



**IN-HOUSE SESSION REPORT**  
**POLITICAL JOURNEY**  
**OF PAKISTAN**

**by Dr. Ijaz Shafi Gilani**  
**Chairman Gallup Pakistan**

**22<sup>ND</sup> MARCH**

## INTRODUCTION

On 23rd March 1940 Muslim League passed a resolution in Lahore, calling for independent Muslim states. The resolution says, "... areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North Western and Eastern Zones of (British) India should be grouped to constitute 'independent states' in which the constituent units should be autonomous and sovereign." The resolution is considered as the first formal demand by Muslim League for separation of British India and the pivotal point for the creation of Pakistan. However, the significance of the day is multi-dimensional - be it the history of Pakistan's constitutional struggle or political movement or debate on provincial autonomy and minority rights in Pakistan. 23rd March also marks the day when the first constitution of Pakistan was passed before the constitutional assembly in 1956.

To deliberate upon the multifaceted significance of 23rd March, the Center for Peace, Security and Developmental Studies (CPSD) conducted an in-house discussion on Friday, 22nd March 2019. Mr. Ijaz Shafi Gilani, Chairman Gallup Pakistan shared his thoughts on the topic of 'Political Journey of Pakistan.'

## AGENDA OF THE SESSION

The agenda of the talk was to recall the objectives of the creation of Pakistan and to revisit the trials and achievements of the country as it evolved from a political movement to a sovereign democratic state.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE SESSION

The in-house session opened with the National anthem and a brief introductory remarks by Ms. Fizza Batool, Senior Research Fellow at CPSD. The formal proceedings were divided into two parts. In the first part, Mr. Ijaz Gilani presented a talk on 'Political Journey of Pakistan: A Success Story'. It was followed by an interactive session during which participants asked questions from Mr. Gilani.

Mr. Gilani started by addressing the core question behind the talk: after almost 80 years of the creation of Pakistan, can we call the political journey of this country a success? He held that, in his view, Pakistan was and is a great success and explained five reasons for this.

In his view, the first reason is the achievement of Pakistan in carving out a nation from being a mere state. He added that after the creation of Pakistan the main concern was whether Pakistan would emerge as a nation. During Pakistan movement, the primary concern for Muslims of subcontinent was the unfair treatment they were subjugated to and the movement was based on the dream of providing sovereign state to Muslims based on their separate national identity. Even after the independence of Pakistan the dream saw many trials and adversities with each passing year. The country, nonetheless, never faltered but showed itself to preserve and emerge strong as ever to continue standing 73 years after the partition of the Indian sub-continent as a successful, socially strong, and culturally rich nation.

The second achievement of Pakistan highlighted by Mr. Gilani was its resilience against internal and global bullies. Referring to post-Pulwama tension between Pakistan and India, he held that the Pakistan's timely response to Indian attack is a proof of how Pakistan's defense institution played a major role in proving Pakistan a strong state before regional and global adversaries.

The third factor making Pakistan a success story, according to Mr. Gilani, is that Pakistanis are a learning nation which has learned from its mistakes to correct regional inequalities in the 1950s, social inequalities in the 1960s, unhealthy political polarization in the 1970s and worldview excesses in 1980s. Pakistanis have been brave enough to do experimentations. He agreed that while one cannot claim that all of Pakistan's experimentations ended up successful, the positive outcome of this non-reluctance of Pakistanis to experiment has contributed to its strength in spite of the many problems.

Mr. Ijaz pointed out that Pakistanis are firm on fundamentals and flexible in life and are 'middle-of-the-ground' pragmatic people. This, he termed as the fourth source of success for Pakistan. Finally, he said at the ripe age of 70, Pakistanis are a battle-hardened nation which is fit to enter a new phase of life to match with the new millennial changes. And since they are prone to experimentation and learning, they are likely to become more prepared and strong.

At the second half of the session, students from the law department of Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Education and CPSD team members asked critical questions, highlighting the issues Pakistan is currently dealing with and inquiring how Pakistan can be viewed as a success in the context of these problems. Mr. Gilani responded to the question through unequivocally and presented facts and examples to them to explain his point of view. The 30 minutes long interactive session allowed a critical and balanced analysis of the subject.

## **CONCLUSION**

After almost 80 years of the creation of Pakistan, it is pertinent to examine the challenges and opportunities the country faced and to critically appraise its political journey. The in-house session was successful in initiating a discussion on the political history of Pakistan. Mr. Gilani induced a sense of hope and encouraged the young students to look at the accomplishments of their country. The discussion set the pace to evaluate whether Pakistan is leading toward the right direction or not.

## PARTICIPANTS

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## PICTURE GALLERY





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