

PAKISTAN

Date of Elections: 25 February 1985

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of the National Assembly in the country's first general elections since March 1977.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of Pakistan consists of the National Assembly and the Senate.

The National Assembly is composed of 237 members elected for 5 years. Twenty-one of the seats are set aside for female members and 9 for members of non-Moslem minorities.

The Senate consists of 87 members, of whom 14 are elected by each of Pakistan's four Provincial Assemblies; 8 are elected by the National Assembly members from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas; 3 are chosen from the Federal Capital; and 5 are elected by each of the Provincial Assemblies to represent *ulema* (Moslem theologians and scholars), technocrats and other professionals. The term of Senators is 6 years, some of them retiring every 2 years.

Electoral System

All citizens of Pakistan who are at least 21 years of age, registered as electors and not insane are entitled to vote in the constituency in which they reside.

Electoral registers are revised at the district level. Voting is not compulsory.

Qualified electors not less than 25 years of age may be candidates for the National Assembly, while the required age for the Senate is 30 years. Disqualified from the Senate are persons sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than two years (unless five years have elapsed since their release) and persons who have been dismissed, removed or compulsorily retired from the service of Pakistan (unless five years have since elapsed). Disqualified from either House are undischarged bankrupts, while holders of certain offices of profit and government contracts cannot simultaneously be parliamentarians.

Candidates for the National Assembly must be nominated by 50 electors from their constituency and make a deposit of 1,000 Pakistan *rupees*, which is reimbursed if the candidate polls more than one-eighth of the total votes cast. Assembly seats are allocated to each Province, Federally Administered Tribal Area and the Federal Capital on the basis of population; members are elected by simple majority in single-member constituencies. Election to fill Senate seats allocated to each Province is held in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.

By-elections are held to fill parliamentary seats which fall vacant between general elections.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The election date was announced on 12 January 1985 by President of the Republic Muhammad Zia ul-Haq. The new National Assembly was to replace the one dissolved in July 1977, when martial law was imposed in the country. These elections were to be followed by polling for the four provincial legislatures on 28 February, which would, in turn, elect 87 representatives to the upper house of Parliament, the Senate. The President simultaneously announced that all Assembly candidates would run in an individual capacity rather than as political party nominees.

The Government-supported candidates were opposed by an alliance of eleven parties known as the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, which called for an election boycott and thus did not participate in the campaign. Altogether, some 1300 candidates contested the Assembly's 207 generally elective seats, campaigning mostly on local issues.

On polling day, marked by a turnout of over 50%, five Cabinet members were defeated. In general, Islamic fundamentalists lost out to moderates. On 10 April, members of the new Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo, were sworn in.

Statistics

1. *Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the National Assembly*

Number of registered electors.	32,589,996	
Voters.	17,250,482	(52.93%)

2. *Distribution of Members of the National Assembly according to Sex*

Men.	216
Women.	<u>21</u>
	237