

# HORIZON

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**PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE (N) PUNJAB**



## PUBLIC SERVICE- BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY



**Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan**

For a province that has for so long been used to strong leadership, the Covid-19 pandemic and the looming threat of a climate crisis has exposed the presence of a void in Punjab: a void once filled by Shehbaz Sharif. When floods swept through Lahore, was anyone surprised to see young social media users observing the absence of the former chief minister in Lahore's streets - always on the front-lines whenever disaster management was the need of the hour? Even though as the chief minister of the province, Shehbaz Sharif had an entire arsenal of bureaucrats and professionals that could have overseen relief efforts in his stead, he made the decision to put himself at the scene. He made the choice to plod through the water-clogged roads, to identify risk-areas, to be where the people needed him to be.

And his response to the rains was not at all unique as an event during his time as the head of the provincial government. While the Punjab government's leadership today has chosen to be largely absent as the Covid-19 pandemic has raged through the province, can anyone forget how Shehbaz Sharif's zeal guaranteed that the dengue epidemic would plague the province no more? Monsoons still overwhelm this region, bringing with them puddles ripe for mosquito larvae to multiply, yet Punjab has never again seen the horrors of dengue repeat themselves. So impactful was the effect of Shehbaz Sharif that even as governments have changed, the same routine procedures developed under his governance have continued to be implemented. Yet this government has found it difficult to even manage to effectively implement its own standards of procedure to handle the Covid-19 pandemic.

Shehbaz Sharif has always maintained an integrity of character and governance that has impressed many beyond the people that have repeatedly voted for him over the years. Owen Bennett-Jones, a long-time British correspondent in Pakistan, writes of Shehbaz Sharif in his book, *Eye of the Storm*, as a pragmatic politician, suave and effective, not just with handling local politicians but also foreign dignitaries. No wonder that Punjab alone saw such a huge volume of investment from both Chinese and Turkish sources that had never before trickled into the province, especially to the extent that they did in the years of PML-N governance. Just a decade ago, the politicians of Turkey were unknown

to most Pakistanis, but now, through the efforts of the PML-N government that gave a safe and a trustworthy business environment to Turkish investors, the names of Turkish cities and Turkish leaders like that of President Erdogan are known by even the least politically astute people. It's no exaggeration to say Turkish and Chinese presence has increased to a magnitude that we still cannot ascertain. An extraordinary indication of just how much Shehbaz Sharif revolutionized our relations with brotherly Muslim nations like Turkey reflects in how President Erdogan referred to Shehbaz Sharif as his "brother" - commending him for his efforts in bringing Pakistan and Turkey closer as nations. In diplomatic overtures, it is rare for the head of a state to so directly endorse the efforts of a provincial executive, but Recep Tayyip Erdogan deemed Shehbaz Sharif fit for such high praise.

Today, charges are brought forth against Shehbaz Sharif, implying - and sometimes directly stating - that these acts of public service came at a dire cost for the public exchequer. That Shehbaz Sharif, whenever he has brought in investment from China or Turkey in Punjab, has taken the least economical choice, deciding for the Pakistani people options that were more expensive for the economy than they needed to be. In other words, they have accused Shehbaz Sharif of mishandling public expenditure.

Let us, for the moment, put aside the fact that even the corruption perception index of Transparency International observes a sharp increase in fears that economic practice in Pakistan is rife with corruption ever since the PTI government has taken power. Let us also put aside the fact that on the Human Development Index, Punjab has seen the most rapid rise in scores of education, health, and income level, out of all of Pakistan's provinces. And of course, let us also ignore the fact that in spite of the commitments that wealthy ministers and officials in the PTI government would not avail their entitlements, it is Shehbaz Sharif that, as a matter of fact, availed neither his salary, nor used public expenses to finance his foreign travels as a statesman. As also acknowledged by PTI parliamentarians, from 2013-2018, Shehbaz Sharif used his own resources to finance himself in his activities as the chief minister, including when he travelled to countries like China and Turkey.

As a statesman, and in spite of the PML-N's reputation as a business-friendly party, Shehbaz Sharif did not bow down to



## PUBLIC SERVICE- BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

pressure by lobby groups insisting on subsidies or resistant to tariffs when it did not suit the country. In 2017, when sugar mills sought a subsidy for exports on sugar, Shehbaz Sharif refused - even when the Sindh government began to provide an additional subsidy on sugar beyond that provided by the federal government. In the larger public interest, Shehbaz Sharif did not pursue this as policy, even as his own son operated a sugar mill of his own. In fact, a tax was introduced instead on the production of ethanol, a by-product of sugar and usually extracted through distilleries at sugar mills. The tax was unpopular among sugar mill-owners, but Shehbaz Sharif did not budge upon his decision.

Accusations are easy to make, but it is worth comparing projects in Punjab to projects elsewhere in the country to appreciate the cost-saving that defines Shehbaz Sharif's acumen as a politician and leader. The Islamabad Safe City project, installed in 2011 by the then Pakistan People's Party government, with only 2000 surveillance cameras in the city, cost the government Rs. 15 billion. The Lahore Safe City project, achieved in 2016 by the Shehbaz Sharif government, cost Rs. 12 billion, with 8000 surveillance cameras installed in the city. The sheer difference in scale is astounding, and the fact that the Lahore Safe City project still managed to cost less speaks volumes for just how invested Shehbaz Sharif was in securing the best for the people.

And this is not all that Shehbaz Sharif achieved. While transport infrastructure like the Orange Train and the highly affordable mass transport system observed in the Metro Bus seem to attract the attention of our detractors much more (even as they help millions in their daily lives) it's important to emphasize the very specific energy infrastructure that Shehbaz Sharif has allowed this province to benefit from. Those long hours of loadshedding are in the past for scores of people - and for a reason. The Sahiwal Coal Power Project, completed in record time seven months ahead of a deadline, added 1320 megawatts of electricity to the national grid. Not only this, but in light of research into the benefits of investing in green technologies, the Quaid-e-Azam Solar Power Project diversified

the energy economy of Pakistan as one of the most ambitious projects in eco-friendly energy ever undertaken in the country. Decreasing loadshedding was a commitment Shehbaz Sharif gave, and a commitment that he followed through on.

Finally, in lieu of recent police and government mishandling of a horrifying incident, it is worth noting just how much both space for women and their protection was expanded under Shehbaz Sharif. The "Women on Wheels" campaign was started under his government to encourage the public visibility of women and to also facilitate their presence on roads as cyclists and bikers. Police action was, for the first time, actively pursued against marriage halls, parents, and clerics that were involved in marrying off under-age girls. Domestic violence shelters were opened throughout the province, and a bill introduced to criminalize domestic violence against women at home: the Punjab Prevention of Violence Against Women Act of 2016. A Women Development department was introduced in the Punjab Secretariat, showing how the PML-N government recognized the need to especially alleviate and address the sufferings unique to women as a group in society. Female bureaucrats, female police officials, and female statesmen rose to the public eye in a conservative society as a result of these conducive policies.

These are just some facts in a very long list that discredit propaganda that has been unleashed to justify the incompetencies of our current government. To individually target each accusation is a feature-length piece on its own. Yet, be it in his safari suit combating dengue or floods, resisting powerful lobbies demanding subsidies and the removal of taxes, fervently pursuing economical deals and investments, or raising his voice and introducing legislation for the under-privileged, Shehbaz Sharif has proven his scrupulousness as a statesman again and again. Try as they might, they cannot change this fact.  
*(to be continued)*





# Postmortem

## EXPORT SECTOR PERFORMANCE OF PTI GOVERNMENT

Pakistan's export volume has been trembling for the last two years despite tall claims of the incumbent government. Before the election, PTI leadership had criticized the PMLN policy of maintaining stable exchange and claimed that PKR was overvalued. Therefore, our exports were less competitive in the global market. Moreover, the PTI government claimed that it would boost exports to \$35 Billion. Whereas, after the first year of the PTI Government, massive devaluation of 35% was witnessed. However, exports of FY-2019 contracted by more than 2% at \$24.257 Billion which was growing at 13% when PMLN left the government. In FY-2020, Pakistan's exports further declined to \$22.507 billion, down by 9.13% as compared to FY-2018 export i.e. \$24.768 Billion.

It is pertinent here to mention that exports of FY-2020 were not merely impacted by COVID-19, but several inconsistent and bungling policies of government hit the export sector, as after COVID-19 phase export of the first two months of FY-2021 was also down by 17% as compared to the preceding year.

Back in 2013, PMLN inherited more troubling economic challenges than what was left for the PTI government in 2018. Economic growth was less than 3%, inflation was approaching double digits, a whopping budget deficit of 8.2%, lower foreign exchange reserve and tax to GDP Ratio. To top it all, 10-12 hours load shedding and terrorism seized the entire economic wheel of the country. Unlike the current Government, PMLN accepted every challenge without any excuse after coming to power in 2013. Not only was the war on terror fought with insufficient resources but also fulfilled the energy shortage of the country to put the economic wheel back on track. Particularly,

for the export sector, PM Nawaz Sharif had announced a 180 billion export relief package in the shape of duty drawback which was later enhanced to 220 Billion. To boost the export sector, subsidized gas and electricity was provided to industry, import duties on all major industrial inputs and machinery were scrapped or reduced, interest rate dragged down from 14% to 5.25% to ease out financing & to resolve liquidity issue and to attract more investment, tax refund processing was made efficient.

In addition, Textile City was announced in collaboration with China to enhance Pakistan textile production capacity and modernization of industry. After great deliberation, PMLN was also able to revise the Free Trade Agreement with China and finalize the FTA-II product list to export to China. For the first time in a decade, Tourism and IT Export registered immense growth during 5 years of PMLN.

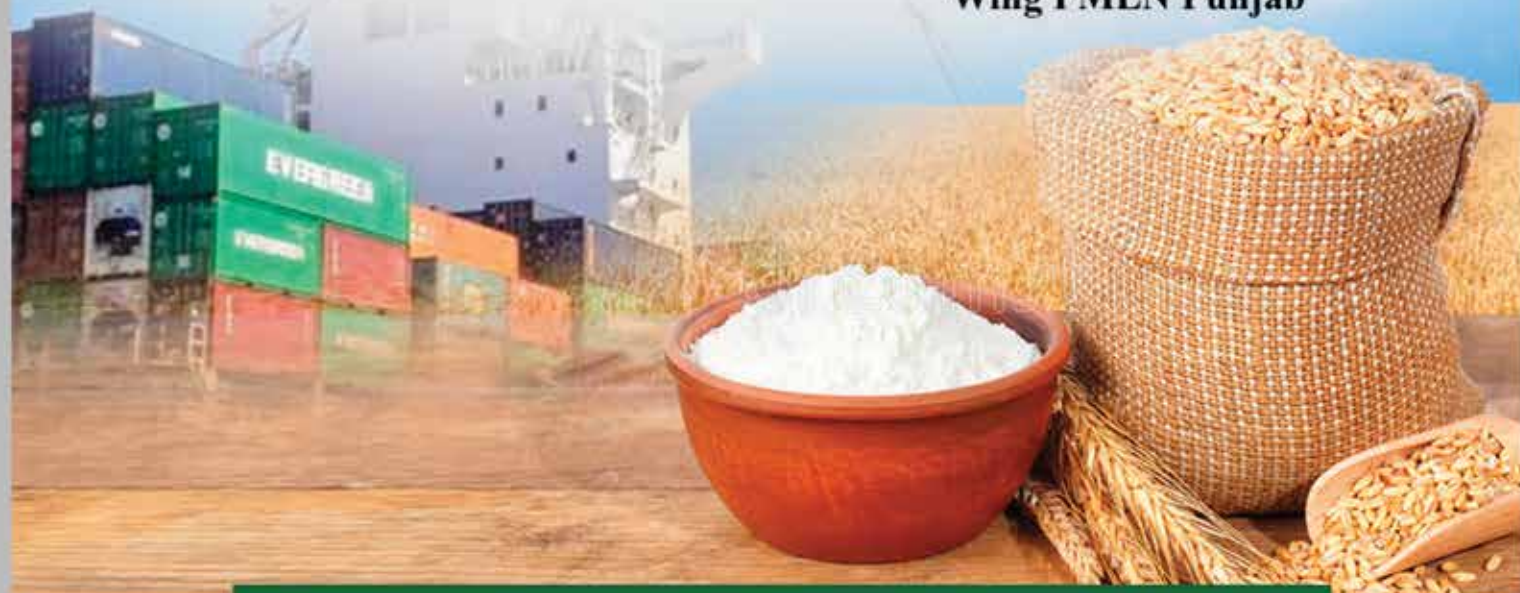
PTI, after coming into power, reversed various above-mentioned reforms which trapped the export growth during the last two year, like massive devaluation and interest rate hike to 13.25% increased the input cost of industry to noncompetitive level. Furthermore subsidy on utilities (Electricity & Gas) was withdrawn and execution of FTA-II revision with China was also delayed. Additionally, 17% Sales Tax was imposed on five major export sectors (textile, leather, carpets, sports goods and surgical goods) with assurance of refunding the amount within 3 days of submitting the claim, however, at the end of FY-2020 total 150 Billion was accumulated in Government treasury on account of sales tax refund and total tax refund ballooned to whopping 710 Billion as per Govt report submitted in national assembly. All these steps of the PTI Government severely impacted Pakistan's vision of export led growth. Glimpse of downfall in major export sector is given below: Glimpse of downfall in major export sector in given below:



Downfall of Major Export Sectors During PTI Government			
		Amounts in 000 USD	
Commodity	FY-2018	FY-2020	Downfall %
Fish & Fish Preparations	489,000	417,957	15%
Wheat	115,187	4,649	96%
Sugar	683,460	103,484	85%
Raw Cotton	56,947	18,400	68%
Cotton Carded or Combed	2,245	458	80%
Made-up Articles(incl.Other Tex	733,350	583,646	20%
Petroleum Products	226,218	75,645	67%
Solid Fuel including Naptha	345,112	120,745	65%
Carpets, Rugs & Mats	84,262	68,372	19%
Sports Goods	551,442	457,798	17%
Leather Tanned	354,563	185,008	48%
Leather Manufactures	614,917	479,469	22%
Leather Garments	365,467	289,660	21%
Other Leather Manufacturer	111,047	35,918	68%
Chemical & Pharmaceutical Prod	1,389,571	1,055,902	24%
Fertilizer Manufacture	115,763	310	100%
Plastic Materials	415,164	328,432	21%
Pharmaceutical Product	257,990	215,658	16%
Other Chemicals	600,654	511,503	15%
Machinery Specialized	37,084	26,397	29%
Jewelry	8,361	6,704	20%
Furniture	3,677	2,603	29%
Molasses	11,916	5,018	58%
Handicrafts	229	126	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,573,623</b>	<b>4,993,857</b>	

Source: State Bank of Pakistan

By: Commodity & Financial Indicator Committee, Research Wing PMLN Punjab





# GHABRANA NAHI



**Zarmeena Nayyar,**

POLITICAL ECONOMIST AND CURRENTLY WORKING  
FOR PUNJAB BOARD OF INVESTMENT AND TRADE.



## Why I left PTI

It was the summer of 2018; I recall standing excitedly to vote for "change," my first ever vote in the general elections carried an excitement of its own. I was eagerly waiting- the previous results had left every ardent fan of PTI sad- and this time we wanted to make sure that not a single vote would be wasted. There were serious problems in Pakistan: our state was being continuously labeled as a failed, rouge nation whose leaders had brought the country on clutches. The time had come for the "savior" to step in, who was promising good governance, elimination of corruption, elimination of hereditary politics, reforms in healthcare and education, and a system run by experts with capable leadership. In short, everything a Pakistani desired, and the influence of social media ensured the fires were ignited and flames burnt bright. The popular-ism swept the country and carried the "savior" to the apex office and his naïve supporters rejoiced. "Now, finally the destiny of the country would shift," everyone who voted for PTI that day perhaps shared the same thought. Little did we know that we had just sabotaged our country's road to development.

**2 years** in, public infrastructure is in the worse shape, law and order have become a laughing matter, good governance is a myth and the political ideology that spellbound every PTI supporter has pulled a Houdini. The only thing consistent about the "saviour" and his team is stubbornness: years ago they demonstrated this quality in not ending their dharna till the elected prime minister resigned, and today the same stubbornness is reflected in their continuous incompetency.

Forget the touted slogans of accountability of corrupt leaders and ensuring good governance, the "savior" has made us reminisce simple things like clean roads, responsive utility providers, and human security. Gone are the times when Lahoris would be comparing the metropolis' infrastructure to Dubai and seeing the realization of one development after another, now the eyes thirst to see a clean road. Anyone living in Lahore can bear witness to the deteriorating conditions of the city and its service delivery providers with each passing day, and the yet we, the PTI supporters, remember voting for a better Pakistan.

If the provincial capital is bleeding, one doesn't wish to think about the conditions of the rest of the province let alone the entire country. The "saviour" is persistently failing in domestic policy, economy, development, health, education and governance. Ineffective management coupled with incorrect policies have lead the country to stagflation. Though PTI-sponsored media attempts to create desired optics, the ground realities cannot be buried in personality cults and charisma, even projects like Orange Train which were just months away from completion at the time of elections, sit stagnant awaiting the time when his team will finally learn the art of running the administrative arms of the country.

The election propaganda of PTI was centered around the former governments not paying enough attention to education, healthcare and public service delivery, yet they have not initiated a single original proposal of a hospital or any other development project, the saviour and his team sits reaping the fruits of labour of the PML-N government through taking credit of the success of projects such as PKLI and Punjab Information Technology Board, an initiative that was already leading the digitalization of Punjab prior to the saviour even entering office. It paints a sorry picture of all the broken promises and U-turns when flagship projects such as Lahore Knowledge Park and Safe Cities sit deteriorating, awaiting the leadership to let go of personal vendettas and venality and focus on service delivery and good governance.

Rising inflation is threatening to send a majority of Pakistanis into poverty. Price hikes, inquiries, changes in his court and zero delivery on the promises of prices being brought down have become a regular norm in "saviour's riyasat". FDI has become stagnant, industries are in loss, no new sweeping change has been made in the business regulatory regime and the policies of his team are doing little to solve the fiscal woes of the country.



# GHABRANA NAHI

To add insult to the injuries of a PTI supporter, saviour's incompetent team has run the improvements made in law and order situation of the country to the ground. Punjab fares the worse. It took lesser time for the saviour to protest against the model town accident than to address the grave crime committed in Lahore. The conditions in the saviour's riyasat are such that a high ranking police officer can get away discrediting a victim and breaking the law with a mere apology. The country is reporting one rape case after another and true to his "celebrity-like" flagrant way of commanding, the saviour whizzed in with an ill-thought promise that did little to curb the every-day waning conditions of safety and security of women in the country. The promised voters look upon the stars in the savior's theatre and reflect upon the overhauls of the system and its policies once pledged. The decaying situation called for a national rape prevention program that would cut down the sexual violence against women, and instead the people of Pakistan were presented with a call for chemical castration of rapists, as the "stars" inefficiently forgot to consult models and policies adopted by countries facing similar predicaments like Kenya.

The "saviour" and his "qualified-envisioned" team launched a citizen's portal, terming it as the bridge between the Government and the people, playing on the needs of people of Pakistan to have a more responsive local governance. The media theatrics termed it as a paramount forum overlooked by previous governments that would connect the general public and the government at national level. It was a treat for all ardent PTI supporters; a brick had been laid for our dream of a true democratic, responsible, and responsive government machinery. We, the people of Pakistan under the captainship of the "saviour" would experience true flavors of good governance. Disappointingly however, like all other theatrics and half cooked, poorly enforced ideas, the citizen's portal sits idle, calling to question the effectiveness of his team and their capacity to see their projects through. It has a record number of dissatisfied complainants and the Prime Minister of Pakistan cannot bring officers in action. This inefficiency, like all the rest, has been shelved under his system of "inquiry

committees". One reminisces on the days when a single open letter to the editor calling the attention of the Chief Minister of Punjab or a post on Facebook would bring the government into action and the problems of citizens would be addressed instantaneously.

The PTI birthed social media watchdogs sit silent on the "saviour" and his team's failures. No outcry creates a frenzy when financial irregularities are reported in Peshawar's metro or the dengue campaign in Punjab is mismanaged. This leaves a citizen to wonder, are we in a cloaked totalitarian system with no access to true information? Hooligism runs rampant in each institution and "saviour's" theatrics have now become exhaustive, leaving all those desirous of positive change severely disappointed. Narratives are being manipulated and controlled and social media accounts launched that further his own popularity among foreigners are more important than governing the country which sinks deeper and deeper into economic crisis.

Two years ago, he diverted the country's focus from mega infrastructure projects that were set to address the core development needs of the country, and turned the guns towards accountability and curbing corruption; today his performance graphs sits riddled with failures and non-deliveries with tales of rampant corruption under his own wings. Two years of bad governance, mismanagement, blame shifting games, learning gaps, trials and errors, and the inefficiency of his team has convinced me, at least, that for the future, my vote needs to be based on tried and tested party performance not an unseasoned politician putting on a show with a singular qualities of sportsman charisma and public popularity under his belt. My vote needs to be for Pakistan and those who delivered for the country instead of for impressive speech-weavers.

*One may smile and  
smile and be a  
villain*

*~William Shakespeare*



# WHEN THE LION ROARS



He is one of the most seasoned politicians of Pmln and Pakistan. Khawaja sb hosted the team with traditional desi breakfast and took us through the spectrum of his political journey.

## **What was your early life and education like?**

My father was a seasoned politician who won his first election in 1951. Later he was leader of the opposition in the West Pakistan assembly in the 1960s and leader of the opposition in the Senate in the 1980s. I did my matriculation from Hassan Abdal and subsequently did my BA from Government College, Lahore and LL.B. from Punjab University. Mian Nawaz Sharif was my class fellow at university, and have been friends with him for over 56 years now.

## **How would you describe your relationship with Mian Sahab at that time?**

We were definitely friends back then, although I had a more frank friendship with Mian Shehbaz Sharif.

## **What prompted you to join politics despite being a successful banker?**

I was associated with the banking sector since 1971, and my last job was with a bank in Abu Dhabi in 1991. Back then Mian Sahab was visiting Sheikh Zayed where he met my father. He insisted that I must return to Pakistan to join the party and take an active role in politics. As such, I returned in December 1991, and in March 1992 I was elected as a senator from Pakistan Muslim League.

## **Since your father was in politics since the time of independence, were you yourself involved in any way before deciding to assume a fulltime role?**

I wasn't involved much but I used to come to Pakistan to look after my father's campaigns during election season, that kept me connected to the political scene in Pakistan. As mentioned earlier, my first foray into politics was in 1992.

## **That government was dissolved by the then President, Ghulam Ishaq Khan using his powers under article 58(2)(b). Why was that?**

Th article was the exact reason why the government was unconstitutionally disbanded. Mian Sahab introduced a bill in parliament to remove the unconstitutional and unbridled powers given to the president through Article 58(2)(b) through which he could dissolve the government arbitrarily. The president didnt like this and decided to dismiss the government on made up charges. The assemblies were dissolved, nonetheless we carried on protests and put pressure on the senate.

## **This action obviously necessitated new election. You decided to run as a member of the national assembly this time?**

At that time the person who was the sitting MNA from our area was the person who was brought in by us when my father resigned. This gentleman decided to switch parties

and nobody else was willing to run against him. Mian Sahab requested that I run from this seat as it was my area and Alhamdulillah we won with a comfortable majority.

## **You've been with this constituency ever since?**

I have won 6 elections so far from my constituency.

## **Can you tell us how supportive your wife has been in your political journey?**

I firmly believe that I couldn't have completed this journey if she had not held the fort at home by raising our 3 three children. Especially since we returned from Abu Dhabi where I was making a handsome salary and was an established banker. She has been a huge support and has never complained.

## **You've sat with Imran Khan on opposition benches. How was that experience?**

Imran Khan I think was struggling with stage fright as he was reluctant to speak up in his allotted time as he didnt know what to say! I used to help him out sometimes. Overall he has been a mediocre politician.

## **What was the background on your disqualification and subsequent reinstatement by the Supreme Court?**

Usman Dar filed a case of concealment of iqama and salary against me even though I had declared it while I was filling my nomination forms. The Islamabad High Court disqualified me but Alhamdulillah the Supreme Court declared that I could stand for elections again.

## **What was the whole business with trying to convict you under article 6 for treason? That is a very dangerous allegation they lobbed at you.**

This was a scheme cooked up by Shafqat Mehmood because obviously Imran Khan is not smart enough to come up with this allegation himself. They alleged that in my position as Defense Minister and Foreign Minister I was dealing in state secrets. There was intense pressure on Bashir Memon, the DG FIA, to implicate me but he chose to sideline himself. This was closely linked to the disqualification attempt against me.

## **Were you perturbed by this allegation?**

Not at all, because I knew there was no truth to these allegations and it was just vindictive politics at play. Ironically, a frivolous treason case was also filed against my father during Ayub Khan's dictatorship when he was part of the agitation against the Tashkent Declaration.



# WHEN THE LION ROARS

## **Were you involved in these things back then?**

Interestingly, when Maadar e Millat was running for president against Ayub Khan, I had a criminal case for violence filed against me. When I went to court the judge brushed off the case saying this child doesn't look like he can commit violence. In fact what happened was that I had taken random pictures of Ayub Khan and he didn't like it. In those days, movements were mostly led by students. Sadly that's not the case anymore.

## **Has NAB been harassing you as well?**

NAB has been calling me in for the past 2 years on trumped up charges but I have been cooperating with them whenever they call me so that they don't say later that I was noncooperative. They have called my wife, son, and even business associates. So much so that they even called in the person we bought the house from in 1988 to make something stick but they have been unsuccessful.

## **Should NAB be abolished?**

I have been advocating for NAB's abolishment for several years. NAB today has become the supreme weapon of political victimization in the hands of Imran Khan and we are to blame for it because we didn't get rid of it when we had the chance. Even in the recent APC Mian Sahab admitted as much that we should have abolished it when we were in power. The genesis for NAB was laid down in Ehtesaab Commission in our second government in the late 90s. Even Musharraf used it only sparingly in the initial years and later it was forgotten. Later PPP and our government didn't use NAB as a political victimization tool, however, the current government has used this agency as their personal victimization apparatus.

## **How is the party withstanding pressure in the fact of extreme political victimization these days?**

We have developed a political culture in the party over time. I believe that if similar pressure had been there in the 1990s, more than 75% of people in the party would have left. The fact that they haven't is a testament to Mian Sahab's struggle over the past 30 years into making PMLN into a mature political party. Mian Sahab has become a symbol of resistance against undemocratic forces encroaching on political territory over the past decades, has faced severe hardship, and paid a high price- whether it is as a family man or in politics.

## **What went wrong with the democratic process in our country?**

This is an ongoing problem for the past 72 odd years, since we came into being. I believe our politicians weren't too serious about democratic principles and this can be gauged from the fact that the first constitution only came

into being 9 years after partition. The Constitution itself was flawed and distorted the character of the federation. The ensuing chaos, inexperience and infighting of politicians in those days resulted in the governance totally slipping into the bureaucracy's hands. Between 1947 and 1958 when Ayub Khan did a coup, politicians ceded ground to the establishment. And we have been struggling with the imbalance ever since...Yes, we have been stuck in territorial fights for the past 72 years. Infact we need a new social contract, which is also being advocated by Mian Sb since atleast 2010. The vision behind this is that we must return to the original constitution of 1973 and every institution should work within the confines of the constitution. We must respect each other's boundaries. It is essential that we resolve the country's political faultlines in order to progress.

## **Was corruption a central issue for politicians in those days?**

Politicians had many shortcomings in those days, but financial corruption was not an issue. There was no greed for money, but yes politicians did crave power and prominence in those days. Financial corruption really took centre stage after Ayub Khan came into power and he had his son, Gohar Ayub, resign his commission and set up businesses for him, which has resulted in his family becoming one of the richest in Pakistan.

## **What is your view on the 18th amendment?**

The 18th Amendment envisioned provincial autonomy, however it is not working as intended because it is limited to only the provincial capitals, whether it is Lahore or Karachi or Peshawar. It has systemic flaws which enables the bureaucracy to have a stranglehold on the system through politicians. The Local Government system must be strengthened.

## **Would you say the local government system was working?**

I have no hesitation in saying that the 2001 Local Government system introduced by General Musharraf was much better insofar as empowering local governments was concerned. True democracy is only achieved at the local level. It is essential to create fiscal space for local governments vis a vis taxation and local budget spending is concerned. This frees the provincial government to spend funds from the NFC award on things like universities, welfare work et cetera. We must move towards that system.



# WHEN THE LION ROARS

**Coming to your slogan “Kuchh Sharam hoti hai, Kuchh Hayaa hoti hai” which has become extremely popular with the general population, regardless of their political affiliation. What prompted this?**

We promote a culture of civility in parliament and I had requested my party colleagues to not heckle Imran Khan and his party at one of the assembly sessions and let them complete what they wanted to say, advice which was accepted by and large. Imran Khan addressed the press right after it outside parliament and used abusive words for us. I found out and when the assembly reconvened, I took the floor and told them that “Kuchh Sharam hoti hai, Kuchh Haya hoti hai.” So that was the context in which it was said.

**Do you think the PTI government should complete its term of 5 years?**

No, I believe that 2.5 years were more than enough to expose the incompetence, inadequacy and corruption that this party has come to represent. It is clearly evident to the nation that they cannot rule and are hurtling us towards disasters, whether domestic or foreign.

**Speaking of foreign relations, you have been the foreign minister of Pakistan as well. Can you tell us whether this government's stance is working on Kashmir post 5th August 2019?**

Unfortunately Pakistan does not have a stance on Kashmir anymore. This government's criminally negligent approach has isolated Pakistan internationally where even friendly nations, such as Saudi Arabia and UAE, don't take our side over Kashmir anymore. I don't know, maybe we have made some international commitment under this government whereby *we are to only pay lipservice to Kashmir now.*

**What is your advice on how we should approach geo-political relations?**

We must have a geographical sense and be realistic. Our basic goal must be not to offend anybody but at the same time be cognizant of reality. We live in an increasingly radicalized neighborhood so we must tread carefully. Also, we must accommodate Iran - with which we have historical brotherly and linguistic ties - in our regional plans like CPEC. Insofar as trade is concerned, EU is a huge market for exports so obviously we must maintain good relations with them as well. We must categorize our relations as follows: (1) strategic importance (2) commercial importance; and (3) diplomatic importance. First and foremost, we must start with our own region as you cannot change your neighbors.

**How are our relations with the Islamic world?**

Our goal must be to maintain brotherly relations with all muslim countries, but unfortunately the *Islamic world itself is deeply fragmented* and we aren't able to derive the best from it. Our religion is being exploited, however we are guilty of it ourselves as we allow outsiders to come and divide us and sow sectarian divisions.

**How will the US withdrawal from Afghanistan impact us?**

It is important to understand that the seeds were sown in the 1980s in the name of Jihad whereas the reality is that we were fighting the US' war against the USSR as the former's proxy. We were very tolerant before this war but it ended up disfiguring our society and radicalized us. As far as the impact of withdrawal is concerned, peace in Afghanistan will bring us political and economic dividends once the peace process is finalized and is operational.

**Has there been a political shift by the current government on CPEC?**

During PMLN's government, there was rapid progress on CPEC. At the moment the West is forcing Pakistan to walk back from CPEC. We should pray that the day doesn't come when almost 4.5 million Pakistani expats are returned from Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as that will be disastrous.

**Now onwards to lighter things. What do you like to read?**

I love reading history. Biggest lesson from history is that *nobody learns from history.*

**What genre of music do you listen to?**

I mostly listen to old songs of madam noor Jahan & Muhammad Rafi

**Do you watch movies? What about Netflix?**

I do watch movies on Netflix when I get the time. I fondly recall that when I was younger, we used to go to cinema to watch the special screenings on Sundays. In those days there was more respect for the law as well. On Mall road we used to mind our lanes and stop at traffic lights and the traffic police used to look at us and smile as if to say, “good job for following the law.” Times have changed.

**You are very fit and healthy, what's the secret behind it?**

I love to walk a lot, in fact I walk 7-8 kilometers everyday.

**Are you a foodie?**

I do like to eat. In fact my daughter in New York has a diploma from a culinary school and is a chef there. My son runs his food business in Islamabad.

**Who has been your great source of strength?**

After my father passed away, my mother lived with us for 20 years. Every morning I used to go to her to take her prayers, she was the greatest source of strength for me.

**Is there something that the Party needs to learn from the recent elections?**

Firstly I believe that bringing Imran Khan was the biggest mistake and we will regret this for years to come. Secondly, we need to reflect on where we went wrong with giving tickets to people to fight elections. I believe we lost as many seats to bad ticket selections as to election engineering against us.



# Social Media Mosaic

Badar Shahbaz

Social Media is an incredibly powerful medium which has brought leaders and the common man in direct contact with one another. It has revolutionized how people interact, their lifestyles, and how they receive their news. The consumer of this revolutionary medium is known as a "Netizen."

In the local context, there has been a resounding response to Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's recent venture into Twitter. Within a month, his account has been followed by over 200,000 Twitter users and each tweet is retweeted thousands of times within a few minutes, reaching a huge audience instantaneously. One example of this is when Quaid Nawaz Sharif tweeted "Vote Ko Izzat Do" on 19th September.

These 4 simple yet powerful words garnered 21k retweets, almost 6k quote tweets and over 55k likes within a few minutes, resonating with netizens all across the country, across all parties, ethnicities and classes. Similarly, Quaid Nawaz Sharif tweet on "State within a State" received a huge response from Netizens, as this medium allowed him to interact directly with Netizens without the interference of state censorship.

The government tried its best to blackout Quaid Nawaz Sharif speeches and his presence, but have failed spectacularly. The reason for this is that Quaid Nawaz Sharif and the PMLN harnessed the power of social media to reach out directly to the people of Pakistan to get out the message of parliamentary supremacy and justice. On both Twitter and Facebook, millions of Pakistani netizens tuned in to watch Quaid Nawaz Sharif live telecast. As such, despite forced media blackout by the government, Quaid Nawaz Sharif regularly interacts with members of the party and the public at large via tweets, and also via video link which is telecast live across several social media platforms. The government's heavy-handed approach has proved to be a boon for the PMLN insofar as its social media outreach is concerned. Millions of diehard PMLN supporters flock to PMLN pages to catch a glimpse of their leaders and share their issues and opinions.

A dedicated team with well defined goals and policies has the power, via social media, to inspire hundreds of thousands of people within a few seconds and to also mobilize them.



**Nawaz Sharif**

@NawazSharifMNS

ووٹ کو عزت دو

20.9K Retweets 5,832 Quote Tweets 55.2K Likes



**Murtaza Solangi** @murtazasolangi · Oct 23

پاکستان کو ایف اے ٹی ایف کی گریہ لست میں ہی رکھنے کا فیصلہ |



**Syed Ali Musa Gillani** @SyedMusaGillani · Sep 28

NAB should give details of how much money it has recovered. Not just figures circulated on tv. People need to know what reality is. "give a dog a bad name and hang him"! Condemning the arrest of @CMShehbaz



19

85



**Ammar Ali Jan** @ammaralijan · Oct 23

Students from FATA send a video message thanking @MaryamNSharif and all others who stood with them in Lahore during these difficult times. Such gestures of kindness and solidarity will make our Federation stronger.



**Abdul Hamid Ahmad** @AbdulHamidAhmad · Oct 24

NewsMaker — Maryam Nawaz: Daughter of Punjab is outspoken, gutsy



NewsMaker — Maryam Nawaz: Daughter of Punjab is outspoken, gutsy  
Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's daughter has emerged as a strong political force  
@gulnews.com



259

708



**Hamid Mir** @HamidMirPAK

Unfortunate incident. Sindh Govt informed PML-N leader Muhammad Zubair that IG Sindh was kidnapped by Rangers at 4 in the morning he was brought in sector commander's office where addnl IG was already present and were forced to issue the orders for the arrest of Cpt Rtd Salfar

6,100 Retweets 1,652 Quote Tweets 16.2K Likes



## Panorama



Vote Ko Izzat Do- Mian Nawaz Sharif addressing the senior leadership of Pmln.



The Daring Duo- Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and Hamza Shahbaz appearing in NAB court



Mariyam Nawaz Sharif - Symbol of struggle for civil supremacy.



Striving for the revival of true democracy