

HORIZON

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PAKISTAN: TOWARDS A NEW HORIZON

RESEARCH AND POLICY PLANNING UNIT
PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE - NAWAZ

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

As we embark on the first issue of *Horizon* magazine for the new year, we find ourselves reflecting on the significant events that unfolded in the closing chapter of 2023. The year concluded with jubilant celebrations worldwide, marking Mian Nawaz Sharif's acquittal in all fabricated cases and commemorating his birthday. The dawn of the new year brought further optimism as the Supreme Court declared that public representatives cannot be disqualified for life, a decision that not only exonerated individuals but also cast a critical eye on the conspiracies aimed at sidelining Mian Nawaz Sharif from the political arena. With the upcoming election, our expectations are high, anticipating a victory for the party.

In this edition, *Horizon* delves into various critical subjects, ranging from the exploration of SIFC and LIMS to the discourse on the significance of pushing for infrastructure development in the country. We also provide insight into the activities of overseas PML-N chapters and share details about an event commemorating a year of *Horizon's* success.

While we celebrate the positive developments, we also mourn the loss of one of PML-N's most distinguished members. Sartaj Aziz, with his impeccable educational background and extensive professional experience both domestically and internationally, made substantial contributions to the party and the nation. Despite the challenges faced by the PML-N over different tenures, Aziz remained a loyalist, dedicated to the prosperity and development of Pakistan. His services will be remembered with gratitude, and we extend our heartfelt condolences to his family.

As we look ahead, 2024 emerges as a year of hope and renewal for Pakistan, where the electorate will have the opportunity to choose their true representatives. PML-N stands fully prepared to contest the upcoming election, embodying the spirit of progress and change for the nation.

Thank you for your continued support, and we invite you to engage with the diverse perspectives and insights presented in this issue of *Horizon* magazine.

Best regards,

Saira Bano
Editor-in-Chief

EDITORIAL BOARD

Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, Saira Bano, Attaullah Tarar, Badar Shahbaz



PML-N'S INFRASTRUCTURE PUSH: A GAME-CHANGER OR A SHOW-OFF

MUHAMMAD MUGHEES ARIF

As the 2024 elections loom on the horizon, political parties are gearing up with their narratives and slogans, each vying for the attention and support of the electorate. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), led by Mian Nawaz Sharif, seems to have completed its preparations, with a focus on highlighting the transformative impact of its infrastructure development projects.

In his historic speech on 21 October 2023, at Minar-e-Pakistan, Mian Nawaz Sharif elucidated the PML-N narrative by directing the public to the tangible results of their governance – the Orange Line train in Lahore, the Green Line in Karachi, and the network of metro buses in various cities, the Peshawar–Islamabad motorways, and many other key projects across the nation.

While political opponents often criticise the emphasis on infrastructure, portraying it as mere showmanship, it is essential to conduct a reality-based analysis to discern whether infrastructure development is truly a

game-changer or an economic burden.

THE BACKBONE OF A NATION

Infrastructure serves as the backbone of a nation, boosting economic growth, connectivity, and societal development. The impact of well-planned infrastructure extends beyond physical structures, influencing industries, quality of life, and a country's overall competitiveness.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

PML-N's emphasis on infrastructure development is exemplified by the launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) during Nawaz Sharif's tenure as Prime Minister. This flagship project significantly boosted Pakistan's economy, leading to a peak GDP of 6.2 per cent. The western route, especially benefitting Balochistan, transformed perceptions of the region. The Gwadar Port development under CPEC aimed to make it a key trade hub, connecting



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**FOR DEVELOPING NATIONS,
INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS
ARE CRUCIAL FOR SUSTAINED
GROWTH AND MARKETABILITY
ON THE GLOBAL STAGE**

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Pakistan not only internally but also globally.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Accessible and efficient infrastructure, including roads and public transport, directly impacts the quality of life of people in the connected areas. PML-N’s focus on building motorways reduced travel time, fuel consumption, and enhanced connectivity. Public transportation projects like the Orange Line Metro in Lahore and Bus Rapid Transit systems in various cities have not only facilitated daily commuting but also contributed to environmental sustainability.

INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

PML-N’s governance saw advancements in technology infrastructure, from optical fibre in the 1990s to the current status of 3G and 4G networks. Initiatives like the Information Technology University and Arfa Karim IT Park showcased a commitment to promoting innovation and technological growth.

JOB CREATION

Infrastructure projects, by their nature, generate employment opportunities, providing a stimulus to the economy. PML-N’s success in maintaining a

low unemployment rate has been a crucial factor in economic stability.

GLOBAL SUCCESS STORIES

Examining developed nations like Singapore, Germany, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates reinforces the idea that strategic investments in infrastructure play a pivotal role in economic growth and global success.

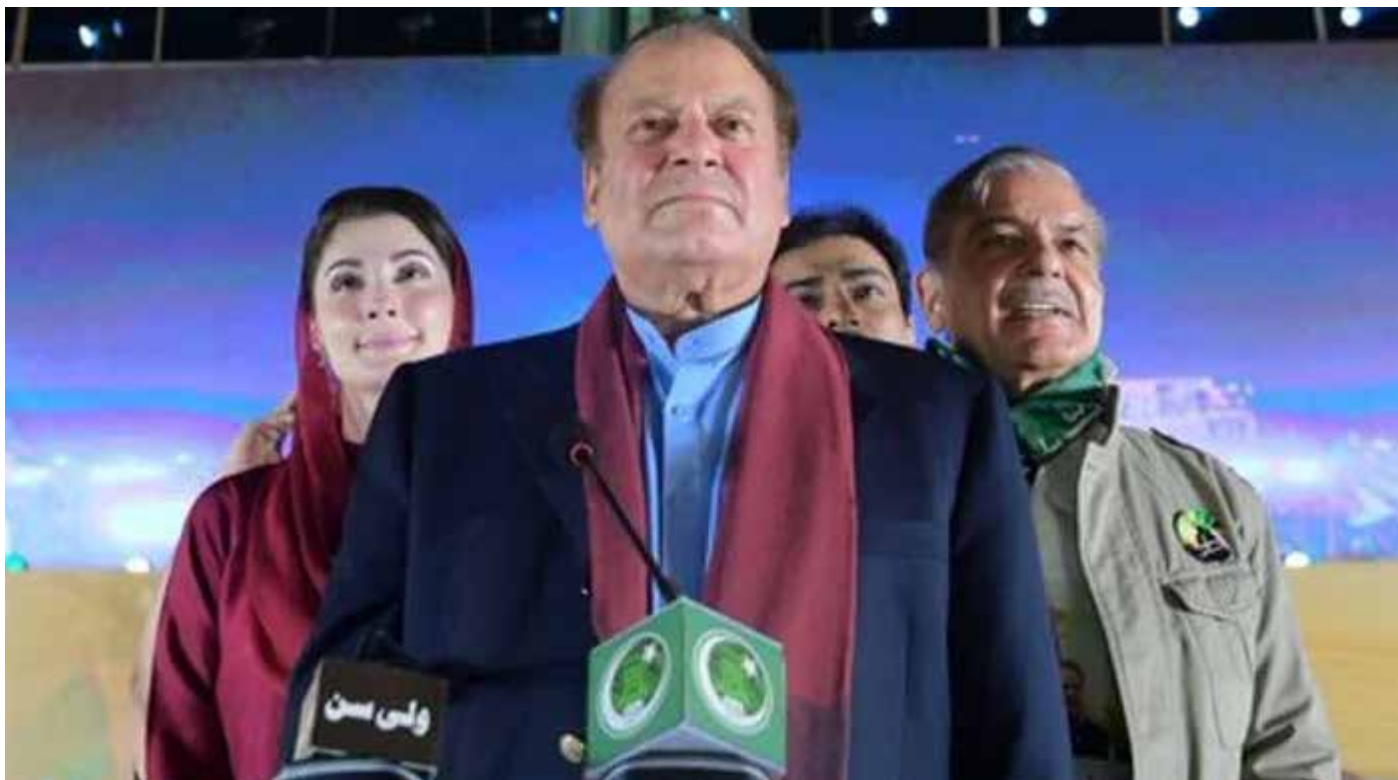
THE IMPERATIVE OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

For developing nations, infrastructure investments are crucial for sustained growth and marketability on the global stage. Collaboration between the public and private sectors, along with international partnerships, can amplify the impact of these investments and ensure long-term sustainability.

IN CONCLUSION

Infrastructure development is not merely about concrete and steel; it is about laying the foundation for progress, encouraging economic vibrancy, and enhancing the overall well-being of a nation’s citizens. While PML-N has historically emphasised infrastructure development as a cornerstone of governance, the long-term effectiveness and impact of these initiatives remain subjects of debate. As the 2024 elections approach, the public will decide the fate of the narrative presented by political parties and whether infrastructure development is truly a game-changer or a mere show-off■

The writer is a political activist and works in youth development.



PAKISTAN: TOWARDS A NEW HORIZON

RANA MASHHOOD AHMAD KHAN

As Pakistan welcomes the dawn of a new year, the air is filled with anticipation and optimism. The upcoming general election on 8 February marks a turning point for the nation, as leaders of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) find themselves acquitted after enduring more than five years of persecution. The Supreme Court's landmark verdict, asserting that a lawmaker cannot be disqualified for life under Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution, has removed any doubt that Mian Nawaz Sharif would again contest elections.

The significance of this decision goes beyond the vindication of political leaders; it corrects a grave mistake made in the Samiullah Baloch case, where the judiciary overstepped its powers. The seven-member Supreme Court bench has established the principle that disqualification of a public office holder cannot be a lifelong sentence. The Supreme Court disqualified Mian Nawaz Sharif for not taking a salary from his son – a conspiracy to tarnish his reputation and keep him out of politics. As we close the chapter on this dark episode, we collectively turn our gaze

towards the future, anticipating a new era of fairness and accountability in the political landscape.

However, as the electoral landscape unfolds, certain forces attempt to cast shadows over this momentous occasion. In January, a resolution was purportedly passed in the Senate, calling for a delay in polling. Several leaders of PML-N have affirmed their commitment to the original election date, dismissing attempts to derail the democratic process.

It appears that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, who has been clamouring for early elections, is now looking to wriggle out the contest. The people have categorically rejected the kind of politics Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has been practising, the worst manifestation of which were the events of 9 May 2023. Sensing an impending defeat, PTI is resorting to delaying tactics, which will not succeed.

Media commentators have pointed out the absence of PML-N leadership from the campaign trail, suggesting that it casts doubts on the impartiality of



“ WE ARE FULLY PREPARED TO CONTEST THE ELECTION AND HOPEFUL THAT THE PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN WILL ONCE AGAIN REPOSE THEIR TRUST IN US. ”



elections. The fact is that the PML-N's top leadership has been working on the electoral manifesto and finalising names of party candidates for various constituencies. Several strong candidates applied for a PML-N ticket for each provincial and national assembly seat. The party's parliamentary board spent several weeks interviewing the applicants. Choosing among equally competent individuals proved to be a challenging task for the leadership. The party has prioritised individuals with impeccable credentials and those who demonstrated unwavering loyalty during challenging times.

PML-N has also been working on preparing the party manifesto. Various committees and sub-committees prepared PML-N manifesto recommendations after extensive consultations with field experts, civil society organisations, bureaucracy, and others. In addition, the party received nearly 4,000 suggestions from the public for the manifesto through its online portal. Each of these suggestions was assessed and forwarded to relevant committees.

PML-N's manifesto outlines the party's vision for a peaceful and prosperous Pakistan. Building on the party's past achievements, the document reflects a

solid plan to revive the economy, enhance security, and realign foreign policy with domestic contingencies. Comprehensive policy recommendations spanning infrastructure development, education, health, agriculture, and youth empowerment, underline the party's commitment to progress.

It is painful to remember that the remarkable progress made by PML-N from 2013-2018 was either frozen or rolled back by the PTI government, brought into power through an elaborate conspiracy. But with immense hope, we look towards the 2024 election. It symbolises an opportunity for the people to elect representatives who will restore and build upon the progress achieved during PML-N's previous tenures. We are fully prepared to contest the election and hopeful that the people of Pakistan will once again repose their trust in us.

As Pakistan moves towards this new horizon, the promise of a brighter future lies in the hands of the voters, ready to entrust leadership to those who embody the nation's aspirations for peace, prosperity, and development ■

The writer is PML-N's vice president in Punjab.



BRIDGING THE INVESTMENT GAP WITH SIFC AND LIMS

SAIRA IFTIKHAR

Just a few months ago, Pakistan's economy was on the rocks due to the soaring dollar rate and critically low dollar reserves. There was a widespread belief that the country was on the brink of default. However, the government implemented some measures, signed a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and launched the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to attract foreign direct investment.

SIFC, a civil-military initiative, has yielded promising results within a short span because of its investment-friendly environment facilitated by a one-window operation. In November 2023, Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed several Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) for multi-billion dollar investments in diverse initiatives outlined by SIFC.

With critically low forex reserves, the government realised the need for expediting processes for bringing foreign investments. Previously, silo-working ministries, fragmentation between the federation and provinces, and turnarounds in policies badly hurt businesses and were major hurdles in the economic

growth of the country. Hence, the SIFC was launched in June 2023.

The government devised a strategy to attract investments from Gulf countries, particularly, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and UAE. The then Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif endorsed the establishment of the SIFC, while the Land Information and Management System (LIMS) emerged as a joint project between the government and the army, designed to modernise the agricultural sector and foster its evolution.

A notification issued on 17 June 2023 from then Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's Office said SIFC would seek investments in the energy, IT, minerals, defence, and agriculture sectors from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. The body, which has the army chief and other military leaders in key roles, aims to take a "unified approach" to steer the country out of economic crisis.

The main objective of the initiative is to deal with the concerns of Gulf investors on policy continuity and



provide a one-window solution to them, as experts believe that these two factors often create hurdles in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows. The SIFC prioritises several sectors in order to attract \$100 billion in FDI within three years. The goal is to achieve a nominal GDP of \$1 trillion by 2035.

Through the council, Pakistan is not only looking for direct Gulf investment but also hopes to sell public-sector assets and state-owned businesses to Arab investors, and is in the process of transferring assets worth over Rs2.3tr to the recently formed Pakistan Sovereign Wealth Fund for privatising or leasing those enterprises. A Karachi port terminal has already been leased to the Emiratis.

Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) Chairman Muhammad Zohaib Khan described the creation of the SIFC as a significant development for foreign direct investment in Pakistan as it has the potential to bring about transformative changes in the economy.

HOW DOES SIFC WORK?

The SIFC serves as a 'single window' for multi-domain cooperation in various fields with GCC countries and other countries in general to facilitate investment. The SIFC consist of three tiers, including a six-member Apex Committee chaired by the prime minister. The Executive Committee has eight members, including representatives from the Pakistan Army.

The council has the authority to call regulatory bodies, government divisions, or representatives when delays in obtaining necessary licenses, certificates, or permits create problems in investment operations and damage an investor's confidence.

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SIFC, A CIVIL-MILITARY INITIATIVE, HAS YIELDED PROMISING RESULTS WITHIN A SHORT SPAN BECAUSE OF ITS INVESTMENT-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT FACILITATED BY A ONE-WINDOW OPERATION.

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Based on the SIFC's recommendations, the federal government can issue notifications in the official gazette to relax or exempt regulatory requirements for projects, transactions, arrangements, and agreements.

MEGA INVESTMENTS

From November 5th to 7th, SIFC successfully hosted an investment roadshow in Dubai in collaboration with USAID. The primary objective was to spotlight the latent potential of Pakistan and cultivate global investments in key sectors of the economy. Approximately 30 Pakistani firms actively participated, presenting their proposals and growth strategies in dedicated B2B pitch sessions across diverse areas such as agriculture, IT, and energy.

On 27 November, Pakistan and the UAE signed several Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in Abu Dhabi for multi-billion dollar investments in various initiatives. After the signing ceremony, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan also held a bilateral meeting.

According to a handout released by the media wing of the Prime Minister's Office and the Information Ministry, the investment cooperation will be across several sectors, including energy, port operations, wastewater treatment, food security, logistics, mining, aviation, and banking and financial services.

LAND INFORMATION AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LIMS)

In September 2023, the civil and military leaders joined hands to tackle food insecurity, malnutrition, and soaring import costs of the agriculture sector. The



solution of the then Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir came in the form of the Land Information and Management System – Centre of Excellence (LIMS-COE).

As per a statement issued by the PM Office, “Establishment of LIMS is the first exceptional initiative, aimed at enhancing food security and improving agri exports thus reducing import burden on the national exchequer. The initiative would help transform millions of acres of uncultivated or low-yield land within the country.”

“This state-of-the-art system will help optimise the agricultural production through innovative technologies and sustainable precision agricultural practices based on the agroecological potential of land,” the statement said, adding that the system would ensure the well-being of rural communities and the preservation of the environment.

According to the World Food Programme, 36.9 per cent of Pakistanis were food insecure and 18.3 per cent of these were facing severe food crises.

It is believed that the LIMS-COE initiative is bigger than the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and will address the nation’s continued struggle with growth. Experts believe that LIMS will establish direct market connectivity for farmers and enable them to connect with buyers and access lucrative opportunities. By utilising modern technologies and techniques on currently unproductive or underutilised

agricultural lands, the system will facilitate increased agricultural production, contributing to the overall growth of the sector.

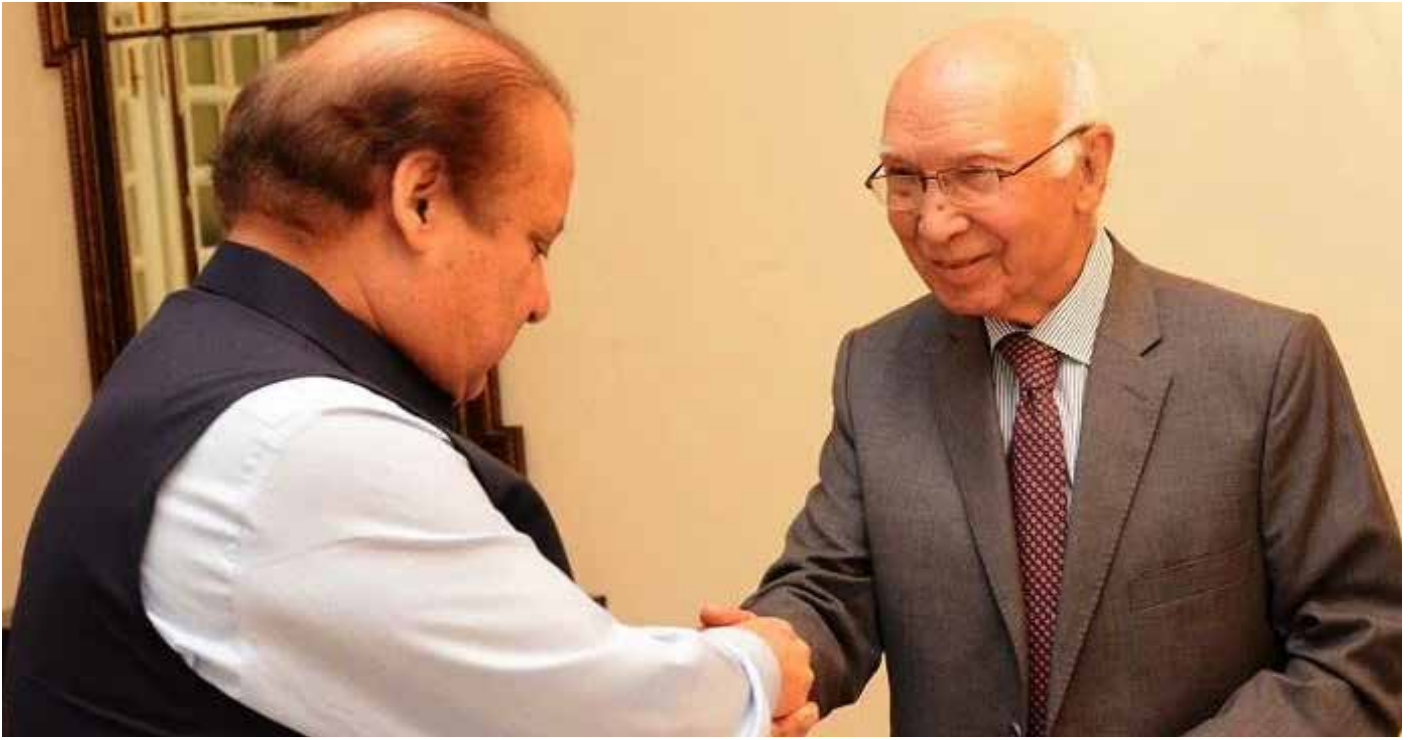
SIFC AND AGRI SECTOR

Pakistan is in dire need of foreign direct investment to improve its foreign exchange reserves and to bridge the investment gap the country is currently experiencing. The agriculture sector has gained prominence among the sectors with significant potential for foreign direct investment. Such investments are crucial to boost its agricultural and industrial production, which can lead to job creation, increased exports, and the generation of additional tax revenues.

Under the banner of LIMS, numerous modern farming projects have been launched, encompassing a total area of 4.4 million acres. These projects are distributed across different provinces, with 1.3 million acres in Punjab, 1.3 million in Sindh, 1.1 million in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 0.7 million in Balochistan. The project entails the construction of new canals and the adoption of modern irrigation techniques such as drip, sprinkler, and circular irrigation.

While SIFC and LIMS are important initiatives to explore Pakistan’s untapped potential in various sectors, relying on Gulf states alone for investment may be limiting. There is a need to expand the operations of SIFC to other countries and regions, which can diversify our FDI portfolio ■

The writer is a dairy value chain expert.



SARTAJ AZIZ: A DISTINGUISHED LIFE OF PUBLIC SERVICE

MALIK M TAYYAB

The PML-N family is deeply saddened by the departure of a staunch member and towering figure of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Sartaj Aziz was a prominent figure in the country's political and administrative landscape. His life, spanning over nine decades, was marked by his unwavering commitment to public service, his academic pursuits, and his tireless efforts towards promoting peace and economic development.

As soon as the news of his passing broke, condolences poured in from within and outside Pakistan. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin expressed deep condolences over the passing of former foreign minister Sartaj Aziz, hailing his outstanding contribution to China-Pakistan relations. "Mr Aziz was a seasoned politician, strategist, and economic expert of Pakistan, and an old and good friend of the Chinese people," Wang said.

Sartaj Aziz was born on 7 February 1929 in a Kakakhel family in the North Western Frontier Province of British India. As a student, he participated in the Pakistan Movement. He earned a degree in commerce

at Punjab University and joined civil service in 1952. He later went on to study at Harvard University, where he obtained a master's degree in Public Administration (Economic Development) in 1963.

After serving in various positions, he rose to the level of a joint secretary in the Planning Commission and was one of the main contributors to the Third and Fourth Five-Year Plans of Pakistan. He retired from government service and started a distinguished international career in 1971 when he joined the Food and Agriculture Organisation as director of the Commodities and Trade Division in Rome.

According to Pakistan's Foreign Office website, "In 1974, he served as Deputy Secretary General of the World Food Conference, held in Rome in November 1974 and was one of the architects of the global food security system which emerged from the Conference and of the proposal to establish the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). In 1977, after serving as Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Council for two years he was Assistant President, Policy and Planning at IFAD from December 1977 to



April 1984.”

Sartaj Aziz returned to Pakistan in 1984 and served as a junior minister for Agriculture and Food Security until 1988. He was elected to the Senate of Pakistan in 1988 and re-elected in 1993 from the PML-N. He served as finance minister from August 1990 to June 1993 and again from February 1997 to August 1998. In 1998, he was made minister of foreign affairs, a position he retained until the 1999 military coup.

During his terms in office, Aziz made an effort with neighbouring India to promote peace and harmony between the two countries. He is noted as the only cabinet member who opposed the decision to conduct nuclear tests in response to India, citing economic reasons. As the Finance Minister, Aziz emerged as a staunch advocate of economic liberalisation. His commitment to economic progress aligned with his pro-peace stance, reflecting a holistic approach to national development.

In 2004, Aziz transitioned to academia, becoming the vice-chancellor of Beaconhouse National University, which transformed into a leading liberal arts university under his leadership.

Mian Nawaz Sharif held such trust in Sartaj Aziz’s financial and diplomatic acumen that when he assumed the office of prime minister in 2013, he extended an invitation for Aziz to join his cabinet in the dual capacity of advisor on foreign affairs and national security, which he accepted.

Sartaj Aziz authored two books and several articles.

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**HIS COMMITMENT TO ECONOMIC
 PROGRESS ALIGNED WITH HIS
 PRO-PEACE STANCE, REFLECTING
 A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO
 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**
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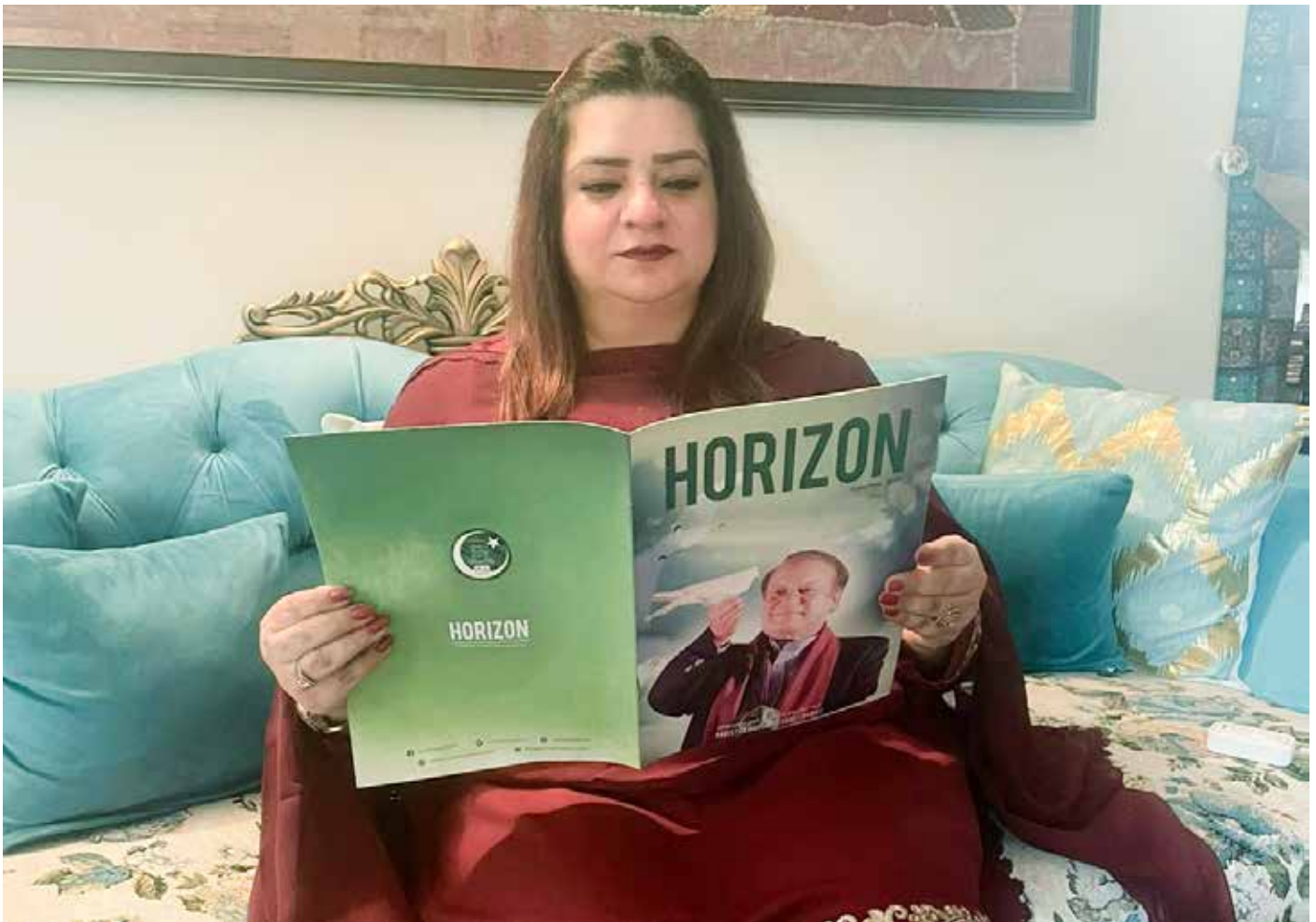
His significant contribution to development literature came in the form of his book on China titled *Rural Development: Learning from China*, published by Macmillan in London in 1978. His memoir, *Between Dreams and Realities* was published by Oxford University Press in 2009. Additionally, a compilation of his essays titled *Hunger, Poverty and Development — Life and Work of Sartaj Aziz* was published by Ferozsons in 2000.

According to the web archive of the Senate of Pakistan, “Mr Sartaj Aziz is holder of the Sanad, Mujahid-e-Pakistan by virtue of his participation in the Pakistan Movement. He was awarded Tamgha-e-Pakistan and Sitara-e-Khidmat in 1959 and 1967 respectively for his contribution to planning and development in the country.”

Pervaiz Rashid posted on the social media platform X, and a rough translation of his post is, “Among the indelible impressions that Sartaj Aziz left of his intelligence, ability, and service, is our electoral symbol ‘tiger’. In its first electoral contest as a party, the favourite symbol of PML-N candidates was allotted to the rival League faction, so Sartaj Sahib secured the invincible symbol of the tiger.”

Mr Sartaj Aziz died peacefully on 2 January in Islamabad at the age of 94, leaving behind a legacy of public service, diplomatic achievements, and academic contributions. The tributes pouring in reflect the deep admiration for a man whose efforts for the nation will be eternally remembered. May Allah bless his soul and grant patience to his family as the nation mourns the loss of a distinguished leader and advocate for peace ■

The writer holds an MA in Political Science from the Government College University and an LLB from the University of the Punjab.



FROM LEGACY TO LEADERSHIP: RAHEELA'S JOURNEY IN PML-N

RESEARCH, POLICY AND PLANNING

Raheela Khadim Hussain is a well-known name in PML-N cadres. As an advocate for minority rights and a seasoned politician, Raheela shares insights into her experiences, aspirations, and the transformative role she envisions for PML-N in the upcoming general election. Currently, she serves as the organiser of the party's Minority Wing.

HORIZON: What was your inspiration to enter politics?

RKH: My primary inspiration was my mother, Begum Sardar Khadim Hussain, a dedicated political worker. Despite being the third among siblings, my father chose me to succeed my mother due to my involvement in student politics and speechwriting for her during college. I'm grateful that my husband

supported my career. Although my mother offered me a gateway into politics, I worked tirelessly to forge my own path in the field.

HORIZON: What difficulties did you face in your political journey?

RKH: Contesting the 2005 local body elections amid Musharraf's regime was a significant challenge. As the only woman in Lahore vying for the Union Council Nazim seat under PML-N, I encountered intense pressure to stand down which also affected my family. After all the manipulations, I was defeated by just 200 votes. Despite this setback, I continued my work, entering the Punjab Assembly as a parliamentarian in 2008 on a reserved seat for women until 2023. As a legislator, I focused on development programmes



and legislative initiatives for women's empowerment, especially from 2013-2018 under the leadership of Mian Shehbaz Sharif, who did groundbreaking work to empower women.

HORIZON: Tell us about your work in the Minority Wing.

RKH: Having recently been appointed as the organiser of the Minority Wing, I took on the challenge of uniting a previously divided organisation. In just five months, our team has grown from 70-75 members to 32,000 in Punjab. We're dedicated to addressing the concerns of minority communities and have incorporated their recommendations into PML-N's election manifesto.

HORIZON: What are the main concerns of Pakistan's minorities, and what recommendations have they given for PML-N's election manifesto?

RKH: The major concerns of minority communities include security, economic empowerment of women, and the absence of youth development centres. We collaborated with various stakeholders to formulate practical solutions and integrated them into our party manifesto to foster the development of all religious communities in Pakistan.

HORIZON: You have served as chairperson of the

Gender Mainstreaming Committee of the Punjab Assembly from 2013 to 2018. How was your experience?

RKH: Mian Shehbaz Sharif decided to establish an independent Gender Mainstreaming Committee in the Punjab Assembly in line with global trends and appointed me its first chairperson. As a new committee, initially, we had to work very hard. All gender-related legislation and reports were sent to us for our input. Working closely with civil society, I played an active role in pro-women legislation in Punjab. Through our work we let the world know that we are serious about protecting women's rights.

HORIZON: There is a widespread perception that reserved seats are used to reward people rather than upholding merit. Is this impression correct?

RKH: Yes, I pretty much agree with that. In all the political parties of Pakistan, the quota of reserved seats is used to favour people to some extent. However, women in reserved seats actively contribute, though their work may go unnoticed due to the lack of a direct constituency. I wrote a letter to Parliament and the Election Commission to remedy this. I propose a solution where women contesting elections on reserved seats should have a separate ballot paper along with the MNAs and MPAs, enabling them to

INTERVIEW

represent a constituency directly.

HORIZON: How was your experience as an opposition member in the Punjab Assembly from 2018 to 2022?

RKH: We saw the quality of governance in Punjab decline. When we visited the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women, we saw the building was not maintained, the staff hadn't received their salaries, and a chair had not been appointed in three years. The PTI government let the women's crisis centre in Multan decline as well. Similarly, the PTI government failed to control dengue. Various scholarship schemes for students were closed and work on sports complexes started during the PML-N tenure was shut down. During this time, Hamza Shahbaz showed leadership by keeping in contact with members and addressing their issues.

HORIZON: Were members harassed during this time?

RKH: It was a challenging time. PML-N members' houses were raided, and false cases were registered against us with the police. We were psychologically attacked by repeatedly being told that Mian Nawaz Sharif's political career was over. During the election of the speaker, deputy speaker, and chief minister, our members were offered incentives or threatened. Despite the adversity, our members remained loyal and we refrained from inciting violence.

HORIZON: You are an eyewitness to the incident of 9 May. Tell us something about that day.

RKH: I reside in Lahore Cantt. At the time of the attack on Jinnah House on 9 May, I was driving home along the same road. I witnessed PTI workers carrying their party's flags attacking Jinnah House. These rioters were chanting anti-Pakistan slogans that I find too reprehensible to repeat. As a political activist, I am bewildered by PTI's approach to politics. The constant indoctrination of the youth and citizens by PTI leaders incited them to attack the very country they aspire to govern.

HORIZON: Regarding the character assassination of politicians, what is your opinion and proposed solution?

RKH: Character assassination of politicians has been prevalent since the martial law era of the 1980s, with politicians being the most maligned group on social media today. I believe that everyone has a role to play in statecraft including the establishment, politicians, judiciary, and media. No one pillar of the state can run the country on its own. The solution lies in greater transparency and independence of the Election Commission and Parliament.

HORIZON: How do you balance family life and politics?

RKH: I have four children, one married, and the other three pursuing university studies. My mother, a political worker, imparted political training to me since childhood. I followed the same pattern in training my children. One thing is certain, I participate in my political activities only because of my family's support. My husband in particular has always remained supportive.

HORIZON: What are your hobbies?

RKH: I enjoy reading Mustansar Hussain Tarar's travelogues and listening to old singers like Lata, Jagjeet Singh, Rafi, Kishore Kumar, and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's Qawwali.

HORIZON: How do you envision PML-N's position in the upcoming general election?

RKH: Many strong candidates have applied for the PML-N tickets and the PML-N Parliamentary Board has completed comprehensive interviews of all the candidates division-wise. Without a doubt, the best candidates will be fielded. Insha'Allah, PML-N will secure a clear advantage in the 2024 general election and steer Pakistan back on the path of development.

HORIZON: Thank you very much for your time.

RKH: The pleasure is mine ■



HORIZON MAGAZINE'S ANNUAL CELEBRATION

PML-N Vice President Punjab Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan hosted an event to mark the successful year of *Horizon* magazine. Saira Bano, the coordinator of PML-N's Research Wing, managed the proceedings. The event included speeches from Senator Irfan Siddiqui, PML-N Information Secretary Marriyum Aurangzeb, Senator Nehal Hashmi, and Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan.



The speakers acknowledged Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan's initiatives in establishing the Research Wing, providing a platform for research-based policy inputs. The wing consists of a Research and Policy Planning Unit and the *Horizon* magazine team. The magazine has been registered as PML-N's official publication with the Election Commission of Pakistan.



Senator Irfan Siddiqui commended the *Horizon* and research teams for their role in developing the PML-N manifesto. Information Secretary Marriyum Aurangzeb commended the growth of *Horizon* magazine from a newsletter into a professional publication.



Musa Raza gave a presentation on *Horizon*'s website analytics and social media outreach during 2023. At the event, attendees subscribed to the magazine using a QR code. This marked a strategic move to enhance subscriptions and engagement with the magazine.



In conclusion, the celebration not only highlighted *Horizon* magazine's accomplishments but also emphasised PML-N's commitment to transparent communication and informed discourse within its ranks and broader audience ■

ONLINE BONDS, OFFLINE DREAMS: PML-N OVERSEAS

DR RANA KHALID MEHMOOD

In a display of unity and enthusiasm, the overseas chapters of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) came together to celebrate the birthdays of the founding father of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and the party's founder, Mian Nawaz Sharif. The events were marked by a series of celebrations, speeches, and online gatherings that reflected the commitment and dedication of PML-N members across the globe.

HONG KONG CHAPTER EVENT



The Hong Kong chapter organised a remarkable event in honour of Mian Nawaz Sharif's birthday. PML-N Hong Kong President Imran Khan, along with other key office-bearers, expressed confidence in the party's victory in the upcoming elections on February 8, 2024. President Imran Khan highlighted the commitment to address the challenges faced by the Pakistani community abroad and emphasised the role of Mian Nawaz Sharif in steering the country towards economic development.

JAPAN: CELEBRATING TWO GREAT PERSONALITIES



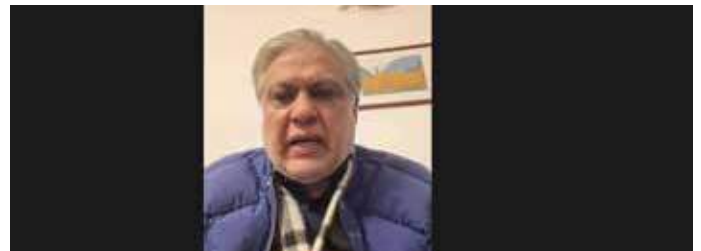
In Japan, PML-N officials and workers gathered for a grand celebration commemorating both Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. Rana Abrar Hussain, the Supreme Leader of PML-N Japan, praised the contributions of both leaders, emphasising Nawaz Sharif's role in making Pakistan a nuclear power and his resilience in the face of adversity.

GLOBAL ONLINE MEETING

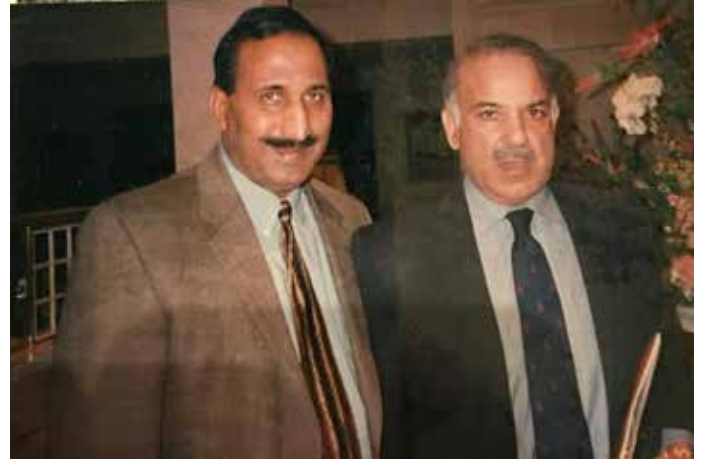


The PML-N International Affairs and Overseas Pakistani Chapters orchestrated an online Zoom meeting that brought together leaders and members from 34 chapters worldwide. Senator Ishaq Dar, President of PML-N International Affairs, commended the two great leaders and recognised the pivotal role of overseas Pakistanis. Barrister Amjad Malik, Senior Vice President and Chief Coordinator, underscored the significance of December 25 as a day to honour the two-nation theory and preached love, peace, tolerance, and unity.

MESSAGES OF SUPPORT FROM AROUND THE GLOBE



Leaders and representatives from PML-N chapters across the globe conveyed their messages of support



and best wishes in the online event. From Australia to Portugal, and Saudi Arabia to South Korea, PML-N members expressed their desire to see Mian Nawaz Sharif as the prime minister once again. The unity and commitment displayed in these messages highlight the global support for PML-N's vision and leadership.

As the overseas chapters of PML-N come together to celebrate the birthdays of two great leaders, the global community of PML-N stands united, echoing the sentiments of love, peace, and progress for Pakistan. The commitment of overseas workers, exemplified by individuals like Masood Sahi, adds strength and resilience to the party's mission. The celebration is not just a tribute to the past but a pledge to shape a better future for Pakistan under the visionary leadership of Mian Nawaz Sharif.

OVERSEAS WORKER'S PROFILE: MASOOD SAHI FROM CHICAGO



A true stalwart of PML-N, Masood Sahi from Chicago has served as a dedicated member of PML-N USA. Retired as a senior officer in the US Intelligence Bureau, Masood Sahi has utilised his professional network to contribute significantly to PML-N. His early involvement with the party is evident in the photographs where he is seen with prominent politicians, including former US Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. The Research and Policy Planning Unit of PML-N recognises and pays tribute to Masood Sahi for his exceptional services to both Pakistan and the party ■

PICTURE GALLERY



PML-N'S PARLIAMENTARY BOARD DELIBERATING ON THE SELECTION OF ELECTORAL CANDIDATES. LAHORE. 13 DECEMBER 2023



PML-N LEADER MIAN NAWAZ SHARIF AT THE PARTY'S PARLIAMENTARY BOARD MEETING IN LAHORE. 13 DECEMBER 2023



HAMZA SHEHBAZ SHARIF AT THE PARLIAMENTARY BOARD MEETING. LAHORE. 15 DECEMBER 2023



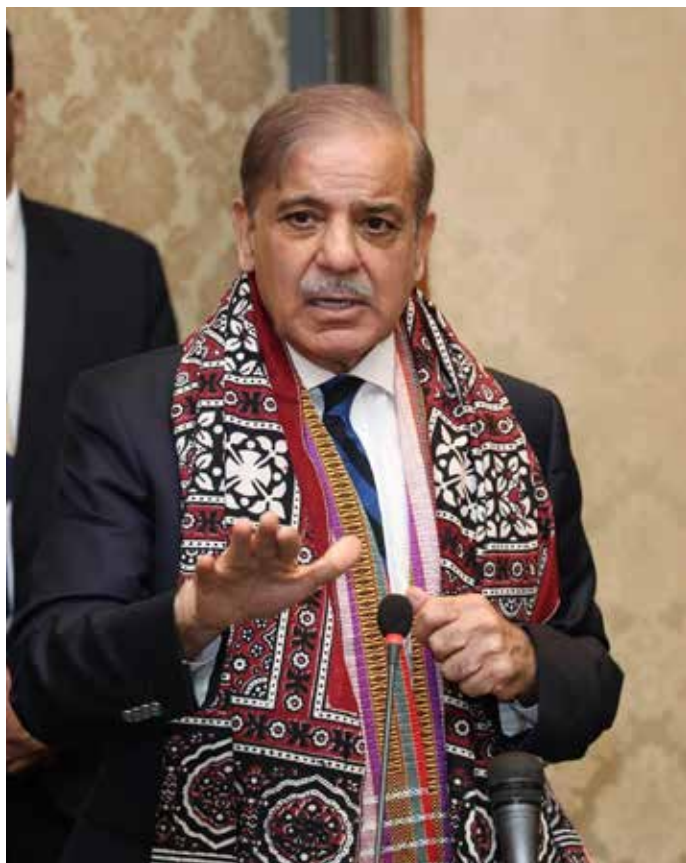
MARIAM NAWAZ SHARIF AT THE PARLIAMENTARY BOARD MEETING. LAHORE. 18 DECEMBER 2023



MUHAMMAD NAWAZ SHARIF, SHEHBAZ SHARIF AND DR AHSAN IQBAL AT THE PARLIAMENTARY BOARD MEETING. LAHORE. 18 DECEMBER 2023



MARIAM NAWAZ SHARIF AT THE PARLIAMENTARY BOARD MEETING. LAHORE. 19 DECEMBER 2023



PML-N PRESIDENT MIAN SHEHBAZ SHARIF ADDRESSING PARTY LEADERS IN KARACHI. 29 DECEMBER 2023



PRESIDENT PML-N SHEHBAZ SHARIF AT A PUBLIC RALLY AT FAROOQABAD. 30 DECEMBER 2023



PML-N PRESIDENT MIAN SHAHBAZ SHARIF WITH MAKHDOOM SYED FAISAL SALEH HAYAT ON REACHING SHAH JEONA, JHANG. 27 DECEMBER 2023



HORIZON

Research and Policy Planning Unit
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz