

- how do we promote exports and productivity?
- Broadening the tax-base by extending it to agriculture and wholesale retail activities
- Improving the tax-base through measures to make the economy formal
- Reducing government size, public expenditures and civil service reforms.

Table 3: Heat map and Scorecard on Party Manifesto Reforms

Reform area	MQM	ANP	Jl	PPP	PMLN	PTI	TLP
Governance & democracy	Yellow	Orange	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Green	Red
Economy	Orange	Red	Yellow	Orange	Green	Green	Orange
City & Opportunity	Red	Orange	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red
IT & Software	Orange	Orange	Red	Orange	Green	Orange	Red
Law & Justice	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Social Infrastructure	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Orange
Climate Change	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Orange	Yellow	Red
Strategy to say IMF bye bye....	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red

Note: From red to green in order of importance given, with red being 'no importance' given.



A detailed reviewed analysis of seven political parties' manifestos is placed in Annexure A by categorizing it into reforms and promises against each of the reform areas. A summary of the manifesto of each political party is detailed as below.

a) Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)

The PPP manifesto for the 2024 general election emphasizes the provision of various social protection programs and subsidies, i.e., free electricity, expansion of social safety nets, free education and health, nutrition programs for mother and child, etc. The party also aims to provide housing to poor, Kisaan card to farmers, youth card to students, and expansion of BISP, to name a few. However, the manifesto lacks meaningful economic reforms and supporting budgetary requirements, necessary to fulfill pledges. Given the need of the hour, although the manifesto talks about green energy, it is still not clear in addressing ongoing energy challenges. The manifesto has made little effort in devising steps to improve governance and making the cities vibrant.

b) Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N)

Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PMLN) manifesto mainly pledges on economic growth and reforms in the energy sector. The pledges in the manifesto regarding the economy rely on growth through trade, development, and inclusion of IT/AI. Still the manifesto largely talks on 'brick-and-mortar' model where growth will be achieved through building signal free corridors, expansion of motorways and BRTs.

The judicial reforms regarding case management introduction, e-courts, structural reforms for judicial accountability, and digital reforms, e.g., e-procurement and blockchain-based unification of citizens' credentials, can fairly assist the system towards efficiency. However, less attention is given to recognizing the cities in the development of the economy and society, along with meaningful reforms for the efficiency of the civil servants, curtailing the extravagant spending of resources, and increasing the government's footprint by establishing various ministries, councils and commissions.

The manifesto still lacks concrete discussion on empowering Parliament, downsizing the cabinet, and reforms in civil service as per the need of 21st century. Population well-being is covered. Developing cities keeping in view the economic need is largely ignored. There is discussion on BRTs, however, making discussion and planning to make cities as the engine of growth is overlooked, i.e., controlling urban sprawl, city zoning, vertical expansion, public libraries, city regeneration, and generating opportunity for lower and middle class.

c) Pakistan Tehreek-e- Insaf (PTI)

Reforms proposed by Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) have a large focus on improving the rule of law, governance, and democratic values, i.e., the election of PM directly, reduction of the legislative term to four years, and direct election of the Senate with a term for five years to name a few along with the pledges. Along with the emphasis on decreasing the size of the cabinet and ministers and monetizing the perks and privileges of the civil servants at market value. The reforms and pledges regarding the development of the cities also fairly address the prevailing issues and needs. They also talk about strengthening the local governments. Still, the manifesto needs to focus better on the economy, regulatory framework, and civil service reforms.

d) Other Political Parties

The manifesto of ANP limits itself to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, whereas the MQM-Pakistan has a significant focus on Karachi. The ANP and MQM-P emphasize the devolution of power and resource sharing and the development of their regions, i.e., KPK and Karachi, respectively—both prioritized local government formation and autonomy.

MQM-P put forth meaningful pledges for enhancing governance through reforming the Civil servants and parliamentary reforms. The social protection and social infrastructure pledges also mainly cover the regional population. ANP pledged to include AI/IT in the skill enhancement and education sector, significantly targeting youth. Still, the economic reforms are primarily silent in improving exports and productivity and reducing government footprints.

The pledges put forth by Jamat-e-Islami Pakistan (JI) and Tehreek-e-Labbaik (TLP) are based on the principles of Islam, relying upon which both the political parties covered the aspects of the manifesto.

Monetary Cost of Commitments

We found manifestos have a long-wish list and promise rather than concrete reforms. Since parties have not made concrete homework and resource mobilization, thus it would be a nightmare to fulfill these commitments and make them part of the budget. A few of the ambitious targets are listed Table 4, having substantial cost.

During the ongoing election campaign, the two leading political parties made a populist announcement of the provision of 200 and 300 free electricity units. However, none of them has shared a roadmap of resource financing when the power sector has already been facing 17.6% line losses, and the government has increased the electricity prices by 8.7 rupees in the last two months. Even if we recover the line losses, 6 million households can be benefited by providing 300 units per month. Our analysis shows that the provision of 300 free electricity units will cost PKR 1.2 trillion and triple the electricity losses.

Table 4: A Sample of Unusual Commitments found in Manifestos

Political Party	Proposed Reforms require substantial budget
ANP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidize electricity to entire industry, solarize every government building and Mosque • Establish E-commerce zones in every village, silicon Valleys in every district • Free university education
MQM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrifying 100% of Karachi with solar and wind power, shifting all local government buildings to solar • Allocating 2% of GDP for social security • Increases health and education budget each by 5%
PMLN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid Mass Transit Systems and BRT in major cities • Electricity subsidies for farmers and vulnerable • Establishing 5 IT cities, Free public Wi-Fi • 200 free units of electricity
PPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases education budget by 5%, establishing university in every district • Free meals to all school going children • 300 free units for poor households, constructing 3 million houses

We have used conservative estimates to calculate the direct cost associated with the proposed commitments of political parties. These estimates are still crude and on the lower side as we have excluded a vast majority of the generic wish lists. Our estimates suggest that it requires more than double annual budget to implement the proposed reforms of PML-N and PPP, and an increase of 50-60% in the annual budget to implement the proposed reforms of MQM and PTI.

Table 5: Line Losses and volume of Electricity subsidy in Pakistan

Parameter	Approximate cost
Line losses in 2022	Rs. 520 billion (22,296 GWh)
Technical losses of power sector-FY 2023	17.6%
Subsidy volume-FY2024	894 billion
Annual cost of 200 free units (only for those consuming upto 200 units)	724 billion
Annual cost of 300 free units (only for those consuming upto 300 units)	1,223 billion
Annual cost of free supply to BISP beneficiaries units (200 units)	514 billion

The country is already struggling to manage annual budget financing through massive domestic and international borrowing, especially infrastructural projects. The commitments of more roads, flyovers, subsidies, health/student/female social protection cards will definitely require more borrowing and downsizing of economy and putting more taxes on the common man.

Table 6: Estimated Crude Budget Required to Implement Reforms

Political party	Crude budget required for five years (in billion)	Annual budget requirement (in billion)	Budget requirement (% of existing federal budget)	Budget requirement (% of annual GDP)
ANP*	15,063	3,013	21.5	7.2
MQM*	37,944	7,589	54.2	18.2
PMLN	86,454	17,291	123.5	41.5
PPP	77,809	15,562	111.2	37.4
PTI	38,800	7,760	55.4	18.6

* ANP cost is limited to only KP province and most of the MQM cost to Karachi

Given the current economic situation, it would be unbearable for any political party to incentivize the public through massive subsidies, keeping in view the meager economic situation, including significant budget going to interest payment financing, no real economic growth, double-digit inflation, rising taxes and tariffs to finance public spending.

The political parties made similar claims 15 years ago, and none of them is talking about its progress. For example, PPP has been ruling in Sindh since 2008, and 44% of the schooling children (aged 5-16 years) are out of school. Lahore and Karachi are facing the highest world pollution due to these infrastructural projects and incentivizing everyone to use their own transport. We talked about the earthquake and flood disasters, but none of the manifesto seriously talks about the pollution disaster that half of the population is facing right now.

The parties must make themselves accountable before narrating another list of idealistic promises, i.e., free education for all, building schools within a radius of 30 30-minute' walk, free meals, and providing subsidies/social protection to everyone.

PIDE's Position on Manifesto

The country is close to default despite 24 IMF programs. More than half of the budget goes to repay interest payments, and there is no strategy except more borrowing to repay debts, external deficit, and budget financing. Despite knowing the issue, every government seeks donor support to finance their populism Haq/HAG projects, including roads, railway, energy, social protection, etc.

Due to over-regulations and a heavy government footprint, investment remains exceptionally low; productivity has declined over time, and the capacity of the economy to grow has died. PIDE's estimates suggest that economic losses of overregulation are 45% of GDP.

After 76 years of independence, the country faces a colonial bureaucracy system. Both politicians and bureaucrats love physical infrastructural projects without economic analysis. Politicians demand protocols and create more jobs to please their constituencies. Rent-seekers are everywhere and resist the devolution of powers, opening markets to reduce risks, making opportunities for the public, and building society through investment in social infrastructure and community.

Politicians and political parties must do a substantive exercise while preparing the manifestos. A deep-root and bottom-up consultative approach would help initiate policy dialogue and opt for a realistic approach in identifying and preparing a roadmap for addressing issues. It would be good if they add:

- A balance sheet to identify potential resources to meet their plans and commitments.
- Short, medium, and long-term implementation framework along with targets.
- Monitoring and accountability measures on the proposed strategy.

Unlike the political parties’ manifestos, PIDE strongly believes that addressing issues through a reliable reform process might not require too much financing. We propose reforms below to address deep-rooted social and economic problems.

Table 7: PIDE’s Proposed Reforms

Reform area	Proposed Reforms
Governance & Democracy	Detailed in Box 1
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An independent budget unit having experts and performance-based budget for each ministry • An autonomous debt management agency to monitor country’s debt • Shift the PSDP budget from hard infrastructure to soft infrastructure • Modernize the regulatory framework and let the market to work efficiently without subsidies • Privatize or close down the state-own enterprises • No general subsidy for any stakeholder, i.e., households, businessmen, farmers, etc. • Introduce electric vehicle policy on priority • Focus on global value chain to promote exports and productivity • No subsidy in energy and privatize the DISCOs. Also abolish the Power ministry by establishing an independent technical Power Commission
City & Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City zoning must favor, density, high-rise, mixed-use, and walkability • Use to state-captured land in city centers for parks and libraries • Regularize the street vendors and give opportunity to a poor in a city • Regulate the private housing schemes by abolishing open file-culture of plots
IT & Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No GST on internet and access the low-cost internet through fiber-optic • Spectrum should be used to promote internet access in remote areas rather than revenue generation
Law & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A maximum limit to resolve a case with no adjournments • Digital diary and e-portal for case management
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart learning through IT, focus on STEM • Technical education in schools to promote entrepreneurship and start-ups • Limit the universities and making universities to payback to community • Focus on building community through public libraries, parks • Social protection must create opportunity for poor rather than hand-outs

The policy makers and political parties must generate debates within the political parties, interact with public and civil society, and involve academia and think-tanks in policy formulation. Every political party promises establishing new universities in each district,

however, no one is serious to uplift their quality by considering that they are producing educated youth with no skills and no aspiration---an intergenerational disaster for the country.

politicians must develop a consensus and charter to shift policy focus from building 'hardware' to 'software' that requires significant investment on building society and community, and creating opportunity for everyone, i.e.,

- a child needs a good atmosphere, i.e., playground, library, and quality schooling
- a youth needs skills, opportunity to build ideas, aspiration, and decent career
- a woman needs skills and job career outside the home

All this requires deep thinking and conversation in the society. Let's participate in building community and society where we can trust each other. Politicians must lead through building democratic values and developing an efficient government according to the 21st century's need, by moving out of colonial mindset, sendoff rent-seeking culture and populism slogans, and overcome slavery relations with the donors/lenders due to lack of indigenous thinking and will.

Annexure A: A Reviewed Analysis of Manifestos of Political Parties

1. Awami National Party (ANP)

Reform Area	Reforms	Other Pledges
Governance & Democratic Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Senate elections • Reconstitution of federating units based on socio-political and economic criteria • Local Governments (LG) financial and administrative autonomy. • Performance based up-gradation • Digitize key sectors for cost-effective, transparent governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Punjab province and Pashtun unit within Pakistan • Technical experts will be promoted in grades 18-22 • Establish Provincial Finance Commission for fair revenue distribution and district autonomy
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure gas sector for increased exploration and production • Simplifying the tax collection system and focusing on increasing the direct tax base • Prioritize off-grid renewable energy projects and solar solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct tax to more than 100 acres of landholding. • Providing electricity and other subsidies at subsidized rates to investors for local SME's. • Levy taxes on profitable service sectors like real estate, litigation, private clinics, elite private schools, and coaching centers. • Opening of 16 crossings with Afghanistan for trade. • Promoting furniture MSE's through subsidized electricity, loans, and export facilities. • Construct 200 Mini and Micro Hydropower Stations in remote areas. • Providing solar energy to all govt. buildings, Mosques and 500 privately owned tube wells in the province • Provide quality seeds to farmers. • Cultivate non-irrigated land, in southern districts. • Insurance program for agriculture produce and livestock. • At least one large industrial zone through PPP consisting of SMEs in every division.
City & Opportunity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building new bypasses and underpasses.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch urban sanitation plan with private/public help in two years. • Set up water pumps/filtration plants in villages and wards via PPP/FDI.
IT & Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freelancing zones for software developers, E-commerce, and InfoTech in every village council within three years. • Digitize all revenue sectors, including Patwar, for comprehensive documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish E-commerce zones in every village council. • Building a dedicated university for IT studies. • Silicon Valleys in every district head quarter. • Prioritize software development education and establish a specified college in every Divisional Headquarters.
Law & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the Alternative Dispute Resolution System. • Enhancing court capacities in line with workload. • Legislation for the Supreme Court to serve as a constitutional court, with High Courts handling litigation, limiting Supreme Court cases to constitutional matters only. • Making the police force independent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacing check posts with cameras and other technological measures. • Allocating funds to enhance working conditions and the physical environment for the police. • Upgrade police salaries, benefits, residential facilities, and transportation.
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother language as medium of instruction at primary level after words three language policy (English, Urdu & a foreign language). • Empower public hospitals with a balance of autonomy and accountability. • Universal Health coverage through Essential package of health services • Enacting laws to control population growth. • Providing multipurpose sports grounds at each tehsil and sports stadiums at district headquarters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoring student unions • 4% of GDP for education • Establish KPK HEC • Establish 3,000 community centers • Amending PECA laws to eliminate the suppression of freedom of expression and information. • 10% annual increase in student enrollment until it reaches 100%. • Provision of internet and cable networks in newly merged districts • Market based higher education. • Establish psychological trauma centers. • Small loans to 10,000 skilled, landless, unemployed women designers in every district for boutique establishment, supporting 175,000 women. • Establish Drug Rehabilitation and child psychological centers in district hospitals. • Free university education under ANP youth program

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5000/monthly stipend for female university students • 1.5 million research grants for university teacher’s PhD research • Small loans for selected 10,000 youth in every district. • Special aid packages for minorities. • Offering free healthcare to daily wage workers' families • Free education for daily wage workers' children. • Muhafiz card with 35000 annually for utility stores and fuel stations. • Scooters provisions for high achieving youth. • Establish sports academies.
Climate Change		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing all environmental protection laws in letter and spirit. • Strictly monitoring all government and non-government projects for adherence to environmental laws. • Five million trees plantation annually • Modernizing the forest department. • Curtail timber mafia and illicit traders to protect forests.

2. Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan (MQM-P)

Reform area	Reforms	Other Pledges
Governance & Democratic Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of secret funds • Establish empowered local government system & allocate 70% share to local government • Community policing & public access to audit reports • Specialist technical cadre cadre for technical jobs • Performance-based compensation for civil servants • Withdrawal of discretionary powers in land allotment • Reducing regulatory compliance to promote business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four-tier bureaucracy by adding the district tier • Public disclosure of high-value contract awards. • Voting facilitation for overseas Pakistanis • Reserved seats for physically challenged individuals. • Establish special cells and courts for protecting overseas Pakistanis' assets. • Federal expenditure reduction through devolution and austerity, including lower non-developmental spending. • Repatriating looted national wealth from abroad worth billions of dollars.
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privatize unproductive industries and institutes. • Recognizing arts & entertainment as an industry • Facilitating the transition of brick-kilns to eco-friendly zig zag technology. • Introduce agriculture tax • Reclaim unconstructed industrial plots held for years. • Implement and enforce green building codes. • Reduction in Indirect taxes, levies and tariffs • Relocation of Industries, and PPP for more investment • Local production of alternative energy equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclaim all defaulted and waived off loans • Allocate state land to landless cultivators • Redirect subsidies from large to small farmers • Electrifying 100% of Karachi with grid or off-grid solar and wind power. • Transitioning local government buildings to solar • Vision for 100\$ billion remittances • One window operations for investors.
City & Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve coastal waters and ecosystem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building 100 cities with clusters of satellite cities, including specialized industrial zones. • Master plan for Karachi's economic, social, service infrastructure, and cultural development • Ensuring safe and clean drinking water for all. • Funds allocation for water treatment.
IT & Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unified data centers for financial sectors. • Introduction of smart cities in metropolitan areas. • Digitize government records and implement e-governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT and AI research universities in major cities. • IT and AI parks in federal and provincial capitals.

Law & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating judicial delays, case backlogs, and prison congestion through judicial reforms. • Police service restructuring for community ownership and local government-based community policing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One female Investigating Officer in every police station • Legal aid provision to poor • Resolving evacuee property claims in adherence to the Liaquat-Nehru Pact, ensuring rightful settlement on occupied lands and properties.
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare, education, policy and planning through LG. • Formulating the National Accreditation Council, uniformity in curricula and KPI based evaluation system. • Compulsory IT and AI education in primary and secondary schools/madrasas. • Establish a network of public libraries, including digital libraries. • Provide sports grounds, stadiums, arts schools • Target population planning • Promote 'Learn to Earn' through e-learning. • Amend laws to combat counterfeit and substandard drug manufacturing and selling. • Utilizing telemedicine and referral links • Legislation for curbing organ sale and purchase. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish career counseling and job placement centers • Construct Youth Development Centers in every district and strength student unions • Increase health and education budget to 5% of GDP • Allocating 2% of GDP for social security outreach. • Scholarships in every educational institute. • Provide meals to mothers, milk to children in schools. • Food and subsidy interventions to counter slum poverty • Revising BISP into BIGP (Benazir Income Generation Program) to maintain individual self-esteem. • Establishing old age homes in every district. • Health card to entertainment industry. • Repatriating stranded Pakistanis from Bangladesh, issuing CNICs and passports • Youth hostels construction across country.
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revamp NDMA and strengthen local govt. capacity • Design community level engagements to promote renewable energy usage and ozone-friendly products • Devise policy to manage water, air, coastal pollution • Promote green transport and EV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green engineering initiatives, i.e., forestation, park development, rainwater harvesting. • Increase green energy share to 35% by 2030 • 8% forest cover in next 5 years. • Allocation of land for urban forest and urban agriculture

3. Jamaat-e-Islami – Pakistan (JI-P)

Reform area	Reforms	Other Pledges
Governance & Democratic Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ending luxury vehicle and free petrol privileges for current and former executives, judiciary and officers Transferring financial powers to local governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restore Bahawalpur as a province and south Punjab another province Establish a commission to assess competence, integrity, and reputation of MNA/MPAs Training Academy for capacity building of parliamentarians and legislators. Review NFC and increase KP share due to law & order Establish a "Real Estate Authority" at the provincial level to protect the rights of scheme victims. Abolish daily wages in favor of permanent posts.
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saving 200 billion rupees annually by abolishing tax exemptions for capitalists, landlords, and the richest elite. Gradually introduce agricultural taxes Providing uninhabited government lands to landless farmers and <i>harees</i> Ban on housing societies and factories on agricultural land. Abolish slab rate for electricity and gas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide uninhabited government lands to landless farmers and haris Reduce general sales tax to less than 5 percent. Establish agro-based industries in rural areas Adjust salaries and pensions to inflation Appoint competent management for national institutions instead of privatization. Reduce non-development expenditures by 30% Subsidy to farmers on all inputs Print prices on fertilizer bags to prevent overcharging.
City & Opportunity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive development plan for a prosperous Karachi. Prepare a comprehensive rural development plan Setting up waste management authority.
IT & Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digitize complete records of government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote education in data science and AI
Law & Justice		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure justice for all and establish an impartial accountability system to eradicate all forms of corruption Reconstituting all investigative agencies.
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barren land on lease with easy terms to graduates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making workers partners in factory profits.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student unions in educational institutes. • Ensuring health for all • Use the term "Pakistani community" for non-Muslim populations and protect their honor and dignity • Increase play grounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urdu as medium of instruction and official language. • Free education to women • Internet connections and laptops to youth. • Vocational training and interest free loans • . • Providing education, employment, and civil rights to non-Muslims without discrimination. • Implement Islamic Shariah for women's inheritance • Establish separate desks for women in public service. • Allocating funds for separate sports grounds for women
Climate Change		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale tree plantation campaigns

4. Pakistan Muslim League- Nawaz (PML-N)

Reform Area	Reforms	Other Pledges
Governance & Democratic Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional amendment to strengthen the local governments including elections within 90 days of dissolution and devolve all social infrastructure departments • Empower local governments to administer urban planning • Merge all parallel bodies, companies and authorities including Development Authorities, PHAs to form an integrated city /district wide local government. • Abolish NAB. • Reviewing compensation, benefits, and retirement provisions to attract and incentivize good performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a specialized local government service cadre • Formation of an ethic committee to monitor conduct of parliament. • Creating space for technical experts through special pay scales. • Provincial finance commission with minimum 30% gross revenue for local governments.
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-year stable taxation reform • Replace every electricity meter with an AMI/smart meter • Restructure gas distribution companies and enhance their productivity by comprehensively installing smart meters • Future contracts with IPP based on Pakistani rupees. • Deregulate the gas distribution companies, privatize DISCOS. • Involvement of private sector in the distribution market. • Abolishing foreign sovereign guarantees in the power sector. • Incentivize adoption of modern technology in agriculture • Removing NOC for drone utilization for agriculture sector. • Farmers insurance scheme against weather shocks and floods. • Reduce trade barriers, explore new markets, foster exporters, integrate e-commerce through legislation, and lift restrictive regulations. • Complete EV adoption by 2040 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Ministry of Economy through an integrated reform-oriented fusion of, Commerce Division, Industries Division, Board of Investment, Pakistan Customs • Increasing IT exports to 20 billion \$ in next 5 years. • CPEC's transportation network expansion includes completing key motorway projects, dualizing major highways, and constructing new roads and tunnels across Pakistan to enhance connectivity. • Significant infrastructure developments include building ring roads, upgrading urban traffic systems, and establishing dedicated freight corridors to improve national transportation efficiency. • Establish a Federal Ministry of Transport and create a National Road Transport Authority for unified transportation policymaking and legislation. • Add 15,000 MWs of power, including 5,000 & 7000 MW through Thar coal and hydroelectricity. • Sign and implement the \$10 B refinery deal with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitize the Ministry, DGPC and OGRA offices toward minimizing discretion/human intervention in approval processes and enhancing transparency. • Electricity subsidies for farmers and vulnerable • Reduction in electricity bills by 20% to 30% • Eradicate circular debt and reduce losses by enhancing transmission/ distribution infrastructure. • Replacing inefficient plants, low-cost power sources for decreasing generation cost. • Increase the share of renewable power to over 10% • Solarize public sector buildings. • Provide 4,000MW of solar power to electricity-starved rural areas through 1-4MW rural-grid-based micro-solar plants. • Expand PM Kisan Package • Agriculture sector growth of 5% by the end of the year 2029
City & Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural reforms in water sector • Develop a country-wide legal and regulatory water framework to ensure efficiency and transparency, and make the water sector self-sustainable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop Rapid Mass Transit Systems in Lahore, Peshawar, and Karachi, including completion of Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) and expansion of Green Line bus service in Karachi • Complete BRTs in Hyderabad, Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, and Quetta • Establish a public transport system at all Divisional Headquarters • Improve rural transport connectivity such that no village is more than 1 Km away from a bus stop • Use of Safe City Projects to control and manage traffic.
IT & Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage use of IT resources for online education. • Digitalization of land records. • Overhaul the Telecom Act for integrated digital infrastructure and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Smart Classrooms in every university. • Create entrepreneurship hubs within universities. • Transform MoIT&T into a Ministry of Digital Economy for cross-sectoral digital policy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an autonomous Digital Authority led by experts for digital infrastructure. • All government departments to go Paperless in the next 5 years. • Implementation of e-procurement across departments. • Block chain-based unification of all citizens credentials and documents. • Integrate the payment system with other countries, for freelancing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 million Pakistanis will be trained through Digi skills, for freelancing. • Sandboxes adoption to attract global venture capitals. • Bringing large payment platforms • Sustainability in IT sector policies for 5 years. • Establishing 5 IT cities • Free public Wi-Fi
Law & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish E-Courts for time and resource efficient justice. • Connect police stations, investigation, forensic laboratories, prosecution, courts, and prisons through digital data • Limiting adjudication time to one year • Promotion of Alternative dispute resolution mechanism • Structural reform for accountability of superior courts. • Introduction of case management system. • Establish dedicated commercial courts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Counter Terrorism Department in all provinces • Statutory legal aid bodies for affordable legal services, through inducting fresh graduates on stipend. • Translating all the laws into Urdu. • Live Telecast of important matters under adjudication before the Superior Courts including the proceedings of the Supreme Judicial Council.
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 'National Action Plan' for AI, STEM, ML, and technology-driven education. • Establish integrated AI and ML labs or clubs within schools. • Continue and establish E-libraries. • Introducing telemedicine facilities • Curriculum updating includes coding, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary studies. • Double national spending on R&D • Establishing linkages between national and provincial poverty alleviation initiatives with local government institutions. • Encourage and conduct regular e-sports tournaments. • Ensure essential reproductive health services including family planning services are affordable and readily available to all citizens of the country. • Encourage funding for e-sportspersons by corporates under CSR • Reviving Student unions in educational institutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce mental health clinics at all DHQs and THQs • Scaling up CM stunting reduction program to a national level. • Construct 250 new state-of-the-art stadiums and AstroTurf pitches, providing world-class facilities for aspiring athletes. • Establishment and operationalization of Medical City in every provincial capital • Establishment of Cancer Care Hospital in each province • Establishment of PKLI facilities in each province • Ensure access to Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) and nutrition essentials. • Ensure Pre-qualification of Pakistan's Regulatory System with World Health Organization (WHO)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing education funding to 5% of GDP. • 5 Point Population Planning agenda to ensure a central focus on improving the quality and standard of living of our people: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch 'Wheels of Opportunity' Program for Safe and Accessible Transport for every student • Expanding CM afternoon program nationwide. • Establishing AI/MI labs/Clubs in schools • Endowment funds in each university. • Increasing higher education access from 13% to 30%. • Establishing New Higher education institutes. • Separate colleges for boys and girls in remote areas. • Need/performance base grant to universities. • Creating entrepreneurship hubs within universities. • Establishing medical and engineering colleges at district level. • Establishing science and technology parks. • Developing paid internship opportunities and job portals. • Achieve universal primary enrolment by 2029. • Ensure social protection of labor by effectively implementing minimum wage, health card and education card. • Introducing National School nutrition program. • Expand Punjab Education Endowment Fund and Pakistan Education Endowment Fund (PEEF) to include marginalized communities. • Establish Pakistan's first sports university. • Launch New Labor Policy in line with ILO and UNICEF laws and recommendations. • Ensure equitable pay for female sportspersons. • Gender Equality in Sports
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement National REDD+ Strategy • Launch "National Adaptation Plan (NAP)" to enhance the country's capacity for climate change adaptation • SMOG Free Pakistan - Air Quality Emergency • Climate-Resilient, Recovery Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework (4RF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening District Disaster Management Authorities for emergency response • Empower local governments to administer and raise climate financing, in order to mitigation of smog

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National early warning system for agriculture for timely alerts.• Legislate fuel-consumption specifications, mandating a shift to hybrid technology by 2035 and complete EV adoption by 2040 in the local manufacturing of domestic, goods transport, and public transport vehicles.• Banning Plastic• Developing Pakistan carbon credit policy framework.
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5. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)

Reform Area	Reforms	Other Pledges
Governance & Democratic Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish separate constituencies for overseas Pakistanis. • Strengthening local government as third tier of government. • Guaranteeing fiscal autonomy for Gilgit-Baltistan by enhancing local revenue authority and increasing its federal revenue share. • Creation of south Punjab province. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of accountability through performance metrics and Ombudsman's office's effectiveness. • Ensuring FATA and PATA areas are duly empowered with local self-governments in tribal areas. • Faithfully implement 18th Constitutional amendment • Establish a permanent secretariat for CCI • Restoration of magisterial powers of DCs • Reviving and upscaling the Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan initiative • Announce a new NFC Award
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted subsidies and tax expenditures rectification • Reforming the energy sector by reviewing power distribution, competition, lines utilization by multiple companies etc. • Reducing import duties on electric vehicles • Ease of doing business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcing support prices for crops • Tax incentives for alternative energy products • Increase development budget of AJK • Debt GDP ratio as per FRDL Act • Doubling real incomes for wage earners • Enhancing the capacity of Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works (KSEW), building a new shipyard in Ormara, Balochistan • Doubling Public investment • Increasing private investment in housing • Tax reforms to achieve a Tax-to-GDP ratio of 15% • Solarizing villages and towns through mini grids. • Solarizing public buildings and promoting net metering with a 1:1 swap ratio for solar-generated • Resuming work on the Pak-Iran gas pipeline. • Setting up green energy parks via PPP, focusing on providing affordable electricity, especially to the poorest households, for up to 300 free units. • Establishing dedicated solar parks for each industrial zone, incorporating wheeling charges in tariffs for parks located outside designated zones.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean energy to coastal residents • Indigenous seed banks to preserve crop diversity and reduce reliance on expensive hybrid imports. • Setting up warehouses with agricultural implements for rent to small farmers for mechanized farming. • Support prices for various crops. Haari/Kisaan Cards for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subsidies on high-quality seeds. ○ Subsidies on inputs like DAP/Urea and marketing of produce. • Crop insurance
City & Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing urban mobility through public transport and non-motorized options to reduce emissions • Establishing a roadmap for the sustainable electrification of mass transit and larger vehicles • Implement integrated waste management and sewerage system in all districts
IT & Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land digitization through GPS map for accurate revenue assessment, cropping patterns, cultivable land, • Invest in IT infrastructure to bridge the digital divide and streamline bureaucratic procedures for IT businesses. • Implement regulatory reforms and targeted incentives to encourage IT sector growth and fund repatriation. 	
Law & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology-based systems to streamline case tracking • Judicial reforms in appointment & accountability of judges • Alternate dispute resolution in civil and commercial cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Federal Constitutional Court with equal representation from all federating units,
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform media-related laws to protect freedom of speech • Establish research and development centers, integrate entrepreneurship training into the curriculum, and setting up incubators to foster startup culture • Investing in modern teaching methodologies, digital literacy • Giving provinces autonomy over curriculum formation • Modernizing the curriculum for 21st-century needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social markets to make essential needs affordable for consumers at the bottom of the pyramid. • Free primary healthcare and medicines nationwide • Free and compulsory education for all children. • Constructing primary schools within a 30-minute and secondary schools within 60-minute radius. • Establish university in every district

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing literary councils at the district level. • Youth centers covering libraries, Wi-Fi, sports and extra curriculum. • Allocating 5% of GDP to education, including 1 percent for research and innovation • Increase social protection spending from 0.6% to 1.2% of GDP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipend fund for school-going children • Regularizing katchi abadis • Large scale housing for poor, landless, working classes • One year stipend for educated and deserving young men and women. • Provision of student loans • Increasing health spending by 500%. • Digital medical record : One patient-one ID • Introduce measures supporting women's rights to pay, equal and minimum wages, and priority in state-owned land allotment for agriculture. • Expand BISP to include additional support for citizens affected by inflation and unemployment through: Waseela-e-Haq, Waseela-e-Taleem, Waseela-e-Rozgar, Waseela-e-Sehat • Mazdoor Card to workers of informal sector. • Free 1,000-day nutritional program for expectant/new mothers. • Free meals to all school going children. • Facilitating home loans • Legalizing property titles for 3 million women in flood-affected areas. • Establishing old age homes across country • Registering female agricultural workers for greater access to social protection and opportunities. • Free DNA tests in sexual abuse cases. • Youth centers establishment covering libraries, Wi-Fi, sports and extra curriculum. • Enhance post-pregnancy and post-abortion family planning with dedicated counselors. • Empower midwives in remote areas through training and clear referral pathways.
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Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing disaster management as an integrated institutional response with community-level preparedness, risk reduction, and early warning systems as fundamental rights. • Encouraging the establishment of carbon market standards to mobilize private sector finance for decarbonization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing climate action efforts' efficiency and effectiveness through expanded digitalized infrastructure. • Climate proofed infrastructure • Plastic ban

6. Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI)

Reform Area	Reforms	Other Pledges
Governance & Democratic Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elect the Prime Minister directly • Legislative terms to four years • Directly elected Senator for 5 years • The Cabinet comprises 10 advisors and 15 experts from NA. • Reduce the size of the government, which includes downsizing the cabinet and minimizing the number of ministers. • Link the reward system of civil servants with delivery and performance. All perks and privileges will be monetized • Form Legislative List III for local govt. • Fully transfer ten specific functions to local governments • Abolition of current administrative positions, such as the Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners, at the district level • Implement electronic voting. • Introduction of key performance indicators (KPIs) for each department • The principle of "Pay for Performance" for civil servants. • Revitalizing the CSS structure. This transformation seeks to open CSS to specialists. • Support the creation of new provinces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intra-party elections from the grassroots to the party chairman • National constituencies, limited to a maximum of 300,000 residents. • Sub-secretariats will function as critical conduits between the provincial secretariat and lower tiers • Abolition of the Chief Secretary role and restructuring departments to fall directly under the Chief Minister and relevant ministers. • Resolve complaints regarding misuse of power by government functionaries within 30 days. • Development of district management cadres • The District Commissioner's current role will be restricted to the supervision of all non-devolved departments and ensuring cooperation between district and provincial governments.
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance-based budgeting • Withholding tax incentives and subsidies from major businesses that don't engage in exporting goods. • Simplify and streamline tax processes, making them more efficient and equitable. • Revisiting and revamping the pension system to make it more sustainable and equitable. • Defined Benefit (DB) Pension Scheme for existing civil servants and defined Contribution (DC) Pension Scheme for new civil servants • Complete the rollout of the Track & Trace System and broaden its application, which can aid in tracking taxable activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate boom-bust cycles and establish a more stable economic trajectory. • Set the target of reducing inflation to a range of 5% to 7% through appropriate fiscal and monetary measures. • Promoting socio-economic development in lagging and under-developed regions • Rebuilding of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reserves to cover three months of import requirements. • Increase exports of traditional goods to 15% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) within five years, with the goal of reaching 20% of GDP within a decade

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital invoicing system known as the Synchronized Withholding Payments System (SWAPS) to modernize invoicing processes. • End land distribution to government employees • Introduction of crop insurance in agriculture sector • Privatization of Distribution Companies (DISCOs) • Reduce public debt to below 60% of GDP. • Reduction in the Corporate Tax Rate from 29% to 20% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment-to-GDP ratio, aiming for it to reach 20% within five years and 30% within ten years. • Elimination of income tax exemptions provided to various segments. • Investments on solar and wind projects, and the utilization of canals and streams for small dams. • Rollout of Point of Sales (PoS) machines • The creation of a Centralized Debt Management Division in the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to centralize and streamline debt management functions. • Raise annual Information Technology (IT) exports to \$30 billion within five years. • Bolstering the local industry under the ‘Make in Pakistan’ banner, recognizing the vital role of competitive energy provisions in industrial growth. • State-owned entities like Pakistan Railways, Airlines, and Steel Mills through Public-Private Partnership schemes • Reduce reliance on taxes related to international trade. • Need for targeted, needs-based, time-bound, and budgeted subsidies. • Energy Circular Debt Burden-Sharing among federal and provinces • Create opportunities for SMEs to access credit
City & Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote vertical growth and higher Floor Area Ratios (FAR), issuing building permits competitively to ensure housing meets the people's needs. • Implement urban growth boundaries to contain sprawl. • Encourage mixed-use development to reduce commute times and promote walkability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass transit systems through public-private partnerships • Electric two-wheelers • Ten-year development plans for mass transit schemes in major urban centers • Contactless digital payment solutions for tolls, parking, and public transit. • Shifting 50% of projects to the PPP mode to encourage private sector participation.

IT & Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitalization, single-window clearance in governance system • implementation of a comprehensive e-governance system • Invest in Artificial Intelligence and advanced technology • Digital rights, including access to the internet and protection against arbitrary shutdowns, will be guaranteed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding internet access and connectivity in rural areas
Law & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Judicial Commissions (IJC) for hiring of judges and fixed tenure for judges. • Local bodies and police offices will be used for out-of-court settlement through Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanism. • Forensic audits of our governance and judicial system's performance • Video communication technology to prevent court proceeding delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed up family court cases ensuring resolution within six months. • Appoint local judges with jurisdiction over areas comprising approximately three Thanas. • Access to justice will be freely available. • Reform in family courts • Protect property rights of widows
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure freedom for online media platforms and social networks. • Incentives for Smaller Families to control population. • Seamless integration of the internet and social media platforms, and extensive use of technology to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of education. • Ehsaas Rerhibaan program nationally, to benefit 1 million+ informal street vendors and affecting 10 million livelihoods. • Cultivate a society where integrity, empathy, and responsibility are as important as academic knowledge • Establish clear and transparent criteria for the release of government advertising. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable ten top universities in Pakistan to achieve accreditation for international degrees. • Overcome learning poverty. • Set up the Pakistan Housing bank for a more robust and efficient housing finance system. • Unified health cards across Pakistan • Promote land ownership among marginalized communities • ‘Shelter for All’ initiative to provide housing to poor. • Ehsaas Riayat accessible for at least 16 million families living in poverty, with an approximate annual budget of PKR 250 billion • Expanding the Kamyab Pakistan Program nationwide. We aim to provide cumulative loans of Rs. 407 billion in year 1, and Rs 1000 billion by year 3, with the government picking up the subsidy of Rs 56 billion in year 1 and Rs. 168 billion in year 3 respectively. • Involving local communities in project planning and decision-making

Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impose higher taxes on heavy polluting industries. • Integration of the Power Division and Petroleum Division within the Ministry of Energy • Renewable energy transition • Carbon tax or cap-and-trade system to put a price on carbon emissions • Developing local electric two-wheelers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide incentives for firms and households to minimize carbon use. • Promote research and utilization of environmentally friendly building materials. • Cross-subsidies in energy tariffs will be removed
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7. Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP)

Reform area	Reforms	Other Pledges
Government & Democratic Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols will be eliminated, and people and organizations will have easy access to everything • Government jobs will be merit-based, with no room for nepotism or bribery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nepotism, bribery, and political involvement in public dealings will be eliminated. • Local governments will be made responsible to ensure cleanliness in streets, roads, highways, government and private buildings and public parks etc.
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both external and internal debts will be cleared and wiped out. Government expenses will be minimized. • Reforms will be made in taxation system. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest free economy, such as interest free banking. • Prime importance will be given to foreign direct investment. • The significant difference in salaries will be eliminated. • Heavy taxes on industries will be reduced and traders' friendly policies will be formulated. • Increase exports in every sector. • Tax burden on citizens will be reduced • The agricultural sector will be accorded prime importance, with the provision of standard quality seeds, pesticides, and machinery to farmers. They will be guided about government-fixed prices, and the role of middlemen will be eliminated. • Emphasizing on marine resources, experts will be engaged to explore income-generating opportunities. • Plans will be formulated to promote exports from both fish farming and cattle farming. • All mineral resources will be managed by the federal government, implementing a proper tender system on an annual basis. • Low-cost electricity will be provided. • Water preservation will be given prime importance, and small dams will be constructed for electricity generation and water conservation.
City & Opportunity	<p>Strict enforcement of road and street width laws will be implemented to reduce commuting time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean water will be provided to every citizen. • The government will create a comprehensive plan for city, settlement, road, and bridge construction, prioritizing fair distribution and strict adherence to construction laws.

IT & Software		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IT sector will be accorded prime importance, and individuals interested in IT will be provided with free IT education. • Policies will be formulated to boost exports in the IT sector, and individuals will be encouraged to contribute to the export growth of Pakistan's IT sector.
Law & Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Reconciliation committees will be formed to minimize the burden on courts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice will be delivered early and on time. • Free legal aid
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fee structure of private educational institutions will be established under government provisions and in accordance with specific criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mass media will be bound to offer solutions to religious and religious problems and to educate people intellectually, morally and socially so that they can be protected from obscenity. • Standard quality Islamic schools, colleges, and universities will be built. • Budget allocation will prioritize free healthcare for deserving patients. Public hospitals will be expanded, and private facilities must adhere to government-approved fees based on standards and hygiene regulations. • Special efforts will be undertaken to boost the tourism sector, ensuring secure accommodations, quality food, and meeting the needs of both domestic and foreign tourists. • Separate colleges and universities will be built for women and girls. • Entrepreneurial opportunities will be provided to skilled youth instead of government jobs.
Climate Chane		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All necessary measures will be taken to eliminate environmental pollution. The government will actively promote tree planting, and strict rules will be applied to industries and institutions to control environmental

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