**The Gujrat power saga and unopposed senators**

**[Senator Rehman Malik](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/senator-rehman-malik)**

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I just saw the former Prime Minister looking very weak on the television screen and one could see his shining eyes disclosing the smooth and quiet deal for 11 Senators where PMLN, PPP, and PTI were facing each other and there was hue and cry on the media about horse-trading at large scale. The ruling party—PTI—and PDM were at daggers drawn, exchanged harsh words and cross statements but all of a sudden, the bitter political opponents settled their differences quietly and happily consented to this compromise behind the curtains. Mariam Nawaz however, refused to give her comments on the unopposed senators which means that she has some unexplained reservation.

This is the same city where PTI and PMLN seemed to be prepared for the crossfire out of hostility, but Ch. Pervez Elahi and Ch. Shujaat Hussain (first cousins but I refer to them as brothers) played an unmatched political game and got their Senator Kamil Ali Agha elected and others from PMLN and PTI including Dr. Zarqa also got elected; who is a special candidate as per the media. Now the future course of action depends on this unannounced understanding between PTI and PMLN & PML Q as the Lahore Senate Packet and according to Ch. Shujaat, they had the blessing of President Asif Ali Zardari too along with others. More importantly, Ch. Shujaat Hussain perhaps forgot the name of a common friend, an individual playing his invisible right shots who could be considered a political mastermind and this troika will play a substantive role like played in Islamabad seats. This was led by Ch. Pervez Elahi was made public by Ch Shujhat and I feel this is quite a political ceasefire and amicable complimentary political trading between the political parties, avoiding the allegation of horse-trading by the media. More importantly, the opposition leader of Punjab Assembly is also out of jail. Ch Shujaat Hussain’s statements had given the outlines of this Lahore packet.

[Zlatan Ibrahimović to miss Man Utd Europa League due to injury](https://nation.com.pk/02-Mar-2021/zlatan-ibrahimovi-to-miss-man-utd-europa-league-due-to-injury)

While watching him having gone physically weak, I recalled young Ch. Shujaat of early the 80s when I was PSO of Ch. Zahoor Elahi who was a highly intelligent minister in the cabinet of Gen Zia ul Haq and that is where I met the young gentleman introduced by his father. Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed, now a minister of PTI, was earlier very close to Ch Zahoor Elahi and provided the longest services to PMLN. There are many more politicians and judges associated with Ch Zahoor Elahi.

I had many meetings with both the brothers, they even used to visit my house located in F-8, Islamabad. We always kept our friendship very honestly and later on I met both of them when I was in London. My meeting was held with prior permission from SMBB.

I also served under Ch Shujaat in the FIA while he was briefly made the interior minister. I found both brothers to be highly active in politics and their politics reflects the true reflection of Late Ch. Zahoor Elahi.

[ECP to make final decision regarding ballot papers today](https://nation.com.pk/02-Mar-2021/ecp-to-make-final-decision-regarding-ballot-papers-today)

It is a matter of record that Gen Zia-ul-Haq fell apart from Ch Zahoor and ordered an investigation against him. I was asked to become approver against him which I declined and thereafter I was summoned by General Arif—the second most powerful general of the Zia regime and declined him too.

This was the time when Gen Faiz Chishti had also fallen out with the Gen Zia regime over some major issues and he also had a lot hidden in his chest to share with the nation. A serious political clash had occurred between Ch. Fazal Elahi and Ch Zahoor Elahi while Gen Zia was still chief Martial Law administrator and Mr. F K Bandial was the Federal Secretary who was posted in Rawalpindi while I was also posted there. The clash between the two brought both of us under crisis but the strategy chalked out by Mr. FK Bandail and me resolved the matter as Gen Zia wanted to favour Ch. Fazal Elahi. The complicated issue was sorted while keeping the three stakeholders happy and then Deputy Martial Law Administrator played a positive role in it. More details can be read in my upcoming book “100 Investigations” to be released next week and also some other major incidents of the time are elaborated.

[MQM-P to support PTI in Senate elections: Amin-ul-Haque](https://nation.com.pk/01-Mar-2021/mqm-p-to-support-pti-in-senate-elections-amin-ul-haque)

Ch. Shujaat Hussain has a very sharp memory that during his last visit on the condolences of my elder sister, we recalled our many memories and we also agreed to co-author a book. I pray he gets well soon so we can have few sittings as we share some beautiful old memories of his father and Khawaja Safdar, father of Khawaja Mohammed Asif.

It is matter of record that I was director FIA during the second government of PPP when I was asked by my then DG FIA to investigate few matters against the Choudhry family and arrest both brothers, but I had the moral courage to decline the investigation at the cost of the annoyance of my DG and then-Interior Minister. I have given this background just to highlight that I have seen very closely the political abilities of their father and both of them. I have always been respected by both the brothers including their third brother. Fast-changing time brought us as colleagues in the cabinet under Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani who is now our PPP candidate.

[UN Syria commission calls for immediate cease-fire](https://nation.com.pk/01-Mar-2021/un-syria-commission-calls-for-immediate-cease-fire)

The above preamble has been given to indicate the abilities of Chaudhary brothers and the level of performance in the present senate elections.

They made it possible to win the deal from their staunch political opponents under the Lahore packet. I see their decisive role in Islamabad. My political and investigative senses are suggesting that they prove to be the might.

People have the thirst to know how this quite political deal from the politically fraught city of Lahore had smoothly happened and as to how it is going to impact the election of Sheikh of Shikarpur and our Syed of Multan. One can assess that the strategy of these two brothers and our common third friend and individual are the real movers. What is important and decisive secret, is the mind of these two political managers of Punjab politics and coalition partners with PM Imran Khan and hence it was done in consultation with PM and the higher leadership of other two parties and one can see the indication in the statement of Ch Shujaat. It looks that both the brothers can turn the table in the Islamabad Senate seat too and let us see how ‘the compromise of Lahore’ brings political turmoil in Islamabad or perhaps a peace solution. I foresee that predictions by many political pundits will fall apart as nobody can play the political chess of Punjab better than these two brothers. Let us see how the Lahore game will impact PTI and my party candidate.

[CM Buzdar suspends major officers on direction of ECP](https://nation.com.pk/01-Mar-2021/cm-buzdar-suspends-major-officers-on-direction-of-ecp)

The PTI and its partners have 180 votes that include 156 from PTI, 7 from MQM, 5 from PML-Q, 5 from Balochistan Awami Party, 3 from GDA, 1 from JWP, 1 by Shaikh Rasheed, and 2 independent; one by Ali Nawaz Shah and one Mr. Bhutani.

On the other hand, PDM has a total of 158 votes that include PMLN 83, PPP 54, MMA 15, Mengal 4, 2 Independent of Manzoor Pashteen group, and one ANP. As per the above strengths of both sides, it shows the difference of 22 votes, in this way Gilani needs 23 votes to defeat Hafeez Shaikh as per this numerical figure but PDM may bank and try to win over Aslam Bhutani, GDAs 3 members, Ali Nawaz Shah, & Dr. Fehmida Mirza for Gilani. Gilani may win the support of some MNAs through Jahangir Tareen but he may perhaps not openly oppose PTI. Some MQM members may perhaps compromise based on old time’s sake and may ask for two seats from Sindh. If Yousaf Raza Gillani manages to attract the allies vote, then he will make it.

The above analysis is subject to secret voting whereas my sixth sense says that any voting gap will have a direct impact of the Lahore pact on Islamabad under the great ability of political handling of the two Punjab political Pundits and a powerful individual who is political mover and shaker of Pakistani politics sitting in Islamabad. Let us see how the above vote strength works with a clear conscience while voting. Both sides must remember that there can be no disseating of voters for switching the side as per the present law which is equally dangerous for both sides. It is my independent and unbiased numerical analysis based on the research by my “Institute of National Reforms “Islamabad. There will be a surprising outcome on 3rd March for the general masses despite fast internal political provincial shuttling however Pakistan needs honesty in voting and free of horse-trading. I hope our leadership will demonstrate this moral fibre to regain the lost trust of a common man.

Note: Opinions expressed are solely my own and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of my party.