



## Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman as an Alliance Maker: A Case Study of Pakistan Democratic Movement

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### ABSTRACT

Pakistan has a history of opposition alliances. Purpose of this article is to evaluate the role of Pakistan Democratic Movement in Pakistan. Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman is the president of the Pakistan Democratic Movement and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam. On September 20, 2020, the PDM was established. The coalition was formed from 11 political parties. Slogan of PDM was to respect the sanctity of the vote. In 2022, the PDM formed a government under the leadership of opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif after successfully ousting Khan in a no-confidence resolution on April 10th. Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman announces 12-Point Charter of Pakistan. In addition, Rehman said that Khan was backed by Jewish lobby, agent of Qadianes, Jews, and Americans. Protests against inflation were announced by the PDM. Under the leadership of the PDM, Pakistan was able to successfully remove itself from the FATF grey list. The administration of the PTI did not assume political ownership of the CPEC project in the same way that previous governments led by the PML-N had done so. The government of PDM is the responsible for historic economic woes.

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## 1. Introduction

Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman (born June 19, 1953) a Pakistani Islamic democratic politician. President of JUI-F and the Pakistan Democratic Movement, which is a political party's coalition that was responsible for removing Imran Khan from his position as prime minister in 2022 through the use of a resolution of no confidence. In 1980, while he was only 27 years old, Rehman launched his career in politics by becoming the general secretary of JUI. This occurred following the passing of his father, Mufti Mahmud, who led the party prior to his own passing. From 1988 to 2018, he served as a National Assembly representative, and from 2002 until 2007, he was the head of the opposition as its leader. He is a supporter of the government run in Afghanistan by Taliban, moreover, he has advocated for its recognition by the world community. Later, in the middle of the 1980s, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam was split into two groups, one of which was led by Fazal and was known as JUI-F (M. Ali, 2022).

In the 1980s, he was an active member of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, which was established to bring an end to the dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq and his military. At the general elections held in Pakistan in 1988, Rehman won the election for the first time to serve in National Assembly as a member, and he did so by winning the D.I. Khan seat. At the general elections held in Pakistan in 1990, Rehman competed for a position in the National Assembly of Pakistan for the second time, moving on from D.I. Khan's seat. Nevertheless, he was unsuccessful in winning the election. In the general elections held in Pakistan in 1993, Rehman won the election to serve in National Assembly as a member of Pakistan again for a second time, this time on the Islamic Jamhoori Mahaz ticket, representing the D.I. Khan constituency. Within the National Assembly of Pakistan, Fazal has been given the

position of chairman of the Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs. At the general elections held in Pakistan in 1997, Rehman made his fourth attempt to earn a seat in the National Assembly of Pakistan, however he was unsuccessful (M. Ali, 2022).

## **2. Pakistan Democratic Movement**

Pakistan Democratic Movement, also known as PDM led by a coalition and alliance of 11 different political parties in Pakistan. Fazal-ur-Rehman serves as president of the PDM, and Hafiz Hamdullah serves as spokesperson for the alliance. The secretary general position is held by the Pakistan Muslim League's (PMLN) Shahid Khaqan Abbasi. Mahmood Khan Achakzai is the Vice President, a member of PMAP. Senior Vice President is represented by Aftab Sherpao, a member of QWP. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, formerly of the Pakistan Peoples Party, served as Senior Vice President of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). Former Awami National Party spokesperson Mian Iftikhar Hussain (ANP). PDM is a political movement that emerged in response to claims of vote manipulation in the general election held in Pakistan in 2018, which was ultimately won by PTI. PDM was established as political movement in September 2020 against the mismanagement of foreign policy, poor governance, economy crisis and political victimization during PTI government. In 2022, the PDM formed a government under the leadership of opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif after successfully ousting Khan in a no-confidence resolution on April 10<sup>th</sup> 2022 (Ali & fateh Muhammad, 2021).

The primary objective of the PDM was to promote the narrative of inflation during PTI government and blamed to Imran Khan for its negative consequences for Pakistanis. The leaders of the PDM asserted that Faiz Hameed and Qamar Javed Bajwa and are responsible for rigging in elections of 2018 for Imran Khan to become Prime Minister of Pakistan. Sharif continued to play a significant and an active role in Pakistani politics despite his absence from the country. In the year 2020, he rose to prominence as a key figure in the foundation of the Pakistan Democratic Movement that aimed to lessen the influence that the military establishment had on civilian rule. In a speech that was broadcast from London by former PM Nawaz Sharif claimed and made allegations that Qamar Javed Bajwa and Faiz Hameed both rigged the General Elections of 2018 in order to place Imran Khan in the position of Prime Minister. Sharif claimed that the two men were responsible for installing Khan in his position. It has come to our attention that the policies of the administration are actively working against the interests of the nation. Alliance was made especially by Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan Peoples Party. APC was called at Marriott Hotel Islamabad for grand political alliance on September 20, 2020, by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to replace PTI administration. Fazal-ur-Rehman, an outspoken opponent of the military establishment, read aloud the 26-point resolution that was unanimously approved by the participants (J. Ali, 2022).

On September 20, 2020, PDM was established with the intention of toppling the government. One of the most important tenets of the PDM is to respect, honor and support the voting process. Once it was formally established at Islamabad on September 20, 2020, the PDM took part in various conferences, rallies, and other activities in an effort to bring down the administration. On October 16, 2020, Gujranwala played host to the first demonstration, which numerous local newspapers hailed as a significant public display. Almost 50,000 people participated in demonstrations that were organized by the PDM in October of 2020 (Baloch & Ellis-Petersen, 2020).

Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman serves as the leader of the Pakistan Democratic Movement, also known as the PDM. Eleven different political parties came together to create the coalition, and their names are as follows: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Awami National Party, Jamiat Ahe Hadith, Awami National Party- Wali, Pakistan Peoples Party, Pakistan Muslim League (N), Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, National Party-Bizenjo, Qaumi Watan Party, Balochistan Awami Party and Balochistan National Party (Mengal). These political groups collectively represent practically the entirety of Pakistan's political spectrum. To be more specific, during the past seventy-five years of Pakistan's history, there have been four instances in which the Army ruled the country. Yet similar opposition alliances had, in the past, come together against military dictators, often with major wins to show for their efforts. Field Marshal Ayub Khan was kicked out of his position as President of Pakistan by the opposition parties in the late 1960s. Yet, opposition groups were not able to achieve the same level of success in the 1980s in relation to the presidency of General Zia-ul-Haq. The Campaign for the Restoration of Democracy was the driving force behind the charges brought against Zia. Once more, in the first decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century, a group of people

banded together to topple General Pervez Musharraf. This group called itself the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD). It's not true that these opposition groups have just fought against military dictators; in the past, they have also fought against civilian governments in an effort to topple them as in 1990 politics (Butool & Arshad, 2021).

For instance, in the year 1977, such coalitions were responsible for bringing General Zia to power, despite the fact that the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Government had been elected. Nonetheless, it is important to recall that the previous Bhutto Administration was specifically accused of electoral fraud and economic policy manipulation. During those times, the Pakistan National Alliance was in charge of directing the activities of the opposition alliance. When it comes to the coalition that is working against the Imran government, it is important to recognize that, in contrast to the Bhutto government that was in power in 1977, that coalition had the complete support of the armed forces. The political parties in Pakistan have, for a number of years now, been working together to establish an alliance with the goal of toppling the present civilian authoritarian government. But this combination has, for the very first time, taken on the form and structure of the Pakistan Democratic Movement. So, the PDM fight of today was very different, and if it goes on, it might get more public support. In Pakistan, in the midst of a deteriorating economic crisis, a new anti-government movement that is cohesive has formed. The PDM, came into existence in September and has since organized enormous protests in three of the country's most important cities by coalition of 11 eleven parties.

More than 20 PTI members surfaced in Assembly on 17 March 2022, paving the way for the PDM's significant success. PTI has asserted that these Members of the National Assembly have been corrupted by money and have disobeyed article 63(A). PDM, on the other hand, dismissed these assertions and characterized the decision of the dissident members as their own free will. To demonstrate that the government has become feeble and that PDM already has a sufficient number of votes to pass the vote of no confidence, dissenting members gave PDM permission to engage with government-aligned parties MQM and BAP. On March 29 and 30, respectively, the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) as well as the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan became members of the opposition coalition in advance of the vote motion. Since the opposition alliance received 174 votes in favour of the motion of no confidence without the support of any members who abstained or invoked article 63(A), the alliance triumphed. Shehbaz Sharif was chosen by the parliament means through the member of NA of Pakistan to take over as PM of Pakistan after the term of Imran Khan as Prime Minister of Pakistan came to an end on April 9, 2022.

Pakistan has a history of opposition alliances. They have banded together, with varied degrees of success, to oppose military rulers. The Pakistan National Alliance, much like the PDM of today, went after a civilian administration led by a populist who was accused of benefitting from electoral fraud and of implementing dictatorial tactics and economic policies that were harmful to the country. The PDM faced a civilian leadership that is supported by the military now, which is one of the most significant differences between then and now. Protests against inflation were announced by the PDM at a time when the administration was already under heavy criticism from the opposition over the rising prices of numerous commodities. The PDM claimed that inflation damaged economy and lives of people in Pakistan. This narrative and agenda was the primary focus of the PDM. Even though the last government, led by Imran Khan, set up economic landmines and there have been problems with fuel and food supply lines around the world, Pakistan's economy has managed to stay afloat. There has not been a single instance of default, contrary to everyone's forecasts. PDM came to power because practically all of Pakistan's political groups united to vote out an unpopular administration through constitutional processes in Parliament. Government's goal from its beginning in April of last year was to give the people of Islamabad with easy, comfortable, and inexpensive mobility by prioritizing the early completion of development and transport infrastructure projects (Mohyidin, 2023).

Under the leadership of the PDM, Pakistan was able to successfully remove itself from the FATF grey list, which was made possible by the country's strong inter-ministerial coordination and the assistance of the country's senior military officials. It was a difficult trip, but continued efforts made it feasible in the end. Geo-strategic rivalries, rising fuel and food prices, and historic floods have caused worldwide inflation. The government has responded by strengthening the safety net and increasing subsidies for specific groups. According to the prime minister, the

administration has been working hard over the past year to diversify the energy mix in an effort to relieve the citizens. The goal of the recent surge in interest in solar, hydel, and coal power projects is to reduce reliance on more expensive energy sources. The administration of the PTI did not assume political ownership of the CPEC project in the same way that previous governments led by the PML-N had done so. This was most likely due to the fact that the PML-N government had negotiated, initiated, and guided the development of this project during the time that Nawaz Sharif was in office. The PTI's efforts to negotiate the largest rescue package in Pakistan's history from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were a major contributor to the slowdown. In order for Pakistan to qualify for the loan, it was necessary for them to provide the International Monetary Fund with information regarding the investments made by China in Pakistan. However, a number of criteria related to the IMF loan, such as fiscal reduction, posed a risk of slowing down CPEC projects and having a negative influence on relation and collaboration of Pakistan and China. The CPEC) presents Pakistan with an opportunity to upgrade its ageing infrastructure and stimulate economic activity throughout the nation (Mohyidin, 2023).

### **3. PDM Announces 12-Point Charter of Pakistan**

During a meeting of senior leaders of the parties forming the PDM, PDM chief Fazl ur Rehman addressed a press conference in Islamabad, saying that the opposition was keeping its promise to the people of Pakistan to discuss publicly the major aims of their platform. The 12 points of the charter as follows: 1-Supremacy and Enforcement of Constitution; 2- Autonomy of Parliament; 3- Elimination of Intelligence Agencies and Establishment from Politics; 4- Establishment of Judiciary as an Independent; 5- Electoral Reforms; 6- Fair and Independent Polls; 7- Protection of democratic and Human Rights; 8- Protection of 18th Amendment and Rights of Provinces; 9- Formation and Implementation of Local Government System; 10- Protection of Media and Freedom of Expression; 11- Elimination of Terrorism and Extremism; 12- Emergency Economic Plan.

Pakistan is currently experiencing the most debilitating and historically unprecedented economic upheaval. The government of PDM is the responsible for historic economic woes. The PDM government has established itself as a regime hostile to both exports and the economy. Financial instability should be shared by other political parties that secretly back the current government. The government came under fire from the public for failing to do enough to boost the economy. Exporters are frustrated by the government's purposeful negligence to ruin the economy and sow disorder for political revenge. The value-added textile export sectors are astonished and completely disillusioned with the current government for its inattention, non-seriousness, indecisiveness, and lack of productive vision and direction to pull the country out of the worst economic crisis in history. Seven million people have lost their jobs in the industrial sector as a result of the ongoing economic difficulties and unresolved problems, with four million of those people working in the textile industry alone. They cautioned that the country's reserves have reached extremely dangerous levels, which has led to a rapid reduction in exports of textiles and other goods. Many manufacturing units have closed, and several exporters are intending to move their factories abroad. Due to high manufacturing costs, industries are financially stressed and cannot operate at full capacity. Inflation is the major problem that is facing by Pakistan during the government of PDM (Ahmed, 2020).

### **4. Conclusion**

Pakistan has a history of opposition alliances. Rehman has openly opposed PTI on multiple occasions. Voting for the PTI was pronounced haram by Rehman in 2013. In addition, Rehman said that Khan was backed by Jewish lobby, agent of Qadianes, Jews, and Americans. The PDM claimed that inflation damaged economy and lives of people in Pakistan. The agenda of PDM is inflation. Under the leadership of the PDM, Pakistan was able to successfully remove itself from the FATF grey list, which was made possible by the country's strong inter-ministerial coordination and the assistance of the country's senior military officials. The administration of the PTI did not assume political ownership of the CPEC project in the same way that previous governments led by the PML-N had done so. This was most likely due to the fact that the PML-N government had negotiated, initiated, and guided the development of this project during the time that Nawaz Sharif was in office. Similar to previous opposition coalitions, the PDM is a motley crew. Some of its 11 groups have been fighting alongside one another for a very long time. As time goes on, it could become harder to present a front that is unified and consistent. Even though the PDM has crossed a line with its criticism of those in authority in the military and the intelligence community. The government of PDM is the responsible for historic economic woes. Financial

instability should be shared by other political parties that secretly back the current government. Many manufacturing units have closed, and several exporters are intending to move their factories abroad. Due to high manufacturing costs, industries are financially stressed and cannot operate at full capacity.

#### **4.1. Limitations of the Study**

The current study was limited only on the political alliance of Pakistan Democratic Movement. Case of PDM was focused. The nature of study is qualitative. Secondary data is used for analysis. This study will be generalized only on the alliance of PDM in Pakistan not for other political alliances which were made in the history of Pakistan.

#### **4.2. Theoretical and Practical Implications**

The findings of the current study explored the phenomenon behind the vision of Pakistan Democratic Movement in Pakistan. Results of study have a contribution in existing theoretical background of the political alliances in the history of Pakistan. Meanwhile, this study directs the new theoretical perspective on alliances that were made in the history of Pakistan. Study will help the community to understand the purpose of PDM in the political history of Pakistan. In addition, study contributed a remarkable knowledge in the literature of political alliances. Furthermore, study will enable the researcher to conduct a research on political alliances.

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