

GALLUP PAKISTAN POLL FINDINGS ON

FAREWELL TO MARTIAL LAW

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H-45, St.52,F-7/4, Islamabad, Pakistan. Tel +92-51-2655630, Fax +92-51-2655632,

Email: isb@gallup.com.pk

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FAREWELL TO MARTIAL LAW

Gallup poll measures hopes and fears

There is general consensus that as a result of lifting of martial law Pakistan will gain respect in the community of nations. There is also a common feeling that the lifting of martial law will prove greater sense of freedom to the people, who will find it easier to seek justice.

However the population suffers from the classic dilemma about liberty and order, and is fearful of law and order break-down in the post martial law period. The attitudes of the Pakistani populations on the eve of lifting martial law confirms psychological theories which say that human beings are split between their urge to be free and an urge to escape from freedom and seek order under a dominating figure.

There is no nostalgia about military courts. On the contrary people feel that it would be easier for them to seek justice in the post martial law period and given the choice a clear preference is expressed in favor of civil over military courts. However neither of two court systems enjoys much confidence and a majority expresses its preference for the nearly nonexistent quiz courts. This may be interpreted as a mark of dissatisfaction with the existing judicial processes of both military and civil varieties.

In keeping with their concern for law and order there is still qualified support for mass politics. While a near majority supports public meetings there is clear distaste for taking out of mass processions.

This analysis emerges from the findings of a nation- wide Gallup survey held shortly before the lifting of martial law. During the course of the survey more than 2000 households were statistically selected from locations in all provinces.

HOPES

The interviewees were presented with a set of common observations about the lifting of martial law and they were asked to express their agreement or disagreement. 69% of the respondents thought that Pakistan will gain respect in the community of nations as a result of lifting of martial law. Only 9% disagreed with this proposition while nearly one quarter of the population showed their indifference by failing to express any opinion on this subject.

57% of the sample said they would feel greater sense of freedom in the post martial law period especially on issues such as seeking their rights. 16% harbored on bright expectations on this score. Nearly half the population (50%) expected that with the lifting of martial law it would become easier for to seek justice. However a sizeable number (23%) expressed its disagreement on this issue and disputed the proposition that civilian rule will bring greater justice.

ON MILLITARY COURTS

In response to another question about preferences between civil military and qazi courts, 26% preferred civil courts compared with 17% preference for military courts. As opposed to this 43% showed preference for qazi courts.

FEARS

52% of the sampled population was fearful that lifting of martial law might cause law and order break-down. Exactly half that many (26%) expressed no concern about chaos in the post martial law period. The remaining 22% did not express any opinion. The fear about the possibility of chaos is present among all age and education groups but the more educated and especially middle age groups have greater concerns.

While expressing their views on the post martial law period, 46% of those surveyed supported the holding of large public meetings (jalsa) but a fairly high number (33%) also opposed large public meetings. Views against large public processions.

Given these data on the eve of lifting martial law, it would be interesting to watch public attitudes remain stable or change when the new civilian rule begins to unfold.

VIEWS ON POST MARTIAL LAW CLIMATE

	Percent of respondents		
	Agree	disagree	no opinion
Pakistan will gain respect in the community of nations	69	9	22
People will feel a greater sense of freedom (on issues such as seeking one's right etc)	57	16	27
People will find it easier to seek justice	50	23	27
Law and order break-down may occur when martial law is lifted	52	26	22

PRERERENCE BETWEEN CIVIL AND MILITARY COURTS

Suppose you were involved in a court case and were allowed to make your own choice which one of the following courts would you choose?

	Percent of respondents
Military court	17
Civil court	28
Qazi court	42
Others	7
No opinion	6

VIEWS ON POST MARTIAL LAW POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

	Percent of respondents		
	Yes	No	no opinion
Political meetings should be permitted	46	33	21
Political meetings should not be permitted	27	51	22