

## ELECTORAL REFORMS IN PAKISTAN: A JUDICIAL APPRAISAL OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION'S POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

**Aqsa Ijaz**

Assistant District Attorney, Rawalpindi  
PhD (Scholar) International Islamic University, Islamabad  
Email: [aqsaijaz75@gmail.com](mailto:aqsaijaz75@gmail.com)

**Dr. Warda Yasin**

Assistant Professor (Law) Faculty of Shariah & Law  
International Islamic University, Islamabad.  
Email: [warda.yaseen@gmail.com](mailto:warda.yaseen@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Electoral reform is a broad concept that broadly refers to improving the responsiveness of electoral processes to public expectations and democratic principles. In practice, such reforms often emerge from negotiations between political stakeholders, particularly ruling parties and the opposition, each seeking to maximize electoral advantage. Reforms are also frequently triggered by disputes arising in pre- and post-election processes.*

*In Pakistan, the persistent demand for electoral reform has stemmed from recurring challenges such as a trust deficit in the electoral system, lack of transparency, weak institutional capacity, and disputed election results. Political parties remain structurally fragile, while the historical involvement of the military and bureaucracy has significantly shaped electoral outcomes. Recent reforms under the Elections Act, 2017, introduced without a broad-based consensus, have raised concerns about the integrity of future elections and deepened political polarization.*

*This analysis will critically examine the role of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in pre- and post-electoral processes, with particular focus on its performance and limitations in light of Supreme Court jurisprudence. The first part evaluates electoral reforms within the framework of law and recurring electoral disputes, while the second part analyzes the ECP's role in implementing these reforms through judicial guidance. The study concludes by emphasizing the importance of aligning Pakistan's electoral framework with international standards, ensuring inclusivity of all political stakeholders, and strengthening judicial review as a safeguard for transparency, accountability, and democratic integrity.*

**Key Words:** Election Commission of Pakistan, Electoral Reforms, Judicial Exegesis.

### 1. Introduction

The notion of electoral reform may be understood as the enhancement of electoral responsiveness to citizens' needs and expectations. Broadly, the process of reform is shaped by political stakeholders and the dynamics of elitism. Within this framework, two categories of elite-driven reforms warrant attention.<sup>1</sup>

First, some reforms primarily serve the interests of politicians, reflecting the dominance of elite preferences in shaping the rules that govern electoral processes and their management. Second, some reforms emerge from elite bargaining, wherein changes are introduced through negotiated settlements that continue to prioritize political advantage. In both instances, electoral reform can be conceived as the outcome of dialogue, often

limited between incumbents and the opposition, with both sides largely intent on maximizing their share of legislative seats.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, any political party is the main source of the emergence of electoral reforms. The core key in bringing the electoral reforms are the political stakeholders and the interest groups. The political parties bring the electoral reforms to ensure the transparency during the elections and secondly, in order to enable them to secure more seats in the Parliament. One important factor which contribute towards the inception electoral reforms is the electoral disputes resulted from pre and post election processes.

In the context of Pakistan, several recurring factors have consistently driven demands for electoral reform, including a persistent trust deficit in the electoral system, lack of transparency, weak institutional capacity, and disputed election results. Political parties in Pakistan remain structurally fragile and repetitive in their approaches, while the historical entanglement of the military with politics, coupled with its longstanding alliance with the bureaucracy, has significantly shaped political outcomes, often resulting in engineered elections.<sup>3</sup>

The recommendations introduced under the Elections Act, 2017, alongside subsequent reforms advanced by the incumbent government in recent years, have severely undermined the autonomy of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), which itself has expressed reservations over such measures. Efforts to bring about major amendments to the Elections Act, 2017 without securing consensus from all relevant political stakeholders have placed the integrity of future elections at serious risk. Consequently, this approach has not only exacerbated political instability but has also obstructed the broader process of democratic consolidation, effectively stalling Pakistan's journey towards a more entrenched democratic order.

## **2. International Treatise and Election Laws of Pakistan**

Pakistan ratified the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)* in 2010, thereby assuming binding obligations to uphold civil and political rights, including those relating to the conduct of free and fair elections. By acceding to the ICCPR and related international treaties, Pakistan has accepted a legal framework against which its electoral processes can be appraised. These provisions are binding on all States Parties, and thus Pakistan is under a clear obligation to align its electoral framework with the standards enshrined in the Covenant.<sup>4</sup>

The General Elections of 2013 were the first to be held in Pakistan after its ratification of the ICCPR, marking a critical test of the country's commitment to international electoral obligations. International law provides a robust normative framework for evaluating electoral processes, bridging gaps in domestic practices, and guiding reforms to address weaknesses in the system. Such frameworks are particularly significant for mediating disputes between electoral stakeholders, thereby strengthening trust in democratic institutions.

The resolution of electoral disputes through transparent and effective mechanisms not only enhances the credibility of elections but also contributes to the institutionalization of democracy. Compliance with international obligations, therefore, is essential for Pakistan to ensure a more credible, transparent, and inclusive electoral process. Furthermore, adherence to these commitments can provide a sound basis for meaningful reforms, fostering greater political stability and democratic consolidation.

Pakistan has ratified a number of international treaties that impose obligations relevant to reforms in the electoral process. These instruments collectively provide a

normative framework for ensuring inclusivity, transparency, and integrity in elections. The key treaties include:

- i. **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):** Establishes the right to participate in public affairs, to vote, and to be elected through genuine periodic elections based on universal suffrage and secret ballot (Article 25).<sup>5</sup>
- ii. **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW):** Mandates equal political participation of women and the elimination of barriers to their representation in electoral processes.<sup>6</sup>
- iii. **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD):** Requires states to guarantee equality in political rights, including participation in elections, without racial or ethnic discrimination.
- iv. **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD):** Obliges states to ensure that persons with disabilities can fully and effectively participate in political and public life, including the right to vote and be elected.
- v. **United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC):** Calls for transparent and accountable electoral systems and measures to prevent corruption in political financing and elections.<sup>7</sup>

Pakistan's ratification of key international treaties, including the *ICCPR*, *CEDAW*, *CERD*, *CRPD*, and *UNCAC*, imposes clear obligations to ensure free, fair, transparent, and inclusive elections. *General Comment No. 25* of the *ICCPR* requires an independent electoral authority; however, Pakistan's legal framework allows overlaps of executive and judicial functions within the ECP, contrary to the principle of separation of powers. The ECP's *Five-Year Strategic Plan* also lacks a comprehensive framework to address these institutional deficiencies.<sup>8</sup>

International instruments emphasize transparency and access to information. *UNCAC* Article 10 requires states to enhance transparency in public administration, while the *ICCPR* obliges governments to proactively disclose information of public interest. Yet, Pakistan's electoral laws do not mandate timely publication of ECP decisions, polling schemes, or results. Lists of candidates for reserved seats are often released only after elections. Although the 18th Amendment guarantees citizens' right to information, the ECP has no effective mechanism to ensure timely disclosure, and its performance is not subject to meaningful accountability.

Political parties also remain weak in internal democracy. While the *Political Parties Order, 2002* requires periodic internal elections and submission of financial accounts, enforcement is minimal. Party elections are often symbolic, and scrutiny of financial statements is limited.<sup>9</sup> The ECP publishes annual reports but lacks a systematic mechanism for enforcement or public transparency, contrary to *UNCAC* standards.

*CEDAW* and Pakistan's Constitution obligate equal participation of women in public life. Although measures such as requiring female polling staff at every polling station exist, barriers persist due to low CNIC registration among women and poor training of female polling staff. Legal safeguards remain only partially implemented.

Electoral dispute resolution also reflects serious gaps. Pakistan lacks a formal legal framework for filing and resolving complaints. Disputes are handled through ad hoc mechanisms, undermining public trust. The *ICCPR* requires effective

remedies and access to judicial review, but no institutionalized system exists within the ECP to meet these obligations.

In sum, while Pakistan has undertaken international obligations to strengthen democratic processes, domestic laws and practices fall short of these standards. Weak transparency, poor accountability of the ECP, fragile political party structures, and inadequate mechanisms for inclusivity and dispute resolution continue to compromise the integrity of elections and hinder democratic consolidation.

### **3. Bridging Borders: Regulating Overseas Voting in Pakistan**

The participation of overseas Pakistanis in the electoral process has been a long-standing demand, yet its realization has faced significant institutional and technical hurdles. In 2012, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) declined to facilitate overseas voting in the General Elections 2013, citing the absence of logistical arrangements and requisite budget allocations.<sup>10</sup>

In 2015, the ECP established a Directorate of Overseas Voting within its Secretariat and subsequently initiated mock trials using postal ballots and telephone-based voting mechanisms. However, these experiments were declared unsuccessful owing to issues of electoral integrity, credibility of results, and inadequate resources. Meanwhile, the Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms (2014) and its sub-committee proposed a legal and technological framework to enable overseas Pakistanis to vote. Their recommendations included exploring remote internet voting (I-Voting) as a viable solution, later incorporated into the Elections Act, 2017. Under Section 94 of the Act, the ECP was empowered to conduct pilot projects for overseas voting in by-elections. Accordingly, the ECP approached NADRA to develop a technical system, which, however, could not be fully operationalized.<sup>11</sup>

Prior to the General Elections 2018, the Supreme Court of Pakistan consolidated various petitions on overseas voting and sought progress reports from both ECP and NADRA on the implementation of Section 94. The Court estimated the pilot project's cost at approximately Rs. 150 million and established the Internet Voting Task Force (IVTF) to examine the proposed I-Voting mechanism and assess its suitability.<sup>12</sup>

The proposed I-Voting system operated through an integrated database and web portal linked with NADRA for voter verification. Voters were required to register using a valid passport, NIC, and email address, upon which they received a secure PIN for login. Additional identity verification measures included random security questions. Prior to polling day, each registered voter was issued a unique passcode via email to access the system and cast their vote electronically. The ECP, through an administrative portal, consolidated votes into result summaries for transmission to election officials. While the I-Voting initiative marked a step toward enfranchising the diaspora, concerns over cybersecurity, cost, transparency, and institutional capacity continue to limit its practical adoption.

The Internet Voting Task Force (IVTF) carried out a detailed assessment of the system developed for overseas Pakistanis and highlighted several fundamental weaknesses. It concluded that the system could not ensure the secrecy of the ballot, which is the cornerstone of democratic voting. It also allowed overseas voters to sidestep their home constituencies, leaving room for votes to be cast in multiple



places. The task force warned of possible impersonation through fake emails, reliance on outdated third-party software, and the absence of proper documentation or protection against cyberattacks. In view of these concerns, the IVTF recommended that the system should not be used in the 2018 general elections.<sup>13</sup>

The Supreme Court of Pakistan later revisited the issue. While acknowledging the weaknesses, it permitted the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to run pilot projects under the Elections Act, 2017. The Court also gave the ECP the discretion to disregard the votes of overseas Pakistanis if it found the system unreliable. Acting on this guidance, the ECP amended the Election Rules, 2017, to provide a legal basis for internet voting, trained its officials, and launched public awareness campaigns.

The first pilot project took place during the by-elections in October 2018 across 35 constituencies. Although 631,909 overseas Pakistanis were eligible, only 7,419 registered, and 6,146 eventually cast their votes. Most came from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, the UK, Canada, and the US. The project cost nearly Rs. 95 million. While the system technically survived multiple cyberattack attempts, voter turnout remained disappointingly low, largely due to the short preparation time. Concerns also persisted about transparency, secrecy of the ballot, and vulnerability to manipulation. A second pilot in December 2018 involved 4,667 eligible voters from ten countries, but only 77 registered and participated.

Independent analysis by FAFEN revealed worrying discrepancies. In some constituencies, the number of invalid votes exceeded the margin of victory, raising questions about the system's reliability and the potential influence of overseas voters on election outcomes. However, due to the lack of detailed constituency-wise data, it was difficult to fully measure their electoral impact.<sup>14</sup>

Beyond technical issues, the project also raised serious legal questions. Article 226 of the Constitution and Section 81 of the Elections Act, 2017 both require voting to be conducted by secret ballot, a condition the system could not fulfill.<sup>15</sup> Remote proxy voting, the risk of exposing voter identity, and the possibility of stolen login credentials further undermined compliance with the law. Another unresolved matter is how electoral offences by overseas voters would be dealt with, as such offences fall outside Pakistan's jurisdiction.

Practical challenges also came to light. The system created opportunities for vote buying, especially under the "Kafeel" sponsorship model common in the Middle East, where employers hold significant influence over migrant workers. It also failed to address the participation of overseas voters with disabilities, bypassed the public display of electoral rolls, and excluded independent observers—all of which reduced transparency and accountability.

Taken together, these gaps show that while overseas Pakistanis have the potential to shape electoral outcomes, the credibility of the system remains questionable. Without a strong legal framework, airtight technical safeguards, and effective oversight, internet voting risks opening the door to manipulation, disputes, and even large-scale electoral rigging. Until such safeguards are in place, Pakistan is not yet ready to rely on online voting for its overseas citizen.

#### 4. Judicial Oversight and the Role of the Election Commission of Pakistan

The Elections Act, 2017 entrusts the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) with a wide range of functions that reflect its quasi-judicial character in managing the electoral process. These include the authority to declare a poll void, punish for

contempt, hear complaints, initiate disciplinary proceedings, entertain appeals against scrutiny orders and vote counts, order inquiries against treasury officers, and frame rules. In addition, the ECP may exercise powers similar to those of a court, such as compelling attendance of witnesses, examining individuals on oath, ordering production of documents, receiving evidence on affidavits, granting adjournments, issuing commissions for examination of witnesses, transferring petitions, and imposing penalties for corrupt or illegal practices as well as for violations of election duties. It may also authorize officers to exercise the powers of a Magistrate.

Section 10 of the Elections Act, 2017 explicitly empowers the ECP to punish for its contempt in the same manner as a High Court, applying the Contempt of Court Ordinance, 2003. This includes imposing fines up to one hundred thousand rupees and imprisonment up to six months. Similar powers had earlier been conferred through the Representation of the People Act, 1976. Thus, under law, the Commission is authorized to proceed against individuals who disobey its orders or use derogatory remarks against its members.<sup>16</sup>

However, the conferment of contempt powers upon the ECP raises serious constitutional concerns. Unlike Pakistan, the Election Commission of India has not been granted such powers, despite parliamentary debate. The core argument is that the Constitution of Pakistan does not vest contempt jurisdiction in the ECP. The Commission is a constitutional body established under Article 213, with its functions defined in Article 219, but without any express reference to judicial powers. Article 225 envisages that election disputes shall be determined by independent tribunals headed by serving or retired judges, not by the ECP itself.<sup>17</sup>

This creates a constitutional anomaly: while the Parliament may assign *functions* to the ECP, there is a clear distinction between *functions* and *powers*. Granting the authority to punish its own contempt undermines the principle that “no one can be a judge in its own cause,” especially when election disputes may involve ECP officials. Moreover, Article 204 of the Constitution vests contempt powers exclusively in the courts of law. Extending such powers to the ECP amounts to a derogation from constitutional principles. The Fourth Schedule further confirms that Parliament’s legislative competence does not extend to conferring contempt jurisdiction upon the ECP.

In essence, while the Elections Act, 2017 attempts to strengthen the ECP’s role, the conferment of quasi-judicial and contempt powers remains constitutionally questionable. The ECP’s core mandate is to ensure free, fair, and transparent elections, but its exercise of judicial authority risks conflicting with the separation of powers enshrined in the Constitution.

In comparison with the legislative body of the UK, it becomes quite explicit that it has never conferred contempt powers to its EC. Although, it has been working without any constraints on its legislative powers, since its inception. Furthermore, the legal position cannot be denied that post election disqualification envisaged in the Article 63 (2) of the Constitution of Pakistan is adjudicated upon by the courts of law in the different democracies of the world, whereas EC only performs electoral functions.

The constitutional status and authority of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) have been repeatedly examined by the superior judiciary. One of the earliest controversies related to contempt powers. The Supreme Court,

while striking down the *Contempt of Court Act, 2012*, held that the right to punish for contempt rests exclusively with constitutional courts and cannot be delegated.<sup>18</sup> Later, when notices were issued by the ECP under Section 10 of the Elections Act, 2017, petitioners challenged its jurisdiction, arguing that contempt powers under Articles 175(2) and 204 of the Constitution vest only in superior courts. Although the Lahore High Court restrained the ECP from passing final orders, the Supreme Court clarified that unless a law is finally declared unconstitutional, its provisions remain operative. Thus, the ECP's contempt proceedings were allowed to continue pending final adjudication.<sup>19</sup>

Delimitation was another area tested before the courts. A challenge was raised against seat allocation in a district on the grounds that delimitation had not begun from the northernmost point. The Supreme Court held that since the population variation remained within the statutory 10% margin, and the words "as far as possible" under Rule 10(5) conferred discretion, the delimitation exercise was lawful. This reinforced the principle that technical flexibility is permissible if the overall fairness of representation is maintained.

More complex disputes arose in relation to pre-election qualifications and disqualifications. The Court categorically held that the ECP has no authority to decide on such matters under Article 218(3) or Sections 8(c) and 9 of the Elections Act.<sup>20</sup> In the case of a candidate who had renounced U.S. nationality but received his certificate after filing nomination papers, the ECP disqualified him.<sup>21</sup> The Supreme Court struck this down, citing earlier precedents (*Muhammad Salman v. Naveed Anjum*, 2021 SCMR 1675; *Zulfiqar Bhatti v. ECP*, C.A. No.142 of 2019), and declared that only constitutional courts can rule on disqualification. The ECP's orders were thus without lawful authority.

The scope of Section 9 of the Elections Act was also judicially interpreted. It was clarified that the ECP may declare a poll void only if violations materially affect results. Fresh polls cannot be ordered without such a declaration, since dual results cannot co-exist. The Court also interpreted the Explanation to Section 9(1), holding that if women's turnout is less than 10%, the ECP may presume coercion or restraint through agreement, thereby protecting women's right to vote.

The allocation of reserved seats presented perhaps the most contentious issue. The ECP had excluded political parties lacking election symbols from reserved seats, relying on Rule 94 of the 2017 Rules. The Supreme Court held this exclusion unconstitutional, since neither Articles 51 and 106 of the Constitution nor Section 215(5) of the Elections Act envisaged such a consequence. The only penalty for failing to hold intra-party elections was the non-allocation of a symbol, not deprivation of reserved seats. Accordingly, the ECP's notifications were declared *ultra vires*.<sup>22</sup>

The matter culminated in the reserved seats litigation of 2024–2025. In July 2024, the Supreme Court had initially ruled in favour of allocating reserved seats to the SIC. However, upon review, a larger bench of eleven judges by a majority of 7–4 set aside that judgment, restored the earlier ruling of the Peshawar High Court, and directed the ECP to reassess nomination and declaration papers afresh. This decision reaffirmed that the ECP must act strictly within its constitutional and statutory mandate, ensuring that political representation reflects both legality and fairness

## 5. Conclusion

In a nutshell, the study concludes that the implementation of electoral reforms in Pakistan has been hampered by weak institutional oversight, lack of accountability, and gaps in the legal framework. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) failed to publish its annual reports for 2022 and 2023 within the statutory timelines under the Elections Act, 2017, reflecting deficiencies in transparency. Despite Pakistan's ratification of the ICCPR in 2010, its electoral framework still falls short of international standards, as the ECP lacks mechanisms to provide timely public information, ensure stakeholder inclusion in decision-making, or enforce compliance with the financial disclosure requirements of political parties, nor is it legally required to publish party accounts for public scrutiny.

The absence of gender-disaggregated electoral data, informal resolution of complaints without a formal legal framework, and delays in judicial remedies further undermine the process. Moreover, overseas Pakistanis, though constitutionally entitled to vote under Article 17, remain disenfranchised due to the non-provision of resources and the incompatibility of internet voting with constitutional requirements for secret ballots under Article 226 and Section 81 of the Elections Act, 2017. Judicial interpretations have repeatedly confirmed that while the ECP is entrusted with supervisory and quasi-judicial functions, its powers remain limited by the Constitution, and provisions such as Section 10 of the Elections Act (contempt powers) are ultra vires for lack of constitutional backing. The Supreme Court has emphasized that the ECP cannot decide on pre-election disqualifications, order re-polls without grave illegality, or assume authority beyond its statutory mandate, thereby subjecting its actions to judicial review on grounds of jurisdiction, legal error, or violation of natural justice. Collectively, these gaps reveal that Pakistan's electoral regime lacks adequate legal and institutional safeguards, leaving the judiciary as the ultimate guarantor against ECP's overreach while exposing the urgent need for reforms to ensure transparency, inclusiveness, and compliance with democratic and international standards.<sup>23</sup>

## References:

- <sup>1</sup> Young J. LUKE, "A Strategic Assessment of the Roles of Electoral Management Board (E.M.B) in Electoral Reforms", *World Atlas International Journal of Education & Management* (2008, vol 3, no 1) ,37, retrieved from <https://www.globalacademicstar.com/download/article/a-strategic-assessment-of-the-roles-of-electoral-management-board-e-m-b-in-electoral.pdf>.
- <sup>2</sup> Priyanka Singh, " Theoretical Background of Electoral Reforms: A One Nation, One Election Perspective", *International Journal of Political Science and Governance* , ( 2025, vol 7, no 6, 8. retrieved from <https://www.journalofpoliticalscience.com/uploads/archives/7-5-32-852.pdf>.
- <sup>3</sup> International Crises Group, "Reforming Pakistan's Electoral System : Executive Summary and Recommendations", *Asia Report N 203*, (2011, 35), retrieved from <https://www.crisisgroup.org/sites/default/files/203-reforming-pakistan-s-electoral-system.pdf>
- <sup>4</sup> Pakistan Election Laws and International Standards: A Reference Guide on Legislative Gaps and Vulnerabilities, Nov 2013, 3, retrieved from <https://rsilpak.org/project/pakistan-election-laws-and-international-standards-a-reference-guide-on-legislative-gaps-and-vulnerabilities-dri/>
- <sup>5</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, General Comment 25, Para 26.
- <sup>6</sup> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Article 7 (a).
- <sup>7</sup> Convention Against Corruption, Article 7.4.
- <sup>8</sup> EU Election Observation Mission, Preliminary Statement, May 2013, Voter education spots promulgating non-Muslim participation in the elections were not aired on state-owned broadcasters,



retrieved from [http://www.eeas.europa.eu/eueom/pdf/missions/eu\\_eom\\_pakistan\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/eueom/pdf/missions/eu_eom_pakistan_final_report.pdf), Last Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2 pm.

<sup>9</sup> Political Parties Order 2002 Section 4 (1)(g).

<sup>10</sup> Hina Binte Haq<sup>1</sup>, Ronan McDermott<sup>2</sup>, and Syed Taha Ali, “Pakistan’s Internet Voting Experiment”, *School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences (SEECs), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, Pakistan* (2019) 3, retrieved from <https://arxiv.org/abs/1907.07765>.

<sup>11</sup> Asma Shakir Khawaja, Hasan Jamal, “Implementing Biometric Voting System In Pakistan: An Analytical Review”, *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, (2016, vol 53, no 2) 12.

<sup>12</sup> Babar Ali<sup>1</sup>, Zeeshan Khan, Haider Ali<sup>1</sup>, Saeed Akram, Waqar Ali, “Elections In The Digital Age: A Study Of Evms' Social Impact In Pakistan”, *Migration Letters* (2024, vol 21. S9) 1389, ISSN: 1741-8992, retrieved from

[https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as\\_sdt=0%2C5&q=implications+of+e+voting+in+pakistan&btnG=](https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=implications+of+e+voting+in+pakistan&btnG=)

<sup>13</sup> ECP’s Task Force Highlights Flaws in Proposed E-Voting Mechanism for Overseas Pakistanis, (2018), <https://www.dawn.com/news/1426972>

<sup>14</sup> ECP’s Task Force Highlights Flaws in Proposed E-Voting Mechanism for Overseas Pakistanis, (2018), <https://www.dawn.com/news/1426972>

<sup>15</sup> The Elections Act, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Waqar Rana, “ Should the ECP Punish Contempt”, <https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=221134> . Last Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> June.

<sup>17</sup> The Constitution of Pakistan 1973.

<sup>18</sup> PLD 2012 SC 870, Baz Muhammad Kakar and others vs. Federation of Pakistan etc.

<sup>19</sup> Imran Khan Niazi vs Federation of Pakistan, 2023 CLC 239.

<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Salman Versus Naveed Anjum and others, 2022 SCMR 42.

<sup>21</sup> Muhammad Faisal Vawda Versus Election Commission of Pakistan through secretary and others., 2023 SCMR 370.

<sup>22</sup> Judgment of SC on Reserved Seats, Civil Appeals No. 333 and 334 of 2024, (Civil Misc.)

<sup>23</sup> Application No.2920 of 2024) Civil Misc. Application No. 5913 of 2024.