**Remember this?**

[**Muhammad Zahid Rifat**](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/muhammad-zahid-rifat)

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There have been many months over the years that are remembered for their turbulent events. March 2021 was yet another due to the Senate elections that took place—involving retiring senators and chairman of the upper house of the parliament.

Asif Ali Zardari landed in Bilawal’s house in Islamabad just three days ahead of the Senate election scheduled for March 3, 2021 and played his cards from there as he went unnoticed by many.

PPP had fielded former Prime Minister and National Assembly Speaker, Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani as its candidate for the Senate seat from Islamabad. He was fully supported by the opposition parties’ alliance against PTI candidate Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh. In the hotly contested election, Gillani defeated Shaikh by a margin of five votes. While congratulating Gillani over his victory, Zardari had remarked that he should have won by a margin of 20 votes, not just five. This was an indication, which somehow went unnoticed by the media and various political circles, about his master plan involving treasury benchers and their vote for Gillani.

[Nation observes 83rd death anniversary of Allama Iqbal](https://nation.com.pk/21-Apr-2021/nation-observes-83rd-death-anniversary-of-allama-iqbal)

Yusuf Raza Gillani then contested for the position of Senate Chairman but lost to Sadiq Sanjrani as seven of his votes were cancelled. While raising hue and cry over the cancellation of votes, Zardari continued playing his cards quite mysteriously. That ultimately resulted in Gillani becoming the Opposition Leader in the Senate with the support of 30 votes—including 7 senators from the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP). This victory came as a great shock to parties, including PML-N, which had eyes on the position of the Opposition Leader in the Senate.

Asif Ali Zardari was virtually a non-entity until he married Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s daughter, Benazir Bhutto, in December 1987. Since then, he has not paused to look back and continued moving onwards to the highest office of the land, President of Pakistan, while gaining a reputation for corruption.

His wife, PPP Chairperson and former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, was tragically murdered on December 27, 2007, while she was coming out of Liaquat Bagh in Rawalpindi after addressing a public gathering. As Zardari rushed home from Dubai, he wasted no time in assuming control of the PPP. He immediately realised that only a Bhutto can have control over the party and accordingly inserted Bhutto in the names of his three children, Bilawal, Bakhtawar and Aseefa. Furthermore, he named Bilawal, who was studying in Oxford University at the time, as the Chairman and himself the Co-Chairman of the party.

[Govt to increase restrictions if Covid-19 SOPs not followed: Asad Umar](https://nation.com.pk/21-Apr-2021/govt-to-increase-restrictions-if-covid-19-sops-not-followed-asad-umar)

Cutting a long story short, PPP had won the election following the tragic demise of Benazir Bhutto and Zardari, in the process, had become the President of Pakistan after President General Pervez Musharraf had stepped down.

On his deceased wife’s first death anniversary, Asif Zardari had publicly stated that he knows the killers of his wife but would disclose their names at an appropriate time. That appropriate time has never come, even after the passage of several years now.

Prior to becoming the President, Zardari also served as a MNA and was the Federal Minister for the Environment. Initially, he was interested in the Finance Ministry but as per reports, his wife had opted to put him in a non-revenue generating department instead. He was also a Senator until October 1999 when a coup was staged by Army Chief General Pervez Musharraf ousting the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and dissolving the Senate as well as the national and provincial assemblies.

Asif Ali Zardari has been in a variety of jails for about 12 years in Pakistan because of the cases initiated against him by the Nawaz Sharif regime. He also faced a number of criminal charges and allegations in foreign countries including Switzerland, Poland and France.

[China’s Xi to attend Biden’s climate change summit](https://nation.com.pk/21-Apr-2021/china-s-xi-to-attend-biden-s-climate-change-summit)

Zardari had amassed wealth both within the country and abroad and in April 1998, a leading English newspaper had published a detailed story, running into four pages, about his properties, apartments, plots and the agriculture land in Pakistan. There is a lot more about Asif Ali Zardari and a lot more against him that could be exposed through the incumbent federal government, as it is contemplating the reopening of the Swiss case.