Governments in the 1990s

Benazir Bhutto's two governments (1988–90, 1993–96), Nawaz Sharif's two governments (1990–93, 1997–99), and why General Musharraf took power in 1999.

Governments in the 1990s

A decade of instability

After **Zia's death** (August 1988) Pakistan returned to **democracy**, but in eleven years there were **four elected governments**, each dismissed or forced out before its term ended. **Presidents** used the **Eighth Amendment** (Article 58(2)(b)) to dismiss them. In **1999**, the army took over.

Dates	Prime Minister	Ended by
Dec 1988–Aug 1990	**Benazir Bhutto** (PPP)	dismissed by President **Ghulam Ishaq Khan**
Nov 1990–Apr 1993	**Nawaz Sharif** (IJI/PML-N)	dismissed by Ishaq Khan (restored by the Supreme Court, then both resigned in July 1993)
Oct 1993–Nov 1996	**Benazir Bhutto** (PPP)	dismissed by President **Farooq Leghari**
Feb 1997–Oct 1999	**Nawaz Sharif** (PML-N)	overthrown by **General Musharraf**

Benazir Bhutto, 1988–90

Background. The daughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and the **first woman Prime Minister** of a Muslim country. The PPP won the **1988 elections** (the largest party), but the **Army and the President** limited her authority, and the **Opposition** controlled the **Punjab** (where **Nawaz Sharif** was Chief Minister).

Problems and failures.

- **Conflict with Nawaz Sharif:** the Punjab government (IJI) fought the Centre; the two leaders blocked each other.
- **Separatist movements** grew: **Sindh** (ethnic violence and the **MQM** in Karachi) and the situation in **Kashmir** (the **uprising from 1989**).
- **Differences with President Ishaq Khan**: over the **appointment of judges** (the judiciary) and the army chiefs.

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- **A no-confidence motion** (**November 1989**) by the opposition: she **survived** by a narrow margin.
- **Economy: inflation** and **unemployment** grew; **corruption** charges were made.
- **Dismissal:** on **6 August 1990** President Ishaq Khan dismissed her under the **Eighth Amendment** on charges of corruption and inefficiency.

Achievements. Released political prisoners, lifted press and student union bans, and restored a **democratic atmosphere**; she signed an agreement with **India** (no attack on nuclear sites, 1988) and rejoined the **Commonwealth** (1989).

Caretaker governments. Each dismissal was followed by a caretaker government and new elections: **Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi** (August–November 1990; elections 24 October 1990), **Moeen Qureshi** (July–October 1993, a former World Bank official; elections 6 October 1993) and **Malik Meraj Khalid** (November 1996–February 1997; elections 3 February 1997).

Nawaz Sharif, 1990–93

Background. Leader of the **IJI** alliance (Islami Jamhoori Ittehad), which won the **1990** elections.

Policies.

- **Privatisation policy:** sold state industries and banks and allowed foreign currency accounts. It increased **investment**, but critics said that it **encouraged profiteering** by friends of the government.
- **Motorway and "yellow cab" schemes** and **Islamic measures** (the **Shariat Act, 1991**).
- **The Gulf War (1990–91):** Sharif's government (and the army chief) criticised the US-led war on Iraq. The **USA** reacted by **cutting aid** (under the **Pressler Amendment** of **1985**, the US President had to certify each year that Pakistan had no nuclear weapon; in **October 1990** he refused, and aid was cut off over Pakistan's **nuclear programme**), and relations with the **Gulf states** suffered.
- **The BCCI scandal (1991):** the collapse of the **Bank of Credit and Commerce International** (a bank with Pakistani links) hurt savers and the **economy**, and caused accusations of corruption.
- **Other projects:** the **Ghazi Barotha** hydel scheme and the **Gwadar** mini-port were begun, and land was given to landless peasants in Sindh.
- **Cooperative societies scandal:** the collapse of finance societies, with allegations that loans had gone to firms connected with the Sharif family, damaged his image.
- **The army chief dispute:** after the death of Gen. **Asif Nawaz Janjua** (January 1993) the President and Prime Minister disagreed over the successor (Gen. **Abdul Waheed Kakar** was appointed).
- **Kashmir:** support for the uprising increased tension with India.
- **Conflict with President Ishaq Khan**: over the **army chief** and the use of the **Eighth Amendment**. He was dismissed in **April 1993**, the **Supreme Court restored** him, but the deadlock led to **both resigning** in **July 1993**.

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Benazir Bhutto, 1993–96

Problems.

- **Kashmir:** continued tensions with India.
- **Opposition demonstrations** ("**train march**" from Karachi to Peshawar in 1994 and a **"wheel-jam" strike**) led by Nawaz Sharif.
- Her own party was split: her brother **Murtaza Bhutto**, who opposed her husband's role, was **killed** in a police encounter in September 1996.
- **Successes:** a visit by the US First Lady **Hillary Clinton** (1995) improved Pakistan's image, and the US **Brown Amendment** (1995) eased some of the restrictions of the Pressler Amendment.
- **Unemployment and inflation**; the **devaluation of the rupee** (1993) led to the **IMF** demanding cuts; **IMF concerns** about the budget deficit and the **balance of payments**.
- **Karachi violence** (**MQM** and the army operation) and **sectarian** killings.
- **The dismissal of the Chief Minister of the Punjab** (Manzoor Wattoo) caused political quarrels between the Centre and the Punjab.
- **Dismissal:** in **November 1996**, President **Farooq Leghari**, her own party colleague, dismissed her (amid the killing of her brother **Murtaza Bhutto**, and corruption charges against her husband **Asif Ali Zardari**).

Nawaz Sharif, 1997–99

- He won a **huge majority** in **February 1997** and removed the **Eighth Amendment** powers with the **Thirteenth Amendment** (1997) (the President could no longer dismiss the Assembly). The **Fourteenth Amendment** (1997) banned **floor-crossing**. The **Ehtesab Act (1997)** set up a body to investigate corruption, but it was mainly used against his opponents. President Leghari resigned in **December 1997** after the clash with the Prime Minister. The proposed **Fifteenth Amendment** (to make Islamic law supreme and strengthen the Prime Minister) was seen by critics as a power grab.
- He tried to **dominate the judiciary** (the clash with Chief Justice **Sajjad Ali Shah**, 1997, and an attack on the Supreme Court by his supporters), and the **press**.
- **Nuclear tests (May 1998):** after India's tests, Pakistan tested its own nuclear devices at **Chaghi** (28 and 30 May). They were popular, but led to **sanctions** and a financial crisis (**foreign currency accounts** were frozen).
- **Lahore Declaration** (**February 1999**) with the Indian PM **Vajpayee**.
- **Kargil (May–July 1999):** fighting in Kashmir with India, which Sharif withdrew from under US pressure. This caused a **rift** with the **army**.
- **The Musharraf coup:** on **12 October 1999**, Sharif tried to **dismiss General Pervez Musharraf**, the army chief, while he was flying home from Sri Lanka. The army **seized power**, and arrested Sharif.

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Why did General Musharraf take power in 1999?

Reason	Detail
the immediate cause	Sharif's attempt to dismiss Musharraf and **block his plane's landing**
earlier friction with the army	in **October 1998** the army chief **Jehangir Karamat** resigned after a dispute with the Prime Minister, and Sharif appointed **Musharraf**
the army's anger over Kargil	the army felt that the **withdrawal** was a betrayal
weak and unpopular governments	poor **governance**, corruption, a stagnant **economy** and heavy **debts**
political quarrels	**conflict** with the judiciary, the press and the opposition
the army's own interests	it **had ruled** for long periods and had little respect for civilian governments

How effective were the governments?

Benazir Bhutto	Nawaz Sharif
democratic atmosphere, women's rights, social programmes	privatisation, motorways, nuclear tests
struggled with the **President**, the **army** and the **economy**; **corruption** charges	clashed with **the judiciary**; accused of **corruption** and **authoritarianism**
both were **dismissed**; neither completed a **full term**	the **economy** was weak; the **Kargil** crisis

> **TRY IT**
>
> How successful were the policies of Benazir Bhutto, 1988–90 and 1993–96?

Outline. *Strengths:* democratic freedoms; the first female PM; relations with **Commonwealth** and others; social programmes. *Weaknesses:* conflict with **Nawaz Sharif** and **Ishaq Khan**; inflation and unemployment; the **Karachi violence**; **IMF** problems; **Kashmir tension**; **corruption** charges; **dismissed twice**. **Judgement:** limited success, as she was often **blocked** by the President and the army.

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