

Gallup Pakistan

Latest Press Release

PERCEPTIONS ABOUT RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

(Part 1 of 2 part survey findings)

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VIEWS ON PML(N)'s RESIGNATION FROM CABINET

Islamabad –Thirty six percent (36 %) favored the decision by Pakistan Muslim League (N) to resign from the cabinet earlier this month to highlight its disappointment that Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), the senior partner of the ruling coalition had failed to comply with the undertaking that judges would be restored. Another 32 % opposed the decision, while 32 % did not give a view. There was a partisan tilt to the opinion. Majority of PML-N voters favoured the decision to resign: 47 % support resignation; 29 % opposed. On the other hand, a majority of PPP voters opposed the resignation of PML-N from cabinet: only 25 % supported; 40 % opposed. In each case, the remaining did not give a view.

VIEWS ON AITZAZ AHSAN

Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan is a leading lawyer and key leader of the lawyers' movement to restore judges who were dismissed last year by General Pervez Musharraf, when he suspended the Constitution and imposed Emergency rule in the country. He is also a member of the PPP and was its leader in the Senate in the last Parliament. More recently, his relationship with the party can be described as one of "cold civility". He is formally associated with the party but his political positions on many critical issues are at variance with those of the party leadership represented by Benazir Bhutto before her assassination and Asif Zardari thereafter. He had applied to the party to be nominated to contest the National Assembly election in a by-election. Earlier in February, he did not participate in the elections because the lawyers' movement wanted him to boycott. The party leadership was ambiguous on whether or not he would be granted the nomination. Mr. Aitzaz Ahsan has since withdrawn his application and also withdrawn from the electoral race. However, before he did that a

couple of questions were asked to gauge public opinion about his political options. Following are the findings.

Should Aitzaz Ahsan stay in the Pakistan Peoples' Party?

A majority of forty-two percent (42%) among the total sample were of the view that he should quit the PPP, 26% favored continued association, while 30% did not give a view. A majority among PPP voters however thought otherwise: 42% were in favor of his staying in the party while 32 % were of the view that he should quit the party. The remaining did not give a view.

Should Aitzaz Participate in the Elections?

Fifty four percent (54%) were of the view that Aitzaz Ahsan should participate in the Elections, irrespective of whether or not he gets the party (PPP) nomination; 21% were opposed to this. The remaining 25% did not give a view.

VIEWS ON JUDGES

Hope on Restoration of Judges is Divided

In the aftermath of PML(N)'s resignation from the cabinet, public expectations on the issue of restoration of judges remain divided. While 57 % of the respondents believe there are chances that the dismissed judges will be restored, 41 % think there is little or no chance of this happening. Two percent (2 %) did not give an opinion.

Reconciliatory Mood towards Sitting Judges.

The nation seems to be divided though in a mildly reconciliatory mood towards the judges who were installed last November to replace the dismissed judiciary.

In the event that the deposed judges are restored, 35% are of the view that the sitting judges should be retained. However, a larger number, 43% believe that the sitting judges should not be retained. Twenty-two percent (22%) did not give any views.

VIEWS ON RECONCILIATION WITH LOCAL TALIBAN

Majority favors a Peace Agreement with the local Taliban who have been engaged in an insurgent conflict with the Government in South Waziristan and Swat in the Frontier Province since early 2006. Fifty six percent (56%) favored a Peace Agreement, 19% opposed and the remaining 26% did not give a view.

PERFORMANCE RATINGS OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani

The latest poll shows that 38% give favorable ratings to the Prime Minister's performance; 20% give unfavorable rating; 41% give "tolerable" ratings and 2% did not give a response.

There is a notable decline in the approval ratings of Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani during the last six weeks. His favorable ratings have come down from 64% to 38 %, a loss of 26 % points. His unfavorable ratings have risen from 6% to 20 %, a rise of 14 % points. The loss of favour seems to correspond with the developments on the judges issue and the withdrawal of PML-N from the Prime Minister's cabinet, as well as a troubling economy. Apparently, there seems to be much volatility in the assessment of the performance of the Prime Minister and the Government led by PPP. It seems that despite its short period in

government, the new leadership has started to pick up some of the blame for the current wave of economic woes.

Question: *What is your personal view about the performance of Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani?*

	6 th April	20 th May
	<i>Percentage of Respondents</i>	
Very Favorable	22%	11%
Favorable	42%	26%
Tolerable	29%	41%
Bad	5%	10%
Very Bad	2%	10%
No Response	-	2%

Source: Gallup Pakistan Surveys, April-May, 2008

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CURRENT INFLATIONARY WAVE?

When respondents were asked: which one do you think is the reason for inflation in the country, 39 % opted for corruption by the former government, 28 % blamed wrong economic policies of the former government and 27 % said that it was the new government's lack of attention towards actual problems. The remaining 6 % did not give an opinion.

SAMPLE SIZE AND DESCRIPTION

The sample for the survey comprised 1595 men and women distributed in the rural and urban areas of all four provinces. They represented a cross section of various age, income and other socio-economic backgrounds. The field-work was conducted face to face during May 19-20, 2008. The error margin in this type of survey is estimated to be $\pm 3\text{-}5\%$ at a 95% confidence level.