

SHIFTING ELECTORAL DYNAMICS IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA :THE RISE OF PTI AND DECLINE OF TRADITIONAL PARTIES(2013-2024)

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ABSTRACT

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) has seen a sharp increase in electoral support. In order to shed light on PTI's performance in the general elections from 2013 to 2024, this paper looks at a variety of factors that contributed to the party's rise, such as demographic changes, campaign tactics, candidate selection, change-effective political tactics, attractive leadership under Imran Khan, rising public desire for political change, and voter perceptions. Additionally, examined in the analysis are societal and economic variables, demographic changes, and the function of social media platforms in enlisting and interacting with younger voters. PTI's popularity in the 2024 election has been further solidified by the effects of their rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, their democratic posture, and their effective public campaigns. The goal of this essay is to present a thorough analysis of PTI's election dynamics and any possible ramifications for Pakistan's political system. The goal of the study is to give readers a thorough grasp of PTI's election dynamics and any possible ramifications for Pakistan's political system. A focus on the reasons and contributing elements to that significant political shift was unavoidable. The article aims to address the important concerns of the way in which the PTI rose so quickly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's electoral politics. In addition, it examines how party manifestos influence support in various geographical areas. The study aims to improve understanding of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's election politics and the downfall of other established political parties like the JUI F, PPP, PMLN, and ANP. According to the findings, KPK has evolved from a politically unstable area where pattern-client relationships predominate to a province where reputation and performance are crucial.

Key words: Political parties ,Electoral dynamics, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Election ,Voter behavior,

1.Introduction

Tenant-landlord relations, party electoral play, and socio-political factors were all aspects of the election process in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the 1946 elections and the 1947 referendum. With Khudai Khitmatgar's' assistance, the All India National Congress used powerful members of the northern community to win elections in 1946. In order to further their personal interests, these powerful individuals utilized Congress to pressure district administration into providing greater advantages to their constituents. (Rehman F., 2008).In 1945 election Muslim League got 17 seats out of 38 provincial seats, but at the referendum 1947The Khudai Khidmatgar and the Congress shunned the 1947 referendum, which the League won handily with 289,244 votes to India's 2,874 ballots, or 99.02% of the total votes cast.(Sikander 1984) The state of national, local, and regional affairs, familial influence, religion, and economic situation all had an impact on political outcomes during the elections. The Servants of God, or Khudai Khidmatgar, was a peaceful civil rights movement that opposed British rule. Bacha Khan (Abdul Gaffar Khan), a Pashtun leader, spearheaded the movement in 1930. The fundamental principles of Pakhtuns, the norms of life of Pakhtuns people society, are honour, dignity, spirituality, and nationalism. (MS Ahmad 2013) Pakistan held the first general elections on December 07, 1970. It took the Pakistani government a long twenty-three years to successfully organize general elections. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has a very diverse election environment than other provinces. There are four key players fighting for political domination, making it a multi-polar conflict.

In particular, KP might be considered quad-polar since it includes regional groups like the Awami National Party (ANP), religious parties like the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI) and Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), the Muslim League (PML(s)), and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP).(Ijaz ,2024) JUI and the National Awami Party received sufficient representation to form their



governments in Balochistan and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where tribe and regional loyalties predominated. The PPP had only managed to win three of the forty Provincial Assembly seats in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 1970 election. (Ecp.1972)20 years, with variations seen from election to election. However, none of the parties has ever achieved 40 percent on its alone, thus coalitions are now a vital part of KP's political strategy. The focus gradually switched from regional and ethnic politics to national politics. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's ethnic and Pakhtuns nationalist views were at the centre of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa politics in the past. But Political understanding grew as a result of the expanding interprovincial contacts and the movement of Pathan youth to industrial cities outside of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.From a broad perspective, it is reasonable to say that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa became a part of national politics during and after the November elections 1988. (Waseem 1989) The core area of what was then known as the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa held 27 provincial assembly seats and 8 National Assembly seats in the 1988 national elections. ANP and PPP candidates dominated elections for **National** Assembly seats between 1988 and 1999.

The ANP won two seats and the PPP won four in the 1988 National Assembly election. The ANP secured six seats in 1990, while the PPP secured five of the eight northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa seats in 1993. The ANP won all eight seats in the National Assembly in 1997, sweeping the region. The ANP was a "junior partner" in the province's politics, with the Peoples Party and the Muslim League holding a prominent position. The Islami Jamhoori Ittihad (IJI) and PML played a minor part in the region's political landscape throughout the next ten years, which saw the ANP and PPP take centre stage (Ahmad, 2010).

With an impactful election program, the coalition of six religious political parties, operating under the auspices of MMA, won the 2002 general election. They ran an election campaign on the anti-American card, and as a result, they won 68 seats in the 124-member parliament and a clear majority in the province of KP. Following the 9/11 attacks and the October 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan, religious parties and Jihadi Pakistani groups will respond sharply to US intervention in Afghanistan. General Pervez Musharraf's decision to back the US in the fight against terrorism further intensified the response (Akram 2010). From the remains of its precursors in central NWFP, a new winner evolved in 2008 to establish the province's administration. The province was experiencing the worst surge in terrorist attacks at the time of that year's elections. Thanks to its strong anti-militancy policy, the ANP won this region handily and partnered with the PPP to create a government. (Ali ,2024)

2.Literature Review

Political Conflict in Pakistan a book by M. Waseem provides a deep Power struggles, institutional imbalance, and the democratic deficiency in Pakistani political history are all thoroughly examined in a book by M. Waseem. This book examines Pakistan's election history from 1947 to the 2018 election, highlighting significant disputes involving religious groups, political elites, constitutional institutions, and the military and civil bureaucracy. The author provides a thorough overview of the military's dominance in Pakistani politics. He claims that the military functions as a parallel state that meddles in civil administration, foreign policy, and elections. Historically, civil administrations have functioned under military supervision, irrespective of their mission. Institutional power and civilian disarray are the foundations of military dominance. The legal system has frequently justified military action. He talks about the role of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhary and the increase in judicial activity after 2007. Ethnic and sectarian divisions are also used to frame the ongoing disputes among Pakistanis. This book examines how Zia-ul-Haqq's Islamization led to religious fanaticism and sectarian strife. According to Dr. Waseem, the main political parties PPP, PMLN are dynastic and personality-centric, and their clientelism and lack of internal democracy thwart the consolidation of democracy (M Waseem 2022). The rituals of election in Pakistan (1947-2018)



A Process Without a product (2018) by Ijaz shafi Gilani is very comprehensive book on Pakistani election. He is also the head of organization name PILDAT. In this book he tells all elections of Pakistan and political performance of different political parties. He describes how the prediction of election is possible on the basis of scientific grounds. he divides the whole Pakistan into twelve election regions from all Pakistani provinces. Ijaz shafi is one of the country leading election expert, pioneer 9(Gallup Pakistan, which has been collecting election relevant data for many years. The authors explore all Pakistani election from 1947 to 2018, which he concludes an election are rituals democratic process without any developing in Pakistan democratic journey (Ijaz ,2018). Vying for Allah's Vote: Understanding Islamic Parties, political violence, and extremism in Pakistan. In this book, Haroon K. Allah examines the history, beliefs, constituencies, and electoral achievements of Pakistan's biggest and most powerful Islamic parties in this book. He creates a new paradigm for comprehending and contrasting the discourses advanced by different parties in order to determine what motivates them and what distinguishes the moderate from the extreme, drawing on his substantial fieldwork in Pakistan. Knowing how the US and other western countries can interact with states where Islamic political parties hold both governmental and moral power requires a deeper comprehension of the variety of parties. How successfully Islamic parties support civil rule, discourage violence, and rally support for political reform will determine how smoothly Pakistan's present democratic transition goes (Haroon, 2011) Party Affiliation Significantly Influences Voting Behavior in Urban Punjab. In urban Punjab, the PML-N has supplanted the PPP, according to Wilder. While the PML-N won every urban seat in Punjab in 1993, the PPP won every urban seat in the province in 1970. Throughout Punjab, the PML-N has continuously maintained its edge against the PPP. Votes were cast for political reasons, as evidenced by the PML-N's steady victory in metropolitan constituencies. Voters voted either against the PPP. which once more aided the PML-N, or in favour of the PML-N or its leader. "Further evidence that voting was solely based on party affiliation comes from the fact that the PML-N fielded a few unknown and unpopular candidates who received the same number of votes as the winners. However, compared to urban Punjab, party allegiance is lower in rural Punjab, particularly in western Punjab, where voting behavior is still heavily influenced by traditional social structure (Wilder ,1999). Voting Determinants and its Volatility in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Electoral Politics (2002-2013) Taser Ullah and colleagues' research explores the ways in which various social, political, and economic factors cause electoral politics and voting patterns to differ greatly throughout Pakistan. Voter preferences in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa changed during the course of the general elections in 2002, 2008, and 2013, moving from party loyalty and religion to party manifestos by the 2013 elections. The pattern shows a change in political dynamics and an increase in discontent with past political parties. On the other hand, the Sardari system largely shapes Baluchistan's voting habits, and governmental repression poses serious obstacles for nationalist leaders there (Taser Ullah, 2024).

3. Research Methodology

In order to take into consideration, the electoral shifting from the 2013–2024 elections of political parties in KPK province, the study uses a comparative mixed methods research methodology. There study will be qualitative by monitoring party manifesto, leadership speech, quantitative data of political parties' seats, in general elections, voter % and turnout, describing as parties' electoral moves and collation during election campaign, and building governments , and voter behavior, shifting electoral dynamics, and containing majority of PTI in three last elections will be analytical aspects to the study. The research will employ both primary and secondary sources. We shall consult books, articles, journals, magazines, newspapers, elections commission statistics, PILDAT, FAFIN, and other election monitoring and coverage organizations, both domestically and internationally.



4. Discussion

The source of a democratic government is elections. Elections are a crucial part of democracy, which is defined as government of, for, and by the people. Paradoxically, Pakistani elections have not accurately represented the preferences of the populace. The political elites generally view them as little more than a tool of state power (khan, I.H.2010).

The political landscape of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is primarily rural and primarily populated by Pakhtuns, is extremely intricate for a variety of reasons. Local, regional, and global factors like the province's location, governance concerns, the rise of militant Islamists with an international agenda, and the Afghan civil war in the 1990s have all had a significant impact on its political tendencies. By extending the fight from Afghanistan to the tribal areas and subsequently to the province's settled districts, the war on terror has currently played a significant role in defining the political landscape. Moderate political organizations like the ANP and PPP ruled the province from the 1990s until 2013, while right-wing parties like the PML, Jamaat-i-Islami Pakistan (JIP), and JUI occasionally posed a serious threat. In particular, the triumph of Muttahida Majils-e-Amal (MMA) in the 2002 election has sparked concerns that Islamists could seize control of the electoral process and force moderates to take a back seat because they were unable to come up with practical plans to end the threat of terrorism and address the province's governance problems(Yaqubi,2024).

The results of the May 2013 elections demonstrated that the PTI had gained popularity as a third choice prior to the polls, according to the majority of political analysts. However, most people believed that the PTI's widespread support was due to the establishment's extensive propaganda in its favour (Amir ,2024). meanwhile, voters in the KP province have consistently supported the PTI for the third straight term since Pakistan's general elections in 2013. This constancy of political behavior with regard to vote, party identification, or allegiance is exceptional in a country like Pakistan where election results are unpredictable and in a province with a politically unstable electoral environment (Zaman.A,2023)

The sole solution to their issues because of their growing popularity. The rise in voter turnout from 44% in the 2008 general elections to 55% in 2013 shows that PTI was successful in enlisting a wider range of individuals, including minorities, women, young people, and the elderly, who were typically uninterested in KP political politics. Though its deliberate focus on middle-class politics may have been the main factor in PTI's success, its political candidates' freedom of movement and fearless rallies especially in KP's most dangerous areas gave it an advantage over other parties like the ANP, PPPP, PML-N, or even JUI-F, who were unable to run a free campaign in the 2013 elections due to terrorist attacks (Amir, 2012). The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) took control of KP in the general elections held in May 2013. It partnered with the Qaumi Watan Party and Jamaat-Islami to create a coalition administration.

The 2018 general elections were a turning point in the province's and the region's electoral history. In a province notorious for never voting the same party again, PTI won the majority of votes and established the ruling party for the second time in a row. In 2024 election national assembly seats in KPK province, PTI contested the election without its party symbol bat, there for PTI candidates called independent PTI or independent PTI backed candidates

The significant shift in favour of PTI as the governing party has shocked political analysts and onlookers. PTI's rise has fundamentally altered the conventional political perspective. The province's political climate was complicated and very unstable prior to the PTI's hegemony, but two things were crucial to the elections. The first was creating a strong plan to fight terrorism and violence, and the second was providing for the general public, particularly with regard to re-establishing peace and security, promoting equality in the workplace, resolving the energy problem, improving health and education, and controlling the cost of everyday necessities. Since many people switched from the PMLN and PPP to the PTI or other parties, Pakistan has a variety of votes. However, if we want to get a clear picture, such as if all parties



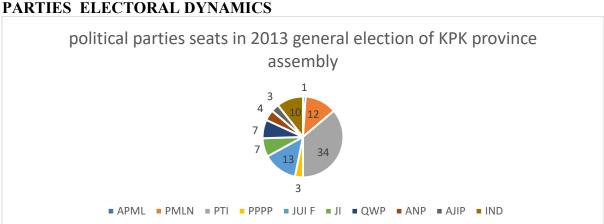
support one The Markova chain makes it clear that the PTI has a good probability of winning the general election in another against the PTI, we may calculate the total number of voters who support the PTI against all parties and check the percentages of votes (Zafar, 2024). Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has a very diverse election environment than other provinces. There are four key players fighting for political domination, making it a multi-polar conflict. In particular, KP might be considered quad-polar since it includes regional groups like the Awami National Party (ANP), religious parties like the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI) and Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), the Muslim League (PML(s)), and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). All of these four parties has received about 20 percent of the vote during the past 20 years, with variations seen from election to election. However, no party has ever attained 40 percent on its alone, thus coalitions are now a vital part of KP's political strategy(Ijaz 2018).

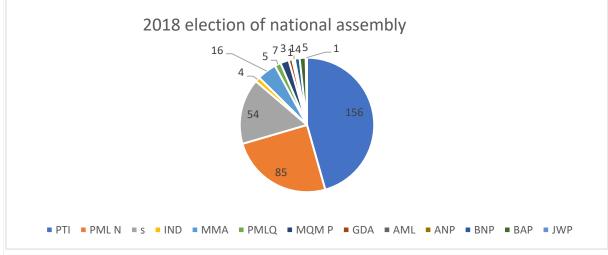
TYPE OF COMPETITION, UNI-POLAR, BI-POLAR OR MULTI-POLAR BY PROVINCE

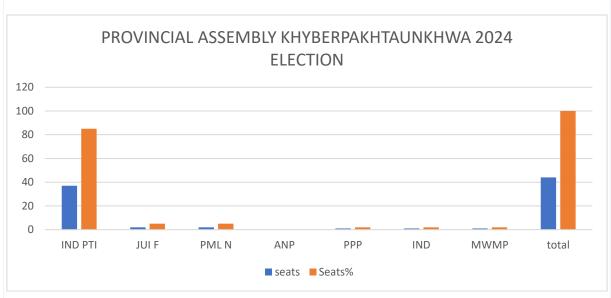
| Election Years | Punjab | Sindh: All other divisions | Sindh: Karachi division | KP | Balochistan |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| 1970 | Uni-polar | Uni polar | Multi-polar | Multi-polar | Uni-polar |
| 1977 | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Bi-polar | Bi-polar | Uni-polar |
| 1988 | Bi-polar | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Multi-polar | Multi-polar |
| 1990 | Bi-polar | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Multi-polar | Multi-polar |
| 1993 | Bi-polar | Uni-polar | Bi-polar | Multi-polar | Multi-polar |
| 1997 | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Multi-polar | Multi-polar |
| 2002 | Multi-polar | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Multi-polar |
| 2008 | Bi-polar | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Multi-polar | Multi-polar |
| 2013 | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Uni-polar | Multi-polar | Multi-polar |
| 2018 | Bi-polar | Uni-polar | Multi-polar | Mild Uni-polar | Multi-polar |
| Average 1970-2018 | Bi-POLAR | UNI-POLAR | UNI-POLAR | MULTI-POLAR | MULTI-POLAR |
| See detail on computation | Computation Punjab | Computation Sindh: All other divisions | Computation Sindh: Karachi division | Computation KP | Computation Balochistan |

According to Ijaz Shafi Pakistan electoral trend in all over Pakistan.

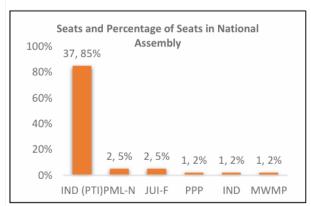
2013-2024 ELECTION IN KHYBER-PAKHTUNKHWA ASSEMBLY POLITICAL PARTIES ELECTORAL DYNAMICS

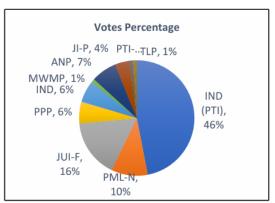












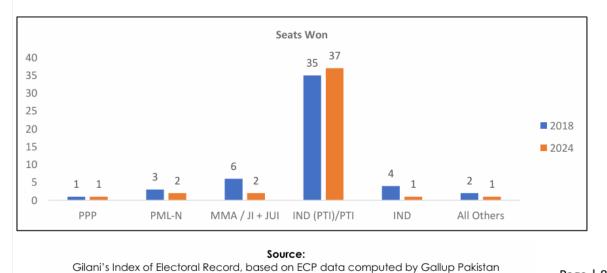
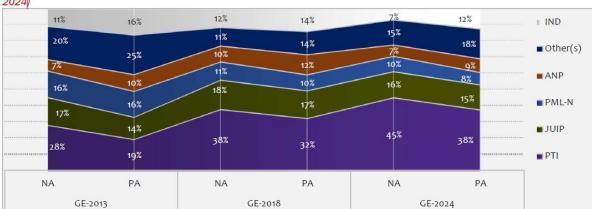


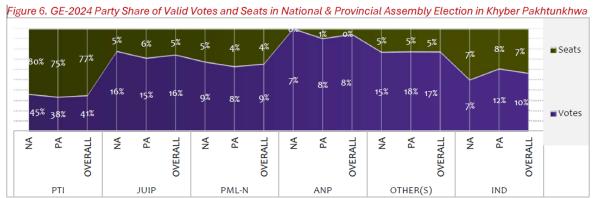
Figure 5. Party Shares in Valid Votes Polled for National (NA) and Provincial (PA) Seats in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2013 to 2024)



The figure shows that PTI gained and maintained its majority by increasing 19% to 38% almost the double his share. JUI F also maintained its vote share 17% to 15%, whereas PMLN lost their share 16% to 8%.

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In this picture PTI attained 45% share of national assembly and securing 80% seats and 38 % provincial vote by achieving 75% seats, In figure shows that PTI securing majority seats as compare to all other political parties in last three elections. There is a huge shift of electoral vote trend towards PTI resulted decline of PMLN and ANP. The drive against corruption, the catch-all policy of change, and the elevated promises of revolutionary economic reforms were the main reasons for the PTI's resounding support in KP's national and provincial assemblies. A successful election campaign that connects with voters has a significant impact. In addition to running a successful social media campaign in tandem with traditional campaign operations, they praised the phrase "Naya Pakistan" (a new Pakistan). From 2013 to 2018, the PTI was largely free of scandals, which greatly helped them in their electioneering. The party's elective acceptance policy also increased the likelihood of victory (Javed, 2022). Some analysts have characterized the PTI's unexpected ascent in Pakistan's two-party system as the result of "fortuitous timing, an effective narrative that echoed with a discontented public, and a charismatic leader who had finally reached his stride(WU,Xing,2022). The slogans of change, retroactive and prospective voting, personal and community economic benefits, the factions' party affiliation, particularly in rural areas, the electoral campaign, particularly the social media campaign, the reform agendas, and the slogan "corruption-free Pakistan" all played a significant role in these two elections and encouraged people to either stick with or change their party affiliation.

Four key factors influenced the 2013 election and its prospects. First, there was a persistent dread of military involvement, which was consistent with Pakistan's turbulent political past. Given the current state of affairs and the uncertainty surrounding the elections, the possibility of military intervention is pertinent. The military has "a monopoly over tactical policy substance sand decision making institutional state," the author claims. It has the power to shape and guide the actions of interest groups and political leaders in a desired direction (Ullah, 2025). The general consensus is that KP voters are "independent." However, this was not the case in reality "Your social and economic ties alter when your economy depends on rental-seeking and militancy, and this has led to shifts in the province's voting trends." He clarified that the war on terror, which overthrew the liberal democratic system in the province, was the reason behind this shift in KP's post-2002 election outcomes. The siege of a neo-liberal economy, individualism, and a hybrid political model has undermined traditional social ties, which also justifies the emergence of PTI in KPK., Dr. Shakeel told Dawn. In the lack of political dialog, as well as the electorate's free will and preference, he continued, identical voting trends were likely to continue (Ahmad ,2010)

In 2002 general elections, more than half of the respondents (72.6%) supported religious voting, according to the data. In a similar vein, information from general polls taken in 2008 shows that fewer than half of participants (47%) favoured religious considerations when deciding how to vote. In the same way, the data revealed that in the 2013 general elections, less



than half of voters (45.7%) based their political decisions on their religious beliefs (Khan.S.,2017).

The presented model could be used to explain the PTI's steady and robust support in KP's three consecutive elections. The partisans seem to have backed the party because of its persuasive and articulate leadership, as well as its successful political campaign and media. As previously mentioned, the PTI launched a robust social media campaign in an attempt to garner support. Similar to the elections in 2013 and 2018, they have made good use of social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter in 2024. They used every available forum to influence supporters and voters. Similarly, the popularity of former PTI chairman Imran Khan surged before as well as throughout the election campaign, helping the party win. It is also believed that these are more significant influential variables in terms of party leadership, political campaigns, and propaganda that have garnered loyalty for the PTI as a political party than the socialization agents, particularly family and peer groups, that are directly connected to party support. The pattern indicates that political forces have a significant influence while the social foundations of party identification are limited (Zaman.A,2023) "Hereditary elites" control most of the political parties in Pakistan. Except for JI, no political party has an internal democracy system. Some families are in charge of mainstream political parties, including the Mufti Mahmood family's Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazal (JUI-F), the members of the Bhutto family's PPP, the Nawaz family's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), and Imran Khan's ebullient PTI(Azhar 2019).

5.CONCLUSION

Because of the new political face PTI's intervention in KPK province politics, politics in the province have undergone a significant transformation. Elections in 2013, 2018, and 2024 demonstrated the public's desire to eradicate all other political parties from society as a whole. Nationalist and socialist parties like the PPPP and ANP have been particularly strong in the KPK province. Between 2008 and 2013, both parties consolidated at the provincial level and held onto power during that time. By yielding the majority to the coalition of Islamic parties MMA in the 2002 general election, the KPK province shifted its electoral dynamics from the liberal, secular politics of the ANP and PPPP to Islamism. As a result of successive failures in governance, the end of the Afghan conflict, and most notably the war on terror, the electoral politics of KPK province changed. In terms of social and economic security, militancy, and ongoing violence brought on by the global war on terrorism, the failure of all political parties regional, religious, nationalist, and national—to make a deliberate and consistent effort has contributed to the demise of all political parties. The results of the May 2013 election demonstrated that the PTI had gained momentum as a third choice prior to the election, as most political observers had predicted. However, the general populace believed that the PTI's popularity was due to extensive propaganda in its favour from the elite. Ineffective policies, internal divisions, a leadership crisis, and conventional methods of public outreach all played a part in the ANP's and other liberal parties' catastrophic collapse. Although PTI has worked extremely hard since 2013 to draw in the public, particularly young people, other parties Without a doubt, PTI outperformed all of the province's political adversaries. The current climate appears to be quite difficult for the liberal and traditional Islamist parties to regain their previous standing. But in politics, there is always a chance. The dynamics of the province could shift once more if the PTI fails and opposition parties use shrewd tactics.

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