

# HORIZON

August 2024

ARSHAD NADEEM BRINGS HOME

**OLYMPIC GOLD**



RESEARCH AND POLICY PLANNING UNIT  
PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE - NAWAZ

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This year, Pakistan's Independence Day was marked by a historic achievement that filled the hearts of every citizen with pride and joy. On the eve of August 14, Arshad Nadeem, Pakistan's remarkable javelin thrower clinched an Olympic gold medal, setting a new Olympic record. His victory is not just a personal triumph but a symbol of the resilience and tenacity that define our nation. In a time when the country faces significant challenges, such as the soaring cost of electricity, Nadeem's achievement has provided a much-needed reprieve—a reminder of what can be accomplished with unwavering determination.

Pakistan celebrates its independence with renewed fervour and a collective resolve to overcome the hurdles that lie ahead. The journey of Arshad Nadeem mirrors the nation's struggle and its capacity to rise above adversity. His single-minded focus, despite the odds, is an inspiration for all Pakistanis, reflecting the spirit with which we must approach our own challenges.

August has also brought encouraging news on the economic front. PML-N President Mian Nawaz Sharif acknowledged the difficulty people are facing in paying inflated bills in summer months while announcing a Rs45 billion subsidy on electricity bills for August and September for consumers in Punjab. This relief, achieved through prudent budgeting and cutting corners in other areas, is a welcome respite for millions of Pakistanis grappling with financial strain.

Another significant development in August was the announcement by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) regarding the initiation of a Field General Court Martial for Lt Gen Faiz Hameed (Retd), who has been taken into military custody. This action follows a thorough court of inquiry by the Pakistan Army into complaints against the retired general in the Top City case. The military's decision to hold Lt Gen Faiz Hameed (Retd) and three other former military personnel accountable for actions prejudicial to military discipline is a landmark moment in Pakistan's history. For the first time, we witness an influential retired senior military official facing consequences for alleged misconduct. This bodes well for the country's future, as it sends a message of commitment to justice, transparency and across-the-board accountability.

Sincerely,  
Saira Bano  
Editor-in-Chief

---

### EDITORIAL BOARD

---

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



# JUDICIAL FAVOURITISM EXPOSED

KANWAL RASHID

On 12 July 2024, the Supreme Court of Pakistan delivered its verdict on the distribution of reserved seats for women and minorities after three full court meetings, with a majority decision of 8-5, giving relief to the ‘favourite child,’ who was not even party to the proceedings.

The verdict overturned the Election Commission of Pakistan’s (ECP’s) decision of 1 March 2024, and a ruling by the Peshawar High Court, declaring the distribution of these seats among political parties participating in the 2024 General Election unconstitutional.

The court ruled that the 39 members who had submitted their nomination papers with PTI party tickets would be recognised as PTI lawmakers, as the PTI intra-party elections case did not bar PTI as a political party. Conversely, the 41 members who

submitted their nominations as independents were free to join any political party within 15 days by fulfilling all legal requirements.

The court extended the period for joining a political party beyond the constitutional provision of three days, citing “peculiar facts and circumstances” of the 2024 general election without specifying those facts. This decision appears influenced by the court’s favouritism towards a particular political figure, whose party members previously protested by hanging shalwars on the Supreme Court gates during the dharna days. Instead of initiating contempt proceedings, the judiciary allowed this individual to file the Panama case, which led to the removal of an elected prime minister for not taking a salary from his son, rather than for corruption, in 2017.

It did not stop there, the judiciary tormented PML-N



leadership with several cases to strengthen the political position of their favourite child. The only notable decision the higher judiciary made against him was the judgment in Qasim Suri's case. Otherwise, he always remained a 'favourite child.'

The judiciary's favouritism continued as they allowed this individual to address the Supreme Court via video link in the NAB amendments case, a practice typically not permitted. He focused more on the facilities provided to him in jail than on the amendments themselves during this address. The court's concern extended to the quality of his food and other amenities, including providing a fridge in his cell – a stark contrast to the treatment of other political figures, such as Maryam Nawaz, who was denied basic facilities in jail and was not allowed to talk to her dying mother. An inmate of Adiala Jail has filed an application requesting similar facilities, citing discriminatory treatment.

The Supreme Court's judgment relied on a misinterpretation of the PTI intra-party elections case decision and did not address the lack of party elections or the threats made to the ECP. The favourite child's sole objective was to play the victim while leaked conversations of his ministers showed how his party was 'managing' courts and trying to derail a deal with the IMF. Even his claim of an American conspiracy to oust him from power proved that he wanted to destabilise the country.

Instead of addressing its fault, it initiated a malicious campaign against CJP Qazi Faez Isa. The decision in the Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIT's) reserved seats

case also seems influenced by social media threats. The court allowed 39 members to rejoin PTI without any evidence of coercion or influence on their joining the SIC, contradicting the Article 63A judgment, which previously disqualified 25 members for voting against party lines, in favour of Hamza Shahbaz in Punjab.

Justice Yahya Afridi rightly observed that candidates who joined another political party undermined the trust and will of the people. He directed the ECP to hear concerned parties before deciding the allocation of reserved seats. However, the majority judgment requires the ECP to complete all legal formalities within 15 working days, violating Article 51(6) of the Constitution which stipulates a three-day timeframe for joining a political party. The judgment pushed 41 independents to join PTI, disregarding the fact that they had joined SIC without any coercion or influence. Once they had joined, they could not hop parties. If they do, they stand disqualified under the law as they never claimed that they had contested from the platform of PTI at any legal forum. Rather, they maintained that they joined SIC and have every legal right to further their party's, i.e. the SIC's objectives.

One should salute the Supreme Court of Pakistan for giving a new definition to Article 187 of the constitution by enlarging its scope to benefit the favourite child who had never challenged the ECP's decision nor opted to become a party in the proceedings before any forum by accepting it as a *fait accompli*. The majority judgment announced a silent spectator of the battle between SIC and ECP as the winner. This arbitrary extension of jurisdiction contrasts with the court's

“

**THIS CASE REPRESENTS AN UNPRECEDENTED JUDICIAL OVERREACH, EXTENDING THE SCOPE OF ARTICLE 187 IN AN APPELLATE CONTEXT AND BYPASSING CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL NORMS TO FAVOUR A PARTICULAR POLITICAL ENTITY, WHICH WAS NOT A PARTY TO THE PROCEEDINGS IN THE MATTER OF THE SIC RESERVED SEATS.**

”



typical restraint in appellate matters.

Further, the judgment did not consider the lawful existence of SIC as a parliamentary party according to the Election Act, as it did not contest the general election. An affidavit submitted by its chairman categorically stated that his party did not participate in the election.

Even otherwise, the SIC does not fulfil the requirements of the law and the Constitution. In its manifesto, it bars non-Muslims from becoming its members and cannot be considered a political party as observed by Justice Yahya Afridi. How can a party that does not allow a non-Muslim to become its member claim reserved seats for minorities? The court rather unjustifiably scooped out the SIC and rewarded its seats to the PTI to avoid any legal and constitutional debate.

The facilitation did not stop there, the Supreme Court directed the members of the assembly to approach them directly in their chambers if any clarification was required for a ‘smooth transition’ from SIC to PTI. What a special treatment, unthinkable for ordinary litigants. The judgment is based on the presumption that all 80 members were candidates of PTI. It would seem that judges have preferred to save themselves from trolling on social media platforms, as social

media propaganda is something the favourite child is admittedly very skilled in.

This case represents an unprecedented judicial overreach, extending the scope of Article 187 in an appellate context and bypassing constitutional and legal norms to favour a particular political entity, which was not a party to the proceedings in the matter of the SIC reserved seats.

By extending the time for joining a political party after the election, the judgment has utterly disregarded the Constitution. It has given a ‘creative’ interpretation to the law and the Constitution sitting in the appellate jurisdiction. It is a settled principle of interpretation that law must be read in plain and simple words to understand and interpret the intentions of the legislature. The courts should not add or read the provision in an artificial manner by giving their own definition to the wisdom of the legislature. The judgment is more political than judicial, as Justice (R) Shaiq Usmani observed. The judicial history of Pakistan has shown time and time again that whenever courts stray beyond judicial boundaries, they not only undermine the law but also risk creating political crises ■

*The writer is a political analyst and an advocate of the high court.*



# CELEBRATING 77 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

**SAIRA BANO**

As we celebrate our Independence Day, it is a time to reflect on the journey of Pakistan born out of the need to safeguard the rights and interests of the Muslim population in the Indian subcontinent on 14 August 1947. Pakistan faced monumental challenges from its inception, grappling with the complexities of state-building, political instability, and the need to forge a national identity.

The early years were tumultuous, with the country struggling to establish a stable political framework. With the early demise of the country's founder Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, assemblies were dissolved, prime ministers dismissed, and the country witnessed the tragic assassination of its first Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan. It took nearly a decade to draft the first constitution, only to see it abrogated, paving the way for cycles of constitutional turmoil and martial law. The mysterious death of Quaid-e-Azam's sister, Fatima Jinnah, added to the sense of uncertainty and loss that gripped the nation.

The secession of East Pakistan in 1971, resulting in the creation of Bangladesh, remains one of the most painful chapters in our history. The disenfranchisement of East Pakistanis and the subsequent civil strife exploited by our adversaries highlighted the critical need for equitable power distribution and national unity.

The country briefly experienced an elected government from 1973 to 1977, but this period of democracy was cut short when General Zia-ul-Haq usurped power and later hanged the deposed prime minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Zia's regime joined the United States in its proxy war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, a decision that opened the floodgates of militarisation in society and strengthened retrogressive forces in the 1980s. The social fabric of Pakistan began to unravel as extremism and intolerance took root, setting the stage for the challenges the country would face in the years to come. Zia died in a plane crash in 1988, but the process he set in motion continued.

Amid this backdrop of decline and instability, Mian Nawaz Sharif emerged as a beacon of hope for Pakistan. He became prime minister for the first time in 1990 after winning the general elections as the head of the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI), a coalition in which PML-N was a dominant force. Nawaz Sharif's first tenure as prime minister laid the groundwork for economic liberalisation, with initiatives like the privatisation of state-owned enterprises and the ambitious Lahore-Islamabad motorway project aimed at enhancing national connectivity. Despite the premature end of this tenure due to undemocratic interventions, Nawaz Sharif's commitment to economic growth was evident.

Undeterred, Mian Nawaz Sharif returned to power in 1997 with a landslide victory. His second term is remembered for significant infrastructure projects, including the completion of the Lahore-Islamabad Motorway and continued efforts to stabilise the economy. Nawaz Sharif also reinforced Pakistan's democratic institutions by introducing constitutional amendments to curtail the president's powers and strengthen the office of the prime minister.

A defining moment of Nawaz Sharif's second term was the decision to conduct nuclear tests in May 1998, in response to India's nuclear tests. This bold move made Pakistan the first Muslim-majority nation to possess nuclear weapons. However, it also resulted in international sanctions, which posed new challenges for the country's economy. Despite this, Nawaz Sharif's leadership during this critical time reinforced Pakistan's sovereignty and security, making it a formidable player on the global stage.

Another noteworthy achievement during Nawaz Sharif's second term was the thaw in relations with India, marked by the historic visit of Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Pakistan. This diplomatic breakthrough was a significant step towards regional peace and stability.

Unfortunately, this peace effort was derailed by undemocratic forces within our own ranks, leading to another coup by then Chief of Army Staff General Pervez Musharraf in 1999, which once again derailed Pakistan's democratic process and economic progress.

“

**THE CHALLENGES HAVE BEEN IMMENSE, BUT THE SPIRIT OF PAKISTAN REMAINS UNBROKEN.**

”

In the name of accountability, military rule eroded the institutions meant to uphold the state. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), once a symbol of national pride, began its decline, ultimately being banned from several international destinations. Pakistan Railways, once a robust transportation network, became synonymous with inefficiency and financial losses. The nation seemed to be on a downward spiral, each year passing with new challenges.

General Musharraf's fateful rule once again pushed Pakistan into the US-led war on terror, further entrenching the militarisation of society. His attempts to permanently oust Pakistan's popular political parties and their leaders failed, as both Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif returned to participate in the general elections. The tragic assassination of Benazir Bhutto in December 2007 during the election campaign led to a delay in the polls, which were eventually held two months later.

The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won the 2008 election, benefitting from a sympathy vote in the wake of Bhutto's death. While the PPP government introduced some groundbreaking constitutional amendments in line with the true spirit of democracy, it struggled to address the long-standing issues of terrorism, power shortages, and economic decline.

In 2013, after a peaceful transition of power from one elected government to the next, Mian Nawaz Sharif became Pakistan's prime minister for the third time. He came prepared for the job and wasted no time in setting the country on the path of progress and prosperity.

Under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, the PML-N government made significant strides in various sectors. One of the most notable achievements was the

doubling of the country's power generation capacity, effectively addressing the issue of prolonged power cuts that had plagued the nation for years. Pakistan Railways, once a financial burden, began to turn a profit.

A landmark moment during this period was the visit of China's President Xi Jinping to Islamabad in April 2015. This visit marked the beginning of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a series of infrastructure and energy projects that promised to transform Pakistan's economic landscape. Within three years, several motorway projects and other infrastructure developments were completed.

Unfortunately, the enemies of Pakistan conspired to remove a capable prime minister from power, orchestrating his disqualification and incarceration on baseless charges. This move, along with the targeting of the PML-N's top leadership, paved the way for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to assume power. What followed was a period of wholesale economic, social, and political decline, reminiscent of the dark days of General Musharraf's rule.

Under the PTI government, the progress achieved during the PML-N era was swiftly undone. Pakistan Railways, once again, recorded losses, and work on CPEC came to a virtual standstill. The economy suffered as the government failed to capitalise on opportunities, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most glaring failures was the inability to secure long-term LNG contracts at favourable prices during the pandemic, a decision that would haunt the nation as energy shortages loomed. Imran Khan's government, mired in populist rhetoric and toxic propaganda, alienated Pakistan's allies in the Muslim world and isolated the country on the international stage. The situation reached a critical point in February 2022 when the PTI government reneged on its commitments to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and announced a significant fuel price cut, pushing the country closer to economic collapse.

It was only through the unity of Pakistan's political forces and a successful vote of no confidence that the

“  
**DESPITE THE MANY CHALLENGES PAKISTAN HAS FACED OVER THE DECADES, THE NATION'S RESILIENCE AND TALENT HAVE SHONE BRIGHTLY IN VARIOUS FIELDS, INCLUDING EDUCATION, SPORTS, AND SCIENCE.**  
 ”

nation was spared from further ruin. Today, as the PML-N once again holds the reins of power, there is renewed confidence that the country can be steered back onto the path of progress and stability.

Despite the many challenges Pakistan has faced over the decades, the nation's resilience and talent have shone brightly in various fields, including education, sports, and science. Dr. Abdus Salam, a brilliant Pakistani physicist, brought immense pride to the country by becoming the first Muslim to receive the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1979. In the realm of sports, Pakistan's hockey team has won multiple Olympic medals. For over three decades, Pakistani players like Jahangir Khan and Jansher Khan dominated the world of squash, setting records that still stand today.

In the field of technology, Arfa Karim made history in 2004 when she became the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional at just nine years old, inspiring a generation of young tech enthusiasts. From Malala Yousafzai's courageous advocacy for girls' education, which earned her the Nobel Peace Prize, to the groundbreaking achievements of mountaineer Samina Baig, who became the first Pakistani woman to summit Mount Everest, Pakistanis have continually proven their extraordinary potential.

As we celebrate 77 years of independence, let us remember the resilience and determination that have defined our journey as a nation. The challenges have been immense, but the spirit of Pakistan remains unbroken. Under the leadership of PML-N, there is hope that Pakistan will once again rise, stronger and more prosperous than ever before ■

*The writer is an educationist and teaches at the University of Central Punjab.*





# THE GREAT £190 MILLION HEIST: HOW IMRAN KHAN'S PTI FAILED PAKISTAN

MUHAMMAD MUGHEES ARIF

In a jaw-dropping scandal, the Imran Khan-led PTI government stands accused of orchestrating one of the most egregious acts of corruption in recent history. The controversy centres on a staggering £190 million, money stolen from Pakistan and later returned through a plea deal brokered by the UK's National Crime Agency (NCA).

Malik Riaz, a well-known Pakistani property tycoon, found himself entangled in a web of corruption charges in the UK. The NCA had irrefutable evidence of his illegal activities, leading to a plea deal in December 2019. Riaz agreed to return £190 million, money that rightfully belonged to the people of Pakistan. This should have been a triumphant moment for the nation, a significant victory in the fight against corruption. But the reality was far from it.

Under the PTI government's watch, this recovered fortune did not benefit the public. Instead, it quietly

slipped back into the pockets of the same tycoon from whom it was seized.

On 18 July 2024, a dramatic twist unfolded in the legal proceedings against Imran Khan concerning the £190 million Al-Qadir Trust case when his trusted principal secretary, Azam Khan, testified against him. Azam Khan revealed that Shahzad Akbar, the former prime minister's aide on accountability, had personally handed him a confidential note, signed by Akbar, seeking cabinet approval for the contentious matter.

According to Azam Khan, this note came with explicit instructions from Imran Khan himself to expedite the process. Azam Khan dutifully forwarded the file to the cabinet secretary for formal presentation. However, due to prior commitments, he was unable to attend the crucial cabinet meeting where the approval was granted. In his testimony, Azam Khan confirmed the

“  
**THE £190 MILLION MONEY  
 LAUNDERING CASE IS NOT  
 JUST A FINANCIAL SCANDAL  
 BUT A MORAL ONE, REVEALING  
 THE DEPTHS OF CORRUPTION  
 INTO WHICH PTI AND ITS  
 LEADER HAVE PLUNGED.**  
 ”

authenticity of the document presented by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), unequivocally stating, “My signature is indeed on that document.” This revelation casts a long shadow over Imran Khan’s administration.

Pervez Khattak also testified against Imran Khan in the same case. Khattak was a key PTI leader, also serving as defence minister in Khan’s cabinet, which, he claimed, had approved a confidential deed to transfer money seized by the UK to Bahria Town owner Malik Riaz. In a brief 15-minute statement, Khattak informed accountability judge Muhammad Ali Warriach about the cabinet’s approval of the confidential deed, detailing how the £190 million seized by the UK’s NCA as proceeds of crime was allegedly returned to the property tycoon through a clandestine arrangement.

The case implicates Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi in obtaining billions of rupees and vast tracts of land from Bahria Town Ltd in exchange for legalising the funds through the federal cabinet. Khattak testified that he participated in the December 2019 meeting where then-accountability adviser Mirza Shahzad Akbar presented the confidential deed in a sealed envelope for cabinet approval. Despite inquiries from some cabinet members, Akbar refused to disclose the document’s contents, citing its confidential nature. This revelation, combined with Azam Khan’s earlier testimony, further undermines Imran Khan’s credibility and raises pressing questions about the integrity and transparency of his administration.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan imposed a fine of Rs 460 billion on Malik Riaz for illegal land acquisition and corrupt practices involving his real estate empire,

Bahria Town. This fine coincided with a £190 million settlement with the UK’s NCA, intended to be repatriated to Pakistan for public welfare. It was later revealed that the amount was used to settle the Supreme Court’s fine on behalf of Malik Riaz through a confidential agreement facilitated by the PTI government and approved by the cabinet under Shahzad Akbar’s guidance.

Imran Khan’s wife, Bushra Bibi, and her close associates were heavily involved in the scandal. The Al-Qadir Trust, ostensibly established to create an educational institution, was the main beneficiary of this dubious deal. Malik Riaz transferred 458 kanals of prime land to the trust, allegedly as a quid pro quo for money laundering services provided by the PTI government.

This scandal laid bare the sheer hypocrisy of Imran Khan’s anti-corruption rhetoric. Promising to build a “New Pakistan,” he instead presided over a government that protected and enriched corrupt elites. The funds meant for public welfare were misappropriated, and the trust deed, signed by Imran Khan himself, only solidified the connection between the PTI leadership and corrupt practices.

How could a government, elected on a platform of justice and transparency, allow such a betrayal? The £190 million money laundering case is not just a financial scandal but a moral one, revealing the depths of corruption into which PTI and its leader have plunged.

This scandal leaves us questioning the true motives behind Khan’s anti-corruption narrative and whether his government ever intended to serve the public or merely protect the interests of the elite. How can the public trust leaders who, while preaching honesty, engage in such blatant acts of corruption? What other truths remain hidden under the guise of reform and righteousness? This scandal has forever marred the legacy of Imran Khan’s government, a glaring example of the duplicity and betrayal of the very values it claimed to uphold ■

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



# THE GOLDEN THROW: ARSHAD NADEEM'S JOURNEY TO OLYMPIC GLORY

ISHRAT SALEEM

Javelin superstar Arshad Nadeem's gold medal and Olympic record were the best gifts for the Pakistani nation on the eve of its Independence Day. After a drought of 32 years, Arshad's gold acted as a healing balm for Pakistanis troubled by economic hardships and a disappointing performance in other sports. Seeing Pakistan's flag hoisted high and the packed stadium resound with the country's national anthem was a moment of recognition and pride that filled our hearts. The country last won a bronze in men's field hockey at the Barcelona Olympics in 1992.

The federal and provincial governments, sports bodies, public officials and private citizens have showered Arshad with rewards and gifts. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz visited his hometown Mian Channu and gifted him Rs100 million and a Honda Civic car with a unique number plate bearing 92.97 – the number of his Olympics record. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif awarded him Rs150 million

and announced the establishment of a Rs1 billion sports endowment fund at a ceremony in Islamabad in his honour. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur pledged Rs5 million, Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori and Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah awarded him Rs2 million and Rs50 million respectively, while President Asif Ali Zardari nominated him for Pakistan's second-highest civil award, Hilal-e-Imtiaz.

Arshad's journey from Mian Channu, a small village in Pakistan's Punjab, to the pinnacle of world athletics is a story of single-minded focus and extraordinary talent that was honed by his coaches over the years to make him a world-class athlete. Nobody could guess this lanky boy would one day become a symbol of national pride.

Third among eight siblings, Arshad showed athletic prowess from the beginning. During a school event, he

“

**ARSHAD'S JOURNEY FROM MIAN CHANNU, A SMALL VILLAGE IN PAKISTAN'S PUNJAB, TO THE PINNACLE OF WORLD ATHLETICS IS A STORY OF SINGLE-MINDED FOCUS AND EXTRAORDINARY TALENT THAT WAS HONED BY HIS COACHES OVER THE YEARS TO MAKE HIM A WORLD-CLASS ATHLETE.**

”



was spotted by Rasheed Ahmad Saqi, a former athlete, who mentored talented sportsmen in his district. Under Saqi's guidance, he started participating in area sports events. Like most Pakistanis, Arshad was first attracted to cricket, where he helped his team win many tournaments.

Arshad's elder brothers, themselves athletes at the division level, realised the difficulties ahead in making a cricket career, where competition was stiff and success depended on the collective performance of all players. They advised him to focus on athletics instead. Saying goodbye to cricket, he tried his hands at various games such as shot put, hammer throw, and discus throw in addition to javelin throw. He also took part in the long jump, high jump, triple jump and 100 and 200-metre races at local competitions.

Arshad participated in the Punjab International Sports Festival in 2012 initiated by the PML-N government

under Mian Shehbaz Sharif and again in the 2014 edition and won medals in several games, though his best performance remained in javelin. "This is when I made a serious start and played at the provincial level," he told in an interview with Hamid Mir on Geo TV. By this time, his mentor Rasheed Ahmad Saqi and family members convinced him to choose one sport, javelin, and concentrate on its training.

"When I started the game, I secured a bamboo stem and went to a local carpenter to get shaved into the shape of a javelin. We did not have a ground in our area, so I went to the nearby primary school and practised in its ground," he said in a podcast with Roha Nadeem on the PTCL's YouTube channel.

In 2015, Arshad participated in trials at the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) sports department but his throw was not long enough to secure him a position. Arshad asked WAPDA to



Arshad Nadeem received historic welcome at Lahore Airport.

give him a second chance in a month. In the second trial, his throw had improved from 56m to 65m, securing him accolades, a job in the department and some financial security. While playing for WAPDA, his game attracted attention at the national level and soon he got a chance to represent Pakistan at international competitions. In 2016, he participated in the South Asian Games, his first international event, in Guwahati, India, where he met India's ace javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, the 2020 Olympic champion, who later became his friend.

Under the able guidance of his coach Fayaz Hussain Bukhari, he won medals at the South Asian Games, Asian Junior Athletics Championships and Islamic Solidarity Games from 2015 to 2019. In the 2019 South Asian Games in Kathmandu, Nepal, he won gold and directly qualified for the Tokyo Olympics, the first in history for a Pakistani athlete. At Tokyo, he ranked fifth in the competition, which was a big surprise for Pakistanis who were unaware of his arduous journey until then.

In a 17 July 2020 news report by Sujag, he can be seen walking the streets of his village and practising his game in a local school ground. In the report, he

complained about a lack of adequate facilities and equipment. Some have argued that had he received proper support from the government then, he may have won a medal in the 2020 Olympic Games. In another video, wearing a green blazer, he can be seen pleading with Prime Minister Imran Khan to reverse his decision to ban departmental sports, which has traditionally been a pipeline for Pakistan's sports talent. Despite orders from the top, government departments resisted the move and refused to dismantle their sports teams. The ban was reversed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in August 2022.

After Tokyo Olympics, Arshad was assigned a new coach, Salman Iqbal Butt, who worked with Pakistan Athletics Federation, Pakistan Sports Board, Punjab Sports Board and orthopaedic surgeon Dr Ali Sher Bajwa to prepare a training programme and manage his injuries. Talking to Kashif Abbassi in an interview on the ARY news channel, Dr Bajwa explained what went into preparing him for the throw that broke the Olympic record. "A very sophisticated team has been working with him for a few years," he said.

Dr Bajwa said that Arshad's team gave him the goal of setting an Olympic record. "It's called single-minded

## ARSHAD NADEEM'S MEDALS

Year	Competition	Venue	Position	Performance
2016	South Asian Games	Guwahati, India	1	78.33 m
2016	Asian Junior Athletics Championships	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam	3	73.40 m
2017	Islamic Solidarity Games	Baku, Azerbaijan	3	76.33 m
2018	Asian Games	Jakarta, Indonesia	3	80.75 m
2019	South Asian Games	Kathmandu, Nepal	1	86.29 m GR NR
2021	Inam Rizvi Cup	Mashhad, Iran	1	86.38 m NR
2022	Commonwealth Games	Birmingham, England	1	90.18 m GR NR
2022	Islamic Solidarity Games	Konya, Turkey	1	86.05 m GR
2023	World Championships	Budapest, Hungary	2	87.82 m SB
2024	Olympic Games	Paris, France	1	92.97 m OR

GR: Games Record NR: National Record SB: Season's Best OR: Olympic Record



## SEASON'S BEST BY YEAR

Year	Performance	Place
2015	70.46 metres	Islamabad, Pakistan
2016	78.33 metres	Guwahati, India
2017	78 metres	Bhubaneswar, India
2018	80.75 metres	Jakarta, Indonesia
2019	86.29 metres (GR)	Kathmandu, Nepal
2021	86.38 metres	Mashhad, Iran
2022	90.18 metres (GR)	Birmingham, England
2023	87.82 metres	Budapest, Hungary
2024	92.97 metres (OR)	Paris, France



Arshad Nadeem with his coach Salman Iqbal Butt (middle) and doctor Dr Ali Sher Bajwa (left) after his victory.

focus, creating stress, creating an environment in which the player then strives, tries to do more and more” and acts like a loaded spring on the day of the competition. Keeping the player comfortable in this whole process is equally important to prevent him from collapsing, in which his coach Salman Iqbal Butt played a crucial role, he said.

Speaking about Arshad’s unique training, Dr Bajwa said, “We have given more importance to agility, speed and strength and reduced the throwing volume ... and I think the programme [we developed] clicked with him,” adding that over the years his performance increased little by little and there is still more room for it.

After Tokyo, Arshad won gold and broke the Commonwealth Games record with a 90.18m throw, his career’s best. He won gold at the Islamic Solidarity Games also breaking the games’ record. He won silver at the World Athletics Championship, a first in the history of Pakistan. According to the Pakistan Sports Board, a cumulative amount of Rs22 million was given to Arshad as prize money for his various

victories from 2021 to 2024 until the Olympics. The government also paid for the treatment of his injuries abroad. Arshad also received corporate sponsorships from various companies.

When he talks about his Olympic success, Arshad credits it to his family’s and countrymen’s prayers. In his interviews, he profusely thanks Allah for the respect and admiration he receives from the people, who thronged the airport at midnight to receive him after his Olympic victory and joined his convoy until he reached his hometown 284 km away.

What Arshad’s team achieved was no small feat given that Pakistan does not have a single world-class athletics facility. He did not own a world-class javelin until the newly inducted PML-N government intervened and gave him Rs2.5 million for this purpose in March 2024, and later another Rs1 million in May.

The final credit for his victory goes to Arshad Nadeem himself, who had the discipline and single-minded focus to achieve the best ■

# COMMONWEALTH SG VISITS PAKISTAN

SABA ALI

Patricia Scotland, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, completed a successful visit to Pakistan, marked by a series of significant events.

During her visit, Patricia Scotland attended the Young Entrepreneurs Award Ceremony at the Prime Minister's Office on 31 July 2024. The event celebrated the achievements of dynamic young entrepreneurs.

On the same day, she, along with the Chairman of the Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP), Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan, visited the National University of Science & Technology (NUST). They addressed faculty and students, emphasising the importance of research and development. The delegation also toured the National Science & Technology Park and School of Interdisciplinary Engineering & Sciences, where they explored state-of-the-art facilities, including a supercomputing centre and biomechanics labs.



On 1 August 2024, the Secretary-General inaugurated six new initiatives under the PMYP at the Prime Minister's Office. These initiatives include the Commonwealth Asia Youth Alliance (CAYA), a Digital Learning Portal, and an AI education programme in collaboration with the British Council and Intel Corporation. During this ceremony, Rana Mashood was honoured with the prestigious "Commonwealth Youth Champion" award for his dedication to empowering young people in Pakistan.

Patricia Scotland's visit also featured a cultural component, as she visited Lok Virsa in Islamabad. The visit highlighted Pakistan's rich cultural heritage and the importance of preserving and promoting it on the global stage.

## INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY



On the occasion of International Youth Day, Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif participated as a special guest in the event organised by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) in Islamabad on 12 August.

The prime minister of Pakistan inaugurated the Commonwealth Asia Youth Alliance Secretariat (CAYY), Digital Learning Portal (DLP), Green Youth Movement, AI for Youth and National Volunteer Corps.

Talking to the media at the Youth Festival organised to celebrate International Youth Day at Pak China Friendship Center, Chairman (PMYP) Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan said the government was taking various initiatives to highlight the potential and provide more employment and other opportunities to the youth.

Chairman PMYP highlighted several existing and upcoming initiatives under the PMYP, including empowering future generations. "Let us work together to ensure that the digital pathways they pursue today lead to a more prosperous and sustainable future for all", he said ■

*The writer is a digital media executive at the Prime Minister's Youth Programme.*

# PML-N OVERSEAS ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

DR RANA KHALID MEHMOOD

## EVENT AGAINST DISINFORMATION IN FRANCE



In an impressive display of unity and purpose, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) overseas chapters demonstrated their commitment to enhancing Pakistan's image abroad by organising a big gathering in Paris. The event, organised by the PML-N France Chapter, aimed to counteract disinformation about Pakistan and highlight the positive contributions of overseas Pakistanis.

The event was graced by prominent figures, including the Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan and President of PML-N Punjab Rana Sana Ullah, Pakistan's Ambassador to France Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, and PML-N Chief Coordinator International Affairs Barrister Amjad Malik. Local PML-N leaders, such as President of PML-N France Mian Muhammad Hanif, Chief Coordinator Talat Mehmood Chauhan, and General Secretary Rana Mehmood Ali Khan, played significant roles in the event.

A substantial number of Muslim Leaguers and journalists attended the meeting, where discussions centred on eliminating disinformation and criticising the previous government of PTI for its economic and foreign policy failures. PM's Adviser Rana Sanaullah labelled Imran Khan a disruptive force and expressed confidence that PML-N, under the leadership of Mian



Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, would steer the country towards development. He also emphasised the importance of addressing overseas Pakistanis' issues and ensuring their representation in Parliament.

Barrister Amjad Malik highlighted the critical role of overseas Pakistanis in the nation's development and called for collective efforts to overcome current challenges. He underscored the significance of the contributions made by the diaspora, noting the substantial increase in foreign remittances to over \$30 billion for the year 2023-2024. However, he also voiced the community's longstanding grievances, such as the need for tax exemptions and a review of the newly imposed tax on plane tickets for overseas Pakistanis.

The event featured speeches from various PML-N leaders, who echoed the sentiment of unity and commitment to Pakistan's progress. Mian Muhammad Hanif, Talat Mehmood Chauhan, and other leaders emphasised the need for organised efforts to strengthen PML-N's presence globally. They acknowledged the party's extensive network across 36 countries, from America to Australia, and called for greater appreciation of these efforts.

Prominent attendees included PML-N officials from across Europe, such as PML-N Holland President Pervaiz Sandhila, PML-N Germany President and



Chairman Rana Liaquat Ali, Secretary Information Germany Hafiz Imran Zia, and other key figures from Germany, Europe, and France. The participation of business community members further underscored the broad support for PML-N's initiatives.

## TRIBUTE TO HAJI ABDUL GHAFOOR



Haji Abdul Ghafoor (left) with Barrister Amjad Malik

In a moment of sombre reflection, the PML-N community mourned the loss of Haji Abdul Ghafoor, father-in-law of Barrister Amjad Malik, who passed away on July 30, 2024, in Rochdale, Greater Manchester, England. His passing prompted heartfelt condolences from PML-N President Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister Mian Shehbaz Sharif, and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar.

The funeral prayers in Rochdale saw a large turnout of PML-N Overseas officials and workers, who paid tribute to Haji Abdul Ghafoor's moral and social contributions. Remembered as a kind-hearted individual dedicated to community service, his passing was described as an irreparable loss to both his family and the wider community.

Messages of sympathy and remembrance poured in from PML-N overseas chapters, underscoring Haji Abdul Ghafoor's enduring legacy and the profound impact of his life on those around him. His exemplary character and community services will continue to be celebrated, ensuring his memory is kept alive.

## CONDOLENCES FOR MUHAMMAD ARSHAD KHAN



PML-N President Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif recently visited village 40 JB Thikriwala in the suburbs of Faisalabad to express his condolences to the family of the late Muhammad Arshad Khan, former PML-N Hong Kong President. Accompanied by party members, Nawaz Sharif met with the sons of the deceased, Muhammad Salim Khan and Muhammad Riaz Khan, and other family members.

Nawaz Sharif offered prayers for the departed soul and praised Muhammad Arshad Khan's contributions to the party and the community. He acknowledged the significant loss to PML-N and assured the family that the party stands with them in this difficult time, sharing their grief.

The family expressed gratitude for Nawaz Sharif's visit and his compassionate words. Nawaz Sharif emphasised that Muhammad Arshad Khan's legacy would live on, and the party is committed to continuing his work in public service.

The PML-N's recent activities and heartfelt tributes reflect the party's dedication to strengthening international ties, addressing the concerns of overseas Pakistanis, and honouring the contributions of its members, both past and present ■

# PICTURE GALLERY



**PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF RECEIVES BRIEFING ABOUT HUTCHISON PORTS PAKISTAN TERMINAL AT KARACHI PORT. KARACHI. 07 JULY 2024**



**PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF ALONG WITH MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL CABINETS WITNESSES THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT REGARDING SOLARISATION OF TUBE WELLS IN BALOCHISTAN. QUETTA. 08 JULY 2024**



**CHIEF MINISTER MARYAM NAWAZ SHARIF FORMALLY LAUNCHED THE FREE MEDICINE SUPPLY PROJECT BY DRIVING A FORKLIFT OF A GOVERNMENT PHARMACEUTICAL WAREHOUSE. LAHORE. 24 JULY 2024**



**PRIME MINISTER SHEHBAZ SHARIF AND COAS GENERAL ASIM MUNIR OFFER FUNERAL PRAYERS OF CAPTAIN MUHAMMAD OSAMA BIN ARSHAD, CAPTAIN OSAMA EMBRACED MARTYRDOM IN NORTH WAZIRISTAN DISTRICT. RAWALPINDI. 9 JULY 2024**



**PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF MEETS DAANISH SCHOOL STUDENT AYAN KASHIF WHO SECURED FIRST POSITION IN MATRIC EXAM. ISLAMABAD. 11 JULY 2024**



**PML-N PRESIDENT NAWAZ SHARIF AND PUNJAB CM MARYAM NAWAZ CHAIR THE SESSION TO REVIEW PROGRESS ON CM SOLAR PANEL SCHEME IN LAHORE. 20 JULY 2024.**



**PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF VISITS THE UNDER-CONSTRUCTION SITE OF ISLAMABAD TECHNOLOGY PARK. ISLAMABAD. 20 JULY 2024**



**PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF OFFERING DUA AFTER UNVEILING A PLAQUE DURING THE GROUNDBREAKING OF JINNAH MEDICAL COMPLEX. ISLAMABAD. 21 JULY 2024**



**COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY GENERAL PATRICIA SCOTLAND PRESENTS THE CHARTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH TO PRIME MINISTER MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF ON HER VISIT TO PAKISTAN. ISLAMABAD. 01 AUGUST 2024**



**PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER MARYAM NAWAZ AT THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY OF THE MODEL BAZAR FREE HOME DELIVERY SERVICE IN TOWNSHIP. LAHORE. 19 JULY 2024**



**PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER MARYAM NAWAZ SHARIF DISTRIBUTES TROPHIES, APPRECIATION CERTIFICATES AND PRIZES AMONG LAHORE BOARD POSITION HOLDERS. LAHORE. 10 JULY 2024**



**CM INAUGURATES UPGRADED MEDICAL FACILITIES AT LADY AITCHISON HOSPITAL. LAHORE. 22 JULY 2024**



# HORIZON

Research and Policy Planning Unit  
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz