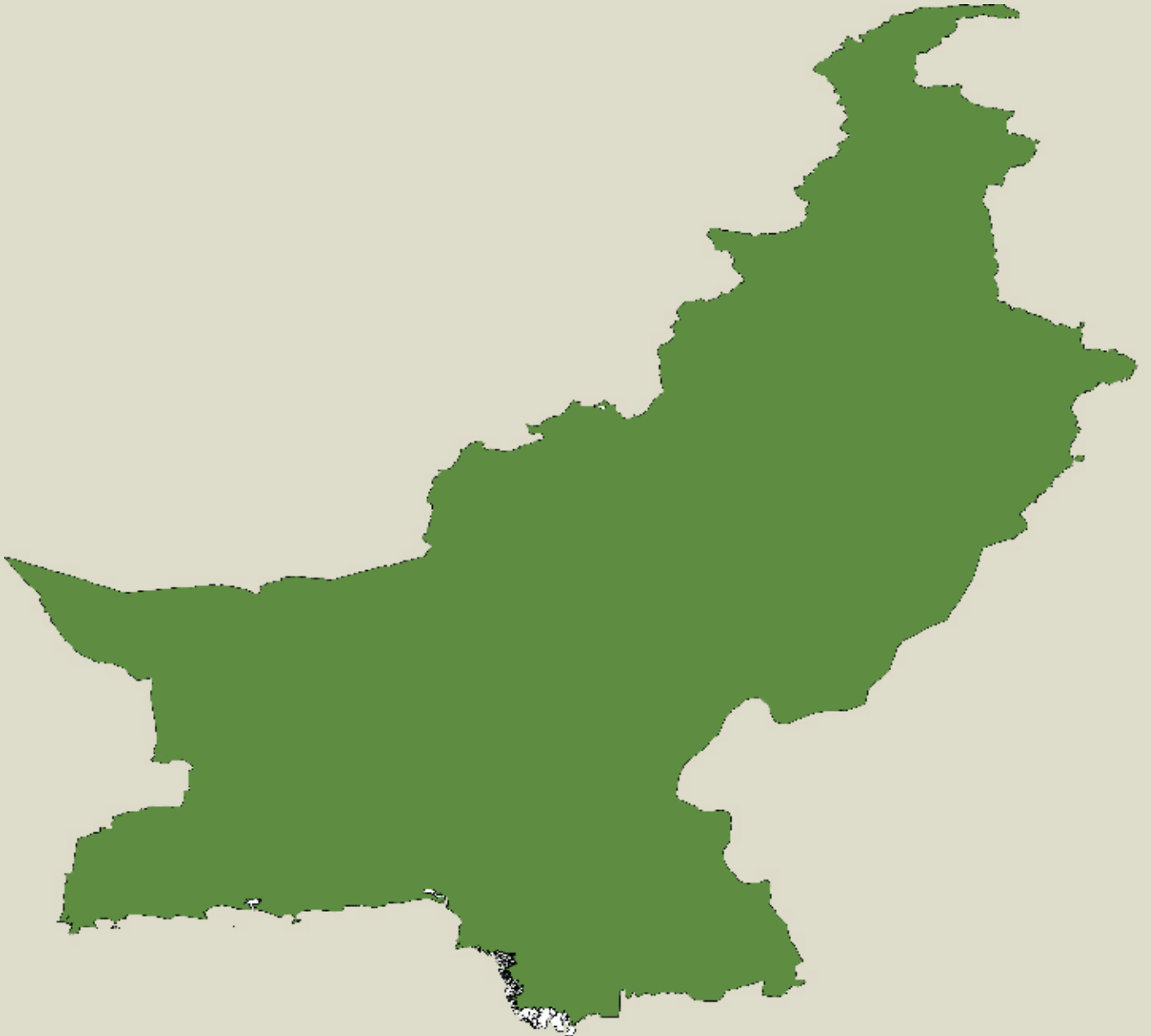


NOVEMBER 2019

PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST

*A Selected Summary of News, Views and Trends
from Pakistani Media*



Prepared by
Dr. Zainab Akhter
Dr. Nazir Ahmad Mir
Dr. Mohammad Eisa
Dr. Ashok Behuria

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INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES
रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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PAKISTAN NEWS DIGEST, November 2019

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Editorial

For the first half of this month, all the media vernacular, English and electronic was focused on Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman's Azadi cum antigovernment march (protest) that lasted for almost two weeks in Islamabad. While the vernacular media was cautious about reporting the protests as antigovernment the English and electronic media portrayed this protest as the building block for a strong opposition for the Imran Khan government, underlining that Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman as the emerging leader of all the opposition parties. It was interesting how PML-N and PPP choice to be diplomatic in supporting the march thus at the same time keeping the back door channel open for negotiations with the government. Almost all media reports seemed to agree that the release of Maryam Nawaz on bail and permission for Nawaz Sharif to fly out of Pakistan of treatment was the result of these back door communications. Although Maulana's march ended and his *plan B* and *plan C* did not seem to have much impact but according to media debates the march pressed the panic mode on for the PTI government and gave a shock.

It was also interesting how the Imran Khan government in order to impress the PTI's vote bank tried to sabotage Nawaz Sharif's foreign trip. Imran Khan in a speech requested the courts to treat both powerful and weak equally which in turn irked the Supreme Court and invited its wrath. The PML-N filed a case against the bond request by the government which in turn gave the hearing in favour of the PML-N and Nawaz Sharif flew to London without signing any bond. The English and few electronic media reported this as the beginning of the clash between the government and Judiciary.

This rift came out prominently when the supreme court of Pakistan rejected the order for General Qamar Bajwa's three-year extension. The media highlighted this issue as an important development in the history of Pakistan where a judiciary directly challenged the dominance of the establishment (army). It churned lots of debate in the legal, political and media circles about the use of the word *extension* and *re-appointment*. Also debates on TV and media about the efficacy of the army act, terms for an extension for army remained a prominent feature. The Imran Khan government went into another panic mode to facilitate the extension of Qamar Bajwa. Overall this was a stressful month for the Imran Khan government. It is been reported in the media that antigovernment voices within political circles, public, even establishment and within PTI party (*especially in Punjab*) is growing stronger. Many questions are being raised from all quarters on the poor performance of the government in the last one and half years.

Zainab Akhter

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Two narratives, Najam Sethi, *The Friday Times*, 01 November¹

Two powerful and unprecedented narratives are playing havoc with the sentiments of the nation. The first is about Nawaz Sharif's disqualifications and convictions, personal health and heir apparent. This narrative is fast assuming critical mass in the democratic struggle for civilian supremacy over the Miltabishment. The second is about Maulana Fazal Ur Rahman's "long march" that has arrived in Islamabad and captured the stage for ousting Imran Khan and his PTI government. *Maulana Fazl has sprung up out of nowhere to seize the moment. His JUI is a most unexpected and unsuitable substitute for the PPP or PMLN.* But he has filled the vacuum created by the decimation of the leadership of both parties and captured the imagination of the people. *The Miltabishment is now scrambling to save its nth political experiment in extra-constitutionalism.* This raises the question of why Maulana Fazl has decided to take a solo flight at the end of October and refused to postpone it even by a month at the request of both Shahbaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto. Never one to resist the inducements of power, he has taken on both the PTI government and the Miltabishment. If his purpose was merely to oust Imran Khan, his mission would have been better served by taking along the PMLN and PPP and delaying the Long March. *No, it does seem that he has thrown the gauntlet to that section of the Miltabishment and PTI that is constantly threatening all and sundry with its "same-page" unity because he has the implicit but firm support of those in the same constellation who are not on the same page.*

Bail for Maryam, Editorial, *Dawn*, 06 November²

The court, while giving relief to Ms Nawaz, asked her to submit her passport to the court officials – which was an anti-climax for those operating the rumour mills. The country had been abuzz with predictions that both Mr Sharif and Ms Nawaz were to 'soon' fly away quietly to some foreign destination. Their absence was thought essential to clear the field for the remaining PML-N leaders, their opponents and, most significantly, the 'establishment', to engage with one another in a way that best suited them. The rumours about the father-daughter duo's 'impending' flight from the country persist, with an attending doctor saying that Mr Sharif needed to undergo genetic tests that can only be conducted abroad. *In the ensuing phase, bets are being placed on whether or not Ms Nawaz is going to join*

¹ <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/two-narratives/>

² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1515172/bail-for-maryam>

Maulana Fazlur Rehman's protest in Islamabad. There are many who expect her to celebrate her release from jail by raising a battle cry expanding on her father's image of resistance, and as a reiteration of her promise to not compromise under adverse circumstances. In reality, these wishes may be premature. *Her uncle, Shahbaz Sharif, has been telling everyone that Ms Nawaz was needed to take care of her seriously ill father. For the time being at least, this is what she may want to concentrate on.*

Fissures in the opposition, Daily Times, 05 November³

Maulana Fazlur Rehman seems to be a lone, almost disregarded man in Islamabad despite amassing a sizeable, charged crowd from all parts of Pakistan, mostly Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. No major opposition party is going to back his dharna plan, or move to D Chowk and beyond with him. Sensing that he has landed in a blind alley, there is now talk of plans B and C. He is keeping his cards close to his chest, which appears to be a good political strategy to keep his followers charged. Earlier, his ultimatum to the prime minister – resign or else – got a lukewarm response from government quarters. Contrary to political pundits' predictions, and his own words, that once the ultimatum expired he would move to the Red Zone to force Prime Minister Imran Khan to leave office, the seasoned politician from Dera Ismail Khan has planned to just prolong the dharna for the time being. That is another strategy, mostly played by politicians, to keep changing goal posts, to keep opponents guessing. *In such circumstances, Rehman must be provided a safe exit, and thankfully, government's decision to offer negotiations presents a silver lining.* The opposition must learn from sit-ins of Dr Tahirul Qadri and Imran Khan that it is easier to start an agitation but difficult to culminate it logically. Also, the government must learn from the past that a prolonged dharna often hurts the government itself.

The march and its consequences, M Haroon Aslam, The Express Tribune, 08 November⁴

Due to a number of geopolitical whys and wherefores, inter alia Pakistan continues to face stiff challenges to its national security by powers who influence political milieu to further their own regional and global interests. *Then who stops the recurrence of such an agitation against the next elected government after a year or so of its installation? Hence withers the political stability which is direly needed in Pakistan. The more sinister detriment of this march cum sit-in relates to its composition.* It mainly comprises right-wing leaders and their followers, including madrassah

³ <https://dailytimes.com.pk/495088/fissures-in-the-opposition/>

⁴ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2095705/6-the-march-and-its-consequences/>

students, with a regimental wing in khaki attire. Their agitation in Islamabad reinforces the narrative that non-state actors or Islamic extremists can march on the capital, paralyse the government and have things their way. The intermittent appearance of leaders of other political parties and the composition of the “Rehbar Committee” cannot belie the fact that this is a right-wing Islamist show. *The image it sends internationally is highly damaging for a country with nuclear power. We should be sending a message of stability, responsibility and maturity to the international community, and not of chaos and uncertainty.* Whatever the declared or hidden agenda or whoever is behind this show, the entire episode has serious consequences for the national security of Pakistan — a fact that needs to be understood by the government and saner politicians within the fold of opposition parties.

‘B’ is for blockade, Editorial, Dawn, 14 November⁵

Maulana Fazlur Rehman has finally come up with his ‘Plan B’ that involves staging blockades of highways and even branch and intra-city roads across the country. Maybe Wednesday’s announcement of the JUI-F’s new map will still be looked upon as a face-saving exercise by many. The problem is, what if the Maulana really means it? He has already shown that he accepts and rejects advice at his own convenience and has sufficiently exhibited a mind free from any reasonable limits for anyone to take him and his Plan B lightly. His protest may be entering an extremely sensitive area and the JUI-F chief could find himself in a corner with no escape. The JUI-F threatens to expand the measures to paralyse all manner of movement on the national road network, and the plan, if carried out, could have devastating effects on daily life. *Unless it is a bluff or a face-saving gimmick that some believe it will turn out to be, these events show an inclination for violent confrontation. Accolades, that are not always his due, have often been lavished on Maulana Fazlur Rehman for his politics.*

End-Game, Najam Sethi, The Friday Times, 15 November⁶

One might imagine that the Maulana’s backers would like the business of extensions to be done away with in the larger institutional interest of the army and are hoping General Bajwa declines to accept the extension. Equally, Shahbaz Sharif and Asif Zardari are taking no chances siding with the Maulana, just in case Gen Bajwa decides to stay on as the most powerful player in the arena. But it is Imran Khan’s behavior that is both intriguing and revealing. On the one hand, he has signed away the extension; on the other,

⁵ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1516634/b-is-for-blockade>

⁶ <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/end-game/>

he hasn't put it in the public domain; on the one hand, he is constantly at pains to insist that the government and Establishment are on the same page; on the other, he is clearly not on the same page as the Establishment in so far as dealing with the political opposition is concerned. *The Establishment is concerned that another Martyr – and a popular Punjabi one to boot – would severely undermine its institutional interests. It may also be concerned about the disunity in the country provoked by Imran Khan's obsession to wipe out the leadership of the PPP and PMLN at a time when Pakistanis are heaving under the yoke of severe economic pressures and hostile regional powers may be conspiring against the country.* Has the Maulana been conveyed some assurances? Certainly, Imran Khan's latest spanner in the works would suggest a degree of boldness that can only result from the knowledge or perception that General Bajwa has decided to go home. He would be a very foolish man to take this stance if he knew that Gen Bajwa aims to wield the stick for another three years.

Nawaz's treatment, Editorial, Dawn, 15 November⁷

The courts granted former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif bail so he could get the medical treatment he needs. The government agreed to remove his name from the ECL on humanitarian grounds so he could travel abroad. *All seemed smooth till all of a sudden the government announced that Mr Sharif would have to sign an indemnity bond worth Rs7bn before he would be allowed to travel, as a guarantee of his return. PML-N president Shahbaz Sharif refused to sign the bond, and instead, challenged the decision in the Lahore High Court.* A normal situation which could have been handled normally has now turned into a full-blown crisis. The result is an acrimonious fight that is eating away precious time from the eight weeks' bail given to Mr Sharif for his treatment. The damage done to the political environment of the country will, unfortunately, take a while to mend. This was a good opportunity for Prime Minister Imran Khan to allow his empathy — which he has displayed quite often — to override his hostility towards his political opponent. *Had he brushed aside the pressure from his advisers to add the indemnity bond clause to the one-time waiver from the ECL, he would have gained tremendous political capital from all sides.* He did not do so, and now the situation has become a minefield of unforeseen consequences. The government should, even at this stage, undo the decision and allow Mr Sharif to travel unhindered.

⁷ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1516821/nawazs-treatment>

Is Imran winning? Shakaib Qureshi, Dawn, 19 November⁸

The Imran Khan government's move to set a potential ransom for Nawaz Sharif was politically brilliant. If Sharif had given an indemnity bond he would for posterity be labelled a thief. And now that the Lahore High Court has overturned the move, the judiciary might be perceived as having to shoulder part of the responsibility. *Unfortunately, all is not well in the state of Pakistan and continued questions remain. Overnight TV anchors who waxed eloquent on Sharif's corruption supported his leaving in the name of humanity or political stability.* The same track resonated with the government's allies leading to speculation whether Nawaz Sharif or actually Shahbaz Sharif had again made friends with the masters. *Perhaps Imran Khan's realization that he will be a sitting duck if he compromises on his anti-corruption agenda made him put up a last stand.* His main problem is that, he does not have an economic vision to break the economic stranglehold maintained by purana Pakistan. Khan's economic mantra should be generating growth, increasing participation in the economy and rolling back big government, but he is doing just the opposite.

Quality of discourse, Editorial, Dawn, November⁹

We do not know if it was stress or something else that provoked Prime Minister Imran Khan to let loose on the opposition in his speech on Monday, but whatever it was it did no favour to a leader who is expected to hold his composure no matter how testing the times. Mr Khan, inaugurating a motorway project, was expected to talk about his government's performance, which he did at the start of his speech. But then he went into a higher gear, lashing out at all his political opponents and repeating that he would spare no one. He reserved the harshest words for Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Shahbaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari. Perhaps the most unfortunate part of his tirade was his mocking of Mr Bhutto-Zardari by mimicking his Urdu accent. This act elicited guffaws from a partisan audience, but it left a sour taste in the mouth of most people. *The prime minister may have had his reasons for such renewed hostility, and many of these reasons may be valid. But the tone, tenor and choice of words to express this hostility were unfortunate.* Mimicking an opponent and making fun of how he speaks does not fall within the parameters of such demands of his office. Mr Khan may want to

⁸ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1517581/is-imran-winning>

⁹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1517711/quality-of-discourse>

review this approach and help our national discourse recover some of its lost decorum.

Failed Experiment, Najam Sethi, Editorial, *The Friday Times*, 22 November¹⁰

As far as the Maulana's dharna is concerned, it is true that he couldn't extract the PM's resignation and compel another round of elections. But it can be argued that perhaps that was only his stated objective while the true motive of the dharna was to focus on, and undermine, the Militabishment leadership that "selected" Khan in the first place and has propped him up since. The logic of this indirect approach is inescapable: by challenging and exposing the Militabishment, he was buffeting the pillar on which the PTI government stands and deepening the cracks in that unholy alliance. *So when the Maulana claims his dharna was successful and he got what he wanted, we can only deduce that it has must have something to do with the Militabishment which should become clear soon enough.* Imran Khan is the biggest loser. His "same page with the Militabishment" roar is sounding hollow. His allies are beginning to flap their wings. His words and body language suggest an erosion of trust with the "Selector" and deep anguish about the current situation. *He senses a state of siege, and therefore wants to bring back loyalists into the team. Now the NAB chairman has announced his intention to target the PTI to redress the balance. And the chief justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Asif Khosa, has ticked him off for doubting the credentials of the judiciary by letting Nawaz Sharif off the hook.*

A shambolic affair, Editorial, *Dawn*, 28 November¹¹

The snowballing controversy over the extension of army chief Gen Qamar Bajwa's tenure is entirely of its own making, and one that cannot be laid at the door of previous dispensations. Moreover, the government's ineptness has not only damaged its own reputation but also threatens to drag the military as a whole into disrepute. *Chief Justice Asif Khosa, in a stunning move, suspended the extension order on the grounds of procedural anomalies, and the fact there is no provision in the Army Regulations to support such an extension.* The episode lays bare the PTI government's authoritarian streak and its lack of maturity — a lethal combination. For example, consider the manner in which, *a few hours after the Supreme Court order, the cabinet rushed through an amendment to the Army Regulations to include a provision for an "extension in the army chief's tenure".* There are profound, long-term repercussions for the democratic process and for civilian authority

¹⁰ <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/failed-experiment/>

¹¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1519292/a-shambolic-affair>

at stake here; the situation demanded a broader parliamentary debate. And yet the government, out of sheer expediency and for the benefit of a single individual, went ahead — simply because it could.

Time to stand down, Khurram Husain, *Dawn*, 28 November¹²

The future is uncertain because far too much depends on the outcome of the decision that the judges will announce. One reason another army chief will think twice about launching another emergency or another political leader will think thrice before storming the Supreme Court is because of the lawyer's movement and the enhanced place of the court in the power structure of the country. *It is with sadness that all day we were reminded that there is only one example of an army chief in the past 20 years who did not get, nor publicly seek, an extension in his tenure.* The proceedings before the court established one thing clearly: there is no law under which an extension of tenure can be granted to an army chief. *Those who took these extensions in the past either gave it to themselves because they were military rulers, or in the one lone case of General Kiyani, took it without contest.* There is more to the institution of the military than its might and its prestige. As a leading institution in the country it has to show the way to others as well, and curate its legacy and its place in the country's power structure.

SECURITY SITUATION

FATF: facts and fiction, Zamir Akram, *The Express Tribune*, 05 November¹³

Performance evaluation by FATF is conducted mainly by focusing on countries that lack the capacity or willingness to implement FATF requirements. This has been the case with Pakistan. *Pakistan's FATF experience clearly underscores the political dimensions of this organisation.* For instance, even when Pakistan was on the black or grey list, there was little financial pressure on the country. It received several bailouts from the IMF and generous assistance from the US. This was due to American dependence on Pakistan for counterterrorism cooperation. It is only after the growing Indo-US partnership, especially after Trump's election, that the FATF has been used as a means of political leverage. And the goal posts keep being pushed back with demands to do more. *While Pakistan needs to take action for its own sake, it also needs to use its*

¹² <https://www.dawn.com/news/1519305/time-to-stand-down>

¹³ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2093482/6-fatf-facts-fiction/>

leverage with the US, such as in Afghanistan and counterterrorism, to ensure that it's financial and security interests are not jeopardized. Pakistan should also highlight FATF's double standards such as ignoring Indian support to TTP and BLA terrorists against Pakistan, and India's own money laundering.

Maulana and his non-state audience, Muhammad Ali Ehsan, *The Express Tribune*, 10 November¹⁴

There are many stakeholders involved in the continuity of Maulana's *dharna* (sit-in) in Islamabad. Internally, the opposition parties are having a joyful political time and externally, the enemies of Pakistan. The whole sit-in conveys an extremely negative image of our country. It has a political utility for Maulana but for him to escalate it beyond the point of political utility in our fragmented political environment becomes a dangerous game that Maulana is playing. So far, the government has dealt with this sit-in with the patience it deserves but could just being patient be termed as a strategy? *Maulana's dharna is high-risk activism and is like an "unexploded bomb" that needs to be defused. Waiting for it to explode cannot be termed as a strategy. The enemies of the state can trigger any unpleasantness or horribleness in that crowd which can dramatically transform how people may get involved and respond.* Maulana's outrage is uncontrollable and the worst thing he is doing is targeting state institutions. The politically discarded and discredited leadership which lost the elections and stand on the container to deliver their "enemy pleasing political sermons" suffer from a political disease called "institutional accusation syndrome". Maulana's emotional outrage and uncontrollable speech making is creating an irrational narrative that seeks to only spread negativity. *Maulana is making is estranging and alienating himself and his followers from the state. His political method of creating a non-state audience can please Pakistan's enemies but can in no way enhance and compliment his own political credibility.*

Pakistan's security challenges and political instability, Dr Ahmed Saeed Minhas, *The Express Tribune*, 14 November¹⁵

Hybrid warfare is in full swing in Pakistan. A sit-in at Islamabad has become a source of instability for Pakistan's international stature in economics, politics and diplomacy. The question of can Pakistan afford it

¹⁴ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2096769/6-maulana-non-state-audience/>

¹⁵ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2098987/6-pakistans-security-challenges-political-instability/>

needs to be analyzed simplistically for identifying tangible threats. The sit-in has to be seen in the backdrop of international and national happenings over the last three months. With due respect for all political forces, the sit-in is extremely detrimental to Pakistan's international demeanor, and poses security challenges. It seems that Pakistan may suffer from three major drawbacks because of the sit-in that may tarnish its now refurbished reputation. *The yellow-dressed "Ansar-ul-Islam" personnel of the sit-in party is massively damaging Pakistan's soft image. The Indian media is presenting the attire as a symbol of religious fanatics who have gathered to unseat a democratically-elected government. Religion card is being used to meet political ends.* The Western narrative of Islamist extremism could get further steam, and this time from the land of pure. The most sensitive and the least desired thing is to cite the alleged role of the armed forces in politics. Here, the sit-in leadership is naively playing into the hands of enemy. The fact is that the armed forces of Pakistan are recognised and respected at national and international levels to have the will and potential to combat multi-dimensional security threats to Pakistan. Any attempt to pitch the armed forces against its own people would be disastrous, as has been attempted by the sit-in leadership.

URDU MEDIA

Politics

Plan-B to stop Maulana Fazl's dharna, Report, Ummat, 01 November¹⁶

To counter Maulana Fazil-ur Rahman and his Azadi March, the government is working on a dangerous plan-B. *On October 23 there was this news that 25 Ahl-e-Sunnat groups had disassociated themselves with the Azadi March. They had said that the Azadi March was a foreign agenda. It is then the government patronized the Barelvi groups' leadership as the Maulana belongs to Deobandi group. According to a source in Islamabad, it was the plan-B of the government. They had thought that if the Maulana reaches Islamabad, they would bring out the Barelvi group on roads to counter the Maulana. The march by the Barelvis would be called as 'Aman March' or 'Milad' March'.* In this regard, Prime Minister Imran Khan had a long meeting with the Barelvi leadership. In the meeting, the Barelvi leadership called the Azadi March as 'fasad' and proposed 'Aman March' from their side to counter the Maulana. Later it was said that if the Maulana continues his

¹⁶ <http://ummat.net/2019/11/01/news.php?p=story2.gif>

dharna, then the march of the Barelvis would be called 'Milad March' as the birthday of the Prophet is going to be celebrated in the 2nd week of November. According to the source, the government would not disturb the Maulana if he decides to protest and stay for 2-3 days. But if the dharna is prolonged, the 'Milad March' plan would be used. Some are fearing the May 12, 2007 kind of situation. It is said that since this government has many people who were with Musharraf in 2007, they may apply same formula to counter the Azadi March.

Who is Maulana? Hamid Mir, *Jang*, 04 November¹⁷

'Who brought these ignorant people to Islamabad'? The question was asked to me by a woman journalist who was stopped by the members of Ansar-ul Islam from entering in the rally place. She said she was mistreated along with her cameraman. *She asked me to raise the issue. I also talked to my friend who repeated similar kind of incident. I sent a message to Fazl-ur Rehman about the incident. Few minutes later the Maulana came on the stage and announced that there was no ban on women from coming to the jalsa. In fact he also invited me on the stage and I also announced that the Maulana has addressed media's concerns.* Because of his flexibility and moderate nature, the Maulana saved himself from the criticism of media. After the nimaz on Friday one PML-N leader asked me who brought the Maulana to Islamabad. I answered Imran Khan. *He then asked would Shehbaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto come to address the rally. I answered Imran Khan would send them also. Imran Khan was very harsh on the opposition leaders in his speech in Gilgit-Baltistan.* One minister said to me that the reason for the fall of Pervez Musharraf was his arrogance and pride in himself. But it took nine years to Musharraf to start Musharraf's fall. *Imran has achieved the same in just one year. I said that all said and done, Imran Khan would not resign, to which he agreed.* He said that if the PTI-led government does not change its way, I would fail sooner or later.

Fazl-ur convinces the opposition to continue the dharna, Report, *Ummat*, 05 November¹⁸

It seems that the Maulana has been able to convince the opposition parties to continue the dharna in Islamabad. *According to the source familiar with the All Party Meeting that took place yesterday, the Maulana got emotional. He said he was able to bring more people to Islamabad than was expected.* The notion that the PML-N and PPP do not support the dharna should end. The top leadership of both the parties, however, did not attend the meeting. *The*

¹⁷ https://e.jang.com.pk/11-04-2019/lahore/pic.asp?picname=06_008.png

¹⁸ <http://ummat.net/2019/11/05/news.php?p=story1.gif>

representatives of the PML-N said that Shahbaz had this message that the Maulana would not be left alone. Similar message was given by the leaders of PPP. However, both the parties added that to move the dharna forward in the current circumstances would not help. It can lead to confrontation. Out of the nine parties, the top leadership of the five did not attend the meeting: PPP, PML-N, ANP, Nationalist Party and Jamiat-Ahle Hadith. The Maulana gave the APC authority to decide whether the dharna should continue or not. He however added that the people would feel letdown if they are asked to return from this point. According to the source, there is plan of country wise strike before 9 November, as 10th is the birthday of the Prophet Mohammad. Some parties asked for carrying out protests across the country, to which PML-N and PPP disagreed. Meanwhile there are some emerging fissures within the PML-N. Though Shahbaz Sharif was against the dharna from the beginning, Maryam-Nawaz group in support of it. But it has not been visible much. ... *According to the source, PML-N and PPP are not in support of the crossing the red line as that can roll back the relaxations that the Sharif and Zardari families are getting at the moment. They are in support of introducing a no-confidence motion against Imran Khan, for they believe they can get support of PML-Q and BNP of Akhtar Mengal. That can give the Maulana also a face saving.*

Shar-e-kharabi Hamid Mir, *Jang*, 07 November¹⁹

The centre of politics in Pakistan, Islamabad, has become place of containers. Containers are everywhere blocking main roads. These containers are guarded by enthusiastic, bearded young people who are raising slogans of 'go Imran go'! *In response, appearing strong, Prime Minister Imran Khan is saying that do whatever you want, no one will get the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO). It seems Imran is either feeling threatened or confused. Otherwise the question of NRO does not rise. NRO was started by Gen. Pervez Musharraf. But the Supreme Court of Pakistan had rejected the ordinance ten years ago, in 2009.* Since then there has been no NRO and nor is it legally possible. What Maulana Fazl-ur Rehman is asking is resignation from the Prime Minister. The Maulana knows that he cannot get the resignation but he wants to corner Imran Khan. *But the real battle of Imran Khan is with Imran Khan. As it happens, when out of the power, Imran was always forthcoming towards criticism and advices. However, when in power, like others, he also surrounded by henchmen. Because of the flattery, the prime minister is getting humiliation nothing else but he is not able to notice it.* ... Islamabad, the centre of power, has neither helped to improve other the country nor the people who have come here to rule Pakistan since it was made the power-capital of the country. Whoever has come here since

¹⁹ https://e.jang.com.pk/11-07-2019/lahore/pic.asp?picname=06_007.png

Ayub Khan, has left the place being humiliated. Nothing good is ever done from the city.

The change is coming, Saleem Safi, Jang, 13 November²⁰

Those people who used to write that Bilawal has become gentle and Shahbaz Sharif gentler are interpreting the things wrongly. *The people think that Bilawal and Shahbaz are leaving Maulana Fazl-ur Rehman alone. While the reality is that the Maulana is making things easy for Bilawal, Shahbaz, Asfandyar and Mehmood Achakzay's. As soon the situation reaches to some conducive point, the dharna will be ended.* Additionally, the illness of Nawaz Sharif has made things difficult for Imran Khan and easy for Bilawal and Shahbaz. There were some differences between Nawaz and Shahbaz before the 2018 elections. After the defeat in the elections, Shahbaz was allowed to pursue the matters and work on compromise began. To reach some deal, each was given some relaxations. *Against the Imran's wish, Shahbaz Sharif was made chairman of the PAC. When Imran realized that Shahbaz was getting close to his goals, he took some measures which damaged the possibility of a deal.* On the other hand, Shahbaz could not convince his brother and niece to go abroad. Meanwhile, Shabazz's children were targeted and Imran could change the situation in his favour. He used the NAB and put the PML-N in a difficult situation. *The Maulana decided to start his march which was not supported by the PML-N and Asif Zardari but later they agreed. Subsequently, contacts were made with Shahbaz and Bilawal. They asked the Maulana that if he should delay the protest for some time, all issues of the opposition might be resolved. The Maulana said that the protest would not hinder the deal but would increase the opposition's importance.* That is the reason that the PML-N and PPP neither openly supported nor opposed the Maulana. Additionally, Nawaz Sharif's illness has turned in their favour. *Imran thinks that if something happens to Nawaz, Punjab will get its Bhutto and he will get the blame. Therefore, the government starting asking Nawaz to go abroad for treatment.* Meanwhile the issues of the opposition seem to be addressed. First three months of 2020, it seem, will be good for the opposition and bad for Imran. When deal is done, the Maulana will end his protest and PML-N and PPP would get what they wanted.

Prime Minister lost golden opportunities, Asrar Bukhari, Ummat, 15 November²¹

Arrogance and pride are human instincts. However we are also appreciative towards simplicity and good behavior. Prime minister Imran Khan and his seven-eight cabinet ministers have mix instincts. *First, Imran did not believe*

²⁰ https://e.jang.com.pk/11-13-2019/lahore/pic.asp?picname=06_004.png

²¹ <http://ummat.net/2019/11/15/news.php?p=idr2.gif>

that former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was ill. He made him to do tests in the Showkat Khanum hospital. When the tests diagnosed Nawaz's illness, only then Imran believed Nawaz. Subsequently, Imran allowed him to travel abroad for treatment. However, Nawaz was asked to pay \$7 billion as bond for leaving the country. The Prime Minister and his ministers are justifying the bond by arguing that if Nawaz does not come back, that would be an issue for the government. The court has allowed him to get treatment and doctors have said that he cannot be treated in Pakistan, he should be allowed to travel then. Additionally, if the brother of Qandeel Baloch can be brought back via Interpol for his crime, why cannot be Nawaz brought back if he decides to stay in England? *Demanding \$7 billion as bond is irrational and sheer arrogance. This reflects Imran Khan's attitude that he would "make these people cry".* ... The PML-N has approached to the court so that Nawaz can go to London for treatment. *Imran Khan has lost a golden opportunity to expand his political capital. Had he said that Nawaz is his political rival but as a human he would allow him to travel abroad for treatment, he would have won hearts of people and his respect would have increased!* However, he missed the opportunity.

New Predictions, Saleem Safi, Jang, 20 November²²

Sacrifices were given to make Muhammad Khan Jinjo and Nawaz Sharif prime ministers but only of PPP and the left parties. *For Imran Khan, not only PML-N and PPP were unhappy but the religious groups were also angered. Mustafa Kamal and Chaudhry Nisar were also sacrificed. Expectations from Imran Khan were high.* It was presumed that he would stabilize the economy and income would increase inside the country as well as outside. Opposite happened. *Imran got favorable environment to function as the prime minister as all the institutions were on his side. Criticism of Imran was seen as criticism of the institutions.* Media gave favorable reporting. The opposition was not as active enough. Imran had promised the people that he had roadmap for everything and his party had done homework. As it turned out, those were all lies. *The party did not even have a capable person to become finance minister. Important provinces like Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa were given to incompetent people like Usman Buzdar and Muhammad Khan.* The government is full of mafia people. People who are citizens of other countries are involved in important decision making information sharing. To meet the crisis, there was need of political unity in the country. For that, PML-N, PPP and JUI-F along with others came together. Maulana's

²² https://e.jang.com.pk/11-20-2019/lahore/pic.asp?picname=06_004.png

dharna and Nawaz Sharif's illness added fuel to it. Imran considered these activities a conspiracy against him and tried to counter them. He failed in both the cases. *Chaudhry Elahi clearly says that he was asked to assure the Maulana. PML- and PPP only attack Imran Khan. Both have started predicting new elections. Shahbaz Sharif is thanking government institutions. But the government does not seem to take things seriously. Let the month of March come, then it shall see what politics Shahbaz has played.* Why the Maulana left from Islamabad!

Promises without delivery, Editorial, Ummat, 22 November²³

Election Commission of Pakistan has set 26 November as hearing date of foreign funding case against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The commission has advised to address the case as soon as possible. The case against the PTI has been going on for five years. *It was filed to find out the foreign funding that the party was receiving from countries like the US, Europe, India, and the Central Asian region.* The opposition is accusing Imran Khan of maintaining a clean-image while the party and its members were involved in receiving undisclosed foreign funds. PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal said that if nothing is wrong why is the PTI asking for keeping the investigation secret? *Meanwhile, Maulana Fazl-ur Rehman has said that he was offered membership in the parliament, government in Balochistan, governorship and the chairmanship of the senate.* If Imran would have been honest, why would he try to bribe the Maulana? By not accepting such inducements, the Maulana proved that he cannot be bought. *Former secretary of the EC said recently that if the allegation of foreign funding against the PTI are proved, its members in the national assembly will be disqualified and also its government at the provinces dissolved.* Despite all this, Imran Khan does not seem to be serious about these matters. He keeps claiming that the economy was improving while the reality on the ground is entirely opposite. *Imran keeps bringing more people into his cabinet and the number has reached almost half century. Loans are being taken unprecedentedly to show an artificial stabilization of the economy. While in fact the business community is reeling under stress.* Reputation of the current government is eroding very fast. With possible judiciary judgment going against Imran Khan and his party, there seems no good coming!

²³ <http://ummat.net/2019/11/22/news.php?p=idr1.gif>

Security

New definition for terrorism, Editorial, *Jang*, 01 November²⁴

A large 7-member bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice Asif Khosa has issued a document defining terrorism. *According to the 59-page document, violence for achieving disciplined religious, ideological or political goals, creating disturbance among masses, damaging property or inflicting human lives is terrorism.* Spreading communalism, attacking journalists, business community and public and political institutions with an agenda is terrorism. However, targeting police, army or government employees on personal capacity is not labeled as terrorism. Justice Khosa has asked that the parliament should define terrorism according to the UN set patterns and end those clauses in the Terrorism Act that do not come under terrorism. Justice Khosa also said that Pakistan has brought in laws since 1974 that have nothing to do with terrorism. *It is surprising that since 1997 no clear policy has been frame to find out what terrorism is and what is not.* The Supreme Court has already identified some aspects of terrorism and also offered proposal to the parliament. Now the Parliament should not delay to deliver on the issue.

American report on terrorism rejected, Editorial, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 07 November²⁵

America is superpower and the world accepts it. *But it is not necessary that whatever it says should be accepted. America has been dictating Pakistan for not doing enough against terrorism in the past. The latest report by Washington has the same grievance.* America never acknowledged the sacrifices that Pakistan has made in war against terrorism. Because of these sacrifices by Pakistan, not only groups like Al Qaeda were eliminated but also the world is safer. Pakistan is implemented the National Action Plan (NAP) with full zeal. It also is meeting all the conditions set by the FATF. Islamabad is playing active role in bringing the Taliban to the negotiation table with the US so that peace can be restored in Afghanistan. Despite that there seems no development in the bilateral relations with the US. However, Pakistan is continuing its fight against terrorism. Few days ago, two Pakistan army men were in firing by terrorists in Dera Ismail Khan. *One IED attempt was filed in Quetta. In the subsequent action, three terrorists were gunned down. During the search operation, 35kgs explosives were recovered. If successful, it would*

²⁴ https://e.jang.com.pk/11-01-2019/lahore/pic.asp?picname=06_002.png

²⁵ <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2019-11-07/page-10/detail-1>

have been major terror attack. Pakistan needs to put up facts with America with full confidence. It needs to have a strong foreign policy for that.

Economy

National economy at the target of Long March! Assadullah Ghalib, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 08 November²⁶

Maulana Fazl-ur Rehman keeps attacking the Prime Minister. He also does not even spare the army from his tirade. *By doing this, he has sidelined the main issue, Kashmir. Also, Maulana's long march has affected the poor the most. Because of the situation created by the Long March, the inflation has gone further high.* The poor are not able to buy even pulses and rice, let alone meat. But the Maulana is adamant on demanding Prime Minister Imran Khan's resignation. He does not talk about the inflation, difficulties of the poor, the Kashmir issue. By starting the Kartarpur Corridor for Sikhs, Imran Khan is gaining popularity even in Indian Punjab. But the Maulana also criticizes Imran Khan for taking the initiative. *The Maulana also attacks the Pakistan army, same army that is respected across the world for its bravery and fight against terrorism. The country's economy is in the doldrums. But the Maulana as nothing to say about it.* Our imports are increasing and exports decreasing. The value of rupee is falling. The national treasury is eroding. The same army goes to countries like China, Saudi Arabia, and America gets bail outs for the country. Even then we do not thank it. *What could have the government led by Imran Khan done in in one year's time when the earlier rulers not only did nothing in 70 years but looted? When cases are filed against them and they arrested we see such marches to for building pressure on the government get the corrupt leaders released. ...* Any step taken by the government is being criticized and hurdles creating in the way of their implementation. Sometimes there are long marches, sometimes shutdowns and in future some may even resign from the parliament. The Maulana has only one demand, resignation from the Prime Minister. He has not uttered a single word about the troubles of the country, the poor and the Kashmiris.

²⁶ <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/08-Nov-2019/1078084>

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Capital Talk with Hamid Mir, *Geo News*, 04 November²⁷

The guests in today's episode are Hafiz hamidullah, JUI-F, Ali Nawaz Awan, PTI and Senator Tasduq Malik of PML-N. *Hamid Mir starts the discussion with a question, who is the real face of opposition, Maulana Fazl ur Rehman or Shehbaz Sharif?* *First*, to this Ali Nawaz of PTI replies that the only person who has gained from the march is Maulana and he has come out as the face of opposition. The main opposition party heads, Bilawal Bhutto, PPP and Shehbaz Sharif has chosen to stand behind the Maulana and, the JUI-F Chief is playing on the front foot. He adds that the popularity of Maulana was earlier 2% which has increased drastically and his political career has also gained by keeping behind the other opposition parties. *Second*, Hafiz Hamidullah of the JUI-F replies, that it is not the first time that Maulana Rehman has taken a lead, infact after the 25 July elections of 2018, he convened a meeting of the oppositions to expose the rigging in the elections. *Third*, he adds that although the Rehbar committee and the government appointed committee have kept the channel of communication but we will underline that until our demands are met we will keep on protesting and even if this march gets over, we will protest in different forms in the coming months and years. We will not let the government rest in peace, he added (until Imran Khan resigns, basically). *Fourth*, talking about the release of Maryam Nawaz from jail, Musadaq Malik of the PML-N explains that her release is completely on merit basis and it proves that she was trapped into the Chaudary Sugar mill case. *Fifth*, when asked if she will address the march in Islamabad? He replied that right now her first priority is Nawaz Sharif as he is critical and with time she will come back to active politics. When asked about Akram Durani's statement (Rehbar Committee head) that there will be shutter down movement and then jail baro movement), Malik replies that under article 15-18 of the constitution every one has a right to protest if his or her legitimacy is compromised. Although PML-N supports the march but we will only support protest under permissible under the legal framework.

²⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Ab0QyeLbY8>

Jirga with Saleem Safi, Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman should not become Imran Khan (*Maulana, Maulana rahe, Imran Khan na bane*), Geo News, 03 November²⁸

In this part Saleem Safi makes a comparison between Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman's March and Imran Khan's protests in 2014 against the Nawaz Sharif government. The main points are, *first*, Imran Khan along with Dr Tahirul Qadri broke the law and marched towards red zone. But the Maulana who not only talks about dean (religion) but also is a staunch follower should not break the law and stay within the protest area and not walk towards red zone. *Second*, Maulana should in no case copy what Imran Khan did that time, for example in 2014 protest, police personals were attacked and injured, bad things were said about parliament, dirty clothes were hurled at Supreme Court. If Maulana does the same, then there will be no difference between him and Imran Khan. *Third*, in 2014, law was taken into hand. Although the PTI leaders resigned from assembly but after failure they came back to the same assembly like thieves. *Fourth*, also he appeals the Maulana not to get used by the PML-N and PPP and let them do deal using the fear of his March and workers.

Capital Talk with Hamid Mir, Who can bring Pakistan out of this Political deadlock? Geo News, 06 November²⁹

The guests on today's episode are Raja Riyaz, PTI, Maulana Jamal Uddin, Jamat-i-Islami and Barrister Mohsin Shah Nawaz, PML-N. Hamid Mir reminds that it has been one week since the march reached Islamabad and despite of the rains and changing weather the JUI-F workers and supporters are not ready to leave the ground until Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman gives those orders. He asks an important question, *who can bring Pakistan out of this political deadlock?* Raja Riyaz of the PTI answers that the government appointed committee is in talks with the Maulana as well as Rehbar committee of the joint opposition and are trying to find a middle ground through constant dialogue. He blames the PML-N and PPP of using the Maulana and his march for their own political motives and now heaving him alone in Islamabad. Jamal Uddin blames *the Imran Khan government of compromising the security of the country by opening Kartarpur corridor for Indians. He is of the view that by exempting visa free entry he has made the corridor vulnerable for entry of spies in form of Sikh pilgrimage.* The PML-N leader defends his party and said that his party and workers have supported all the demands of JUI-F chief and stood by him. Right now they will let the Maulana take the lead and see if some results come out of this. *After this, PML-N is planning to bring no confidence motion (tahreek-e- adam etemad) against the PTI*

²⁸ <https://www.geo.tv/shows/jirga/254454-jirga-saleem-safi-3rd-november-2019-part-01>

²⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZ8BH8oGUJs>

government in parliament as many of its leaders are also not happy with the government.

Sethi Sey Sawal, Najam Sethi Official, 6 November³⁰

Most of the questions on this episode is about the Azadi March by Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman which is currently stationed in Islamabad.

Questions: *What will be the result of Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman's Azadi march or protest? Is he just used as a pressurizing agent by the main opposition parties, PML-N and PPP?*

Answer: The main aim of the march is to break the nexus between Imran Khan and establishment (army). The Maulana knows that it is not easy to remove Imran Khan till the pillar of the state (Army) is supporting him, and therefore through this march he want to shake this pillar of support. *Maulana has given a clear message through this march that they do not want a selected PM and that the fresh elections should be held without any interference from the army.* On the other hand the PTI and establishment is trying hard to convince Nawaz Sharif to take a deal and leave the country. But Nawaz Sharif is not taking it because he knows if he takes it, it will be like political suicide for him and his supporters and common man will feel cheated and betrayed. *This is the reason at one hand the PTI is saying we will not give any (National Reconciliation Ordinance) NRO to Nawaz but at the same time talking to PML-N as they are sacred that PML-N can go and support the Maulana full-fledged if they do not negotiate with PML-N.* Likewise, they are also sacred PPP can also support the Maulana fully if they do not keep the communicating channels open. This is the reason both PML-N is sometimes taking soft line and sometimes hardline vis-a-vis the march. One big breakthrough for PML-N is Maryam's release and therefore she will not go directly into active politics but will be with Nawaz Sharif in hospital. Maulana will only go back, when he gets assurance from quarters that Imran Khan will have to come on his own in the future without the backing of the army. *As far effects of march, it has already shown results, media freedom increased, they can show march on tv, people can talk against the establishment and it looks like the governments stand that government and establishment are on one page is not working.*

³⁰ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEy9_UEN7Bk

Jirga with Saleem Safi, Geo News, 10 November³¹

In today's Jirga Saleem Safi interviews Fazl Ur Rehman, the JUI Chief about his Azadi march which is still stationed in Islamabad and his future strategy. The main points are, the government earlier promised to form a parliamentary committee to inquire about the rigging of 2018 elections, one year has gone and nothing has been done, says the Maulana. *He argues that the time is over and we will not settle for any judicial commission or anything less than Imran Khan's resignation.* When asked about the differences with PML-N and PPP over the Azadi March, he Maulana replies that all the opposition parties agree to the issue, but we need to work on the strategy to tackle it by including all the suggestions from the opposition parties. *Saleem Safi asks about the workers of the JUI-F and says don't you think you have put their life in a difficult situation by station them in the cold in Islamabad for unknown time?* Maulana replies that I am with them throughout the march and there are times when the workers have to go through a test for the party and the betterment of the country. When we have no issues, and have a common understanding regarding the Azadi march, nobody should have issues. Safi asks, till now no law is broken and you have not marched to D chowk. *It does not seem like Imran Khan will resign, so why don't you work on a middle ground and leave Islamabad peacefully?* He replies that we have not come to Islamabad for a picnic that we come and go. It is about the sentiments of the workers and the people of Pakistan and we represent them. And now we have to move towards a different strategy very soon. *When asked about the funding,* he replies sarcastically that it's coming from all the sides, due to grace of Allah but did not reveal the source. He stresses that the talks reached a dead-end with the government because neither have they had the capacity to understand us nor the middle persons are talking our message to the people that matter in the government but we have kept the back channel talks open, he adds. *Saleem Safi asks have you not weaken the Kashmir cause by Azadi march.* He replies that the Kashmir issue cease to exist after 05 August and Imran Khan Government has to blame for that. Before Modi came to power, Imran Khan famously said Kashmir will be resolved if Modi comes to power, and Modi did solve it but it has exposed Imran Khan's fragile Kashmir policy.

³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urG8hcAkKk4>

Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Sath, The dead lock between PML-N and PTI government over Nawaz Sharif, Geo News, 13 November³²

This episode discuss the PTI government's U-turn on Removing Nawaz Sharif's name from the ECL and putting conditions on his travel abroad for his treatment. The main points that came across in today's discussion are, *first*, the federal government has decided to allow one-time permission to Mr Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to travel abroad for medical treatment for a period of 04 weeks from the date of departure subject to furnishing indemnity bond as following of (a). 8 million UK pounds or equivalent rupees, (b).US \$25 million or equivalent rupees and (c).Rs1.5 billion. *Second*, the PML-N rejected the government's conditional offer to allow Nawaz to travel abroad, stating that government's decision to make the removal of *Nawaz's name from ECL conditional to the submission of indemnity bonds was based on "[Prime Minister] Imran Khan's biased attitude and revenge politics"*. *Third*, The PML-N argues that this decision is not legal and purely to satisfy the political vote bank of the PTI. The government they say has no legal authority to ask for surety bond when the Lahore and Islamabad court has cleared Nawaz Sharif's bail after satisfying legal formalities. *Fourth*, while on the other hand, Fawad Chaudhary of the PTI says that PML-N is involved in a tussle for power within the family and Shehbaz and Maryam are fighting to capture the seat of power after Nawaz and that is why they are doing politics on Nawaz Sharif's health. He further adds that we are making sure that Nawaz Sharif comes back to Pakistan after his treatment as his son and other PML-N leaders who are wanted in cases have not returned back once they left the country. *Fifth*, most of the lawyers are of the view that it is an innovation by the PTI government, a sort of new trend taken under political pressure. There should be clear political provisions to take such a step and it should be out rightly rejected on political grounds. *Sixth*, Shah Mehmood Qureshi is of the view that a middle solution should be worked to end the deadlock between PML-N and PTI government, and anyways the government is not asking for money now but a signature on guarantee bond that he will return back to Pakistan.

Jirga with Saleem Safi, Interview of Fazl-ur-Rehman, Part-II, Geo News, 17th November³³

On this latest episode of Jirga, Saleem Safi invites Maulana Fazl Ur Rehman and asks about his **plan B**, and if he directed his workers **to leave Islamabad under some deal?** **Q: What is Plan B of the Azadi March?** **A:** The plan B is an extension of the Azadi march and includes blocking roads and Highways in the main provinces, including Balochistan, KPK, and Punjab etc. Initially we

³² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkxpnRcR0Ac>

³³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ePCqYxfZw0>

came to Islamabad for three days, but looking at the response of the government under pressure we extended our stay to two weeks. **Q: Did the Azadi March dissolved in Islamabad under some deal?** **A:** We are a Tehreek organisation and since the election of 25 July 2018, we are protesting the rigged elections and protesting the removal of the PTI government and conduct of fresh and fair elections. I want to make it clear that although we had a good talk with Chaudhary Elahi who represents the government but we categorically reject any statement about any deal. We will continue our agitation until Imran Khan resigns. **Q: Imran Khan is sitting peacefully in Banigala and there does not seem to be any pressure from the Azadi march?** **A:** There is chaos and confusion in Banigala and Imran Khan is not sitting or sleeping peacefully due to our March. Even the TV commentators are saying the Azadi march had an adverse impact on Imran's government. And we are hoping strongly that next year beginning in January, Imran Khan Government will collapse. We have not taken out the march out of thin air, it comes into practice with loads of research and commitment t and inshallah change will come soon.

Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Sath, Geo News, 21st November³⁴

The main pointers on this episode are, *first*, amid reports of tension between the government and Army, PM Imran Khan met the DG ISPR two times recently and has said there is no issues between the two. *Second*, amid this Imran Khan on Thursday appointed Lt. Gen. Nadeem Raza to be the new Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), the highest military rank. *Third*, on this episode journalist and media person Arshad Bhatti is the guest, and he reveals the main points discussed with PM during his recent meeting. Fourth, justifying the extension of Chief of Army Imran Khan in the meeting has said that General Bajwa is the best chief of army so far and he has cooperated with the government in all decisions from Whitehouse to Kartarpur. *Fifth*, PM said the decision that he will continue as army chief was taken well before in advance, and only the announcement came late. *Sixth*, when asked by Arshad Bhatti why HE (Imran Khan) was so angry and attacked the opposition in his speech during the Hazara motor highway inauguration? He replied that I agree that as PM I should not have said those things, but the way all the opposition leaders attacked me and tagged me agent of Israel, selected PM, I was furious. *Seventh*, the PM talking about the foreign funding case said that the agencies will do their work and I am not afraid and government will go on. *Eight*, it has to be noted here that the

³⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPQGQCQQ364>

Rehbar Committee of the joint opposition has submitted a letter to election commission to speed the cases of foreign funding against Imran Khan's PTI. *Ninth*, the election commission has appointed a scrutiny committee to look into the matter and to act on the Rehbar committees complain. *Tenth*, the JUI-F chief Maulana Rehman and PML-N has requested the election commissioner of Pakistan Sardar Raza to take decision on the foreign funding before his retirement on 07 December 2019. *Eleventh*, at the same time PM Imran Khan told Arshad Bhatti that within two weeks there will be lots of changes in the government as we are shifting the focus on governance and performance. He said that the Azadi March protest has helped them to strength the resolve of the government to do better.

Jirga with Saleem Safi, Interview of Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed over US's anti CPEC Stance, Geo News, 24 November³⁵

US has warned Pakistan over the China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC). Alice Wells, the top US diplomat for South Asia said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor *said that Pakistan could end up with a higher debt burden. She added that it was not an aid to Pakistan but a form of financing, ensuring guaranteed profits for Chinese enterprises. To talk about Pakistan's stand Saleem Safi invites* Mushahid Hussain Syed, Senator, PML-N and Chairman Senate standing Committee. **Q: Saleem Safi asks who is right US or China? A:** CPEC is an old project of five years and its results in Pakistan speaks for itself. The question is why US felt the sudden need to criticise CPEC, it is because they feel China is developing on a fast speed and they cannot catch up. It is trying to build an anti-China narrative by including countries like India, Australia, Japan and even Vietnam. **Q: What is the anti-BRI narrative that US is building? A:** They are forming new laws and bringing an act called BUILD that stands for better utilization of investments leading to developments in competition to China's belt and road initiative. Total cost of BUILD is 6 Arab dollar under a new international development finances cooperation (IDFC). At this point US is scared of China and that is why they are doing all these propaganda's. **Q: Can the US influence Pakistan's CPEC? A:** In the current situation the US needs Pakistan more than it needs US, because of its interest in Afghanistan. It has an impact on Pakistan 30 years back but no more. In fact this time the US is parroting the Indian version of anti-CPEC narratives.

³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1k9n6nv5iE>

Supreme Court suspends Gen. Bajwa's Extension: Importance? Analysis by Moeed Pirzada, YouTube, 27 November³⁶

The main points are first, this is an unusual, extraordinary and interesting development in the history of Pakistan. Second, the answers to the questions put forward by the Supreme Court of Pakistan in front of the Imran Khan led government will have long term implications on the politics, constitutional history and present governance set up. *Third*, initially the way a two line letter signed by Imran Khan was circulated regarding the extension of general Bajwa for three years without the endorsement of the President or defence ministry was unconstitutional and questionable. But nobody asked questions that time. *Fourth*, There is an argument from the government side that notification for the extension has been issued but it cannot be made public before the official date of Bajwa's retirement on 29 November 2019. But the retirement date is fast approaching but this has not have made public. *Question still remains, where is the official notification endorsed by the president of Pakistan?* Fifth, this is a landmark case: unprecedented questions are being raised, threatening to upend the accepted status quo, and holding a mirror to society's psyche. *Consider that four army chiefs have given themselves extensions while two others were so favoured by the government of the time — but no one thought to ask whether this was legal at all.*

STATISTICS

BOMBINGS, SHOOTINGS AND DISAPPEARANCES

(Select incidents culled out from the Pakistan media)

Place	Date	Description	Killed	Injured
Punjab				
Lahore	11/11/2019	5, including 2 cops, killed in firing incident in Pakistan	05	02

³⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1GrJ-xBqsk&feature=youtu.be>

Balochistan				
Quetta ³⁷	16/11//2019	Three Pakistani Soldiers Killed In Restive Balochistan Province	03	05
Quetta ³⁸	26/11/2019	Pakistan Bus Crashes Into Ravine Killing At Least Nine	09	29
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)				
KPK outskirts ³⁹	14/11/2019	Gunmen Kill Senior Police Official In Northwest Pakistan	01	01

³⁷<https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/three-pakistani-soldiers-killed-in-restive-balochistan-province/30275605.html>

³⁸<https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/pakistan-bus-crashes-into-ravine-killing-at-least-nine/30293862.html>

³⁹<https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/gunmen-kill-senior-police-official-in-northwest-pakistan/30272157.html>

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