**Remembering Benazir Bhutto**

[**Pervaiz Saleh**](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/pervaiz-saleh)

December 28, 2022

Though we come across thousands of people in our lifetime, only a handful of individuals leave an everlasting impact. Benazir Bhutto was one such individual that would inspire generations to come, as history would recall her as one of the leading and most influential female leaders of all time.

It was a privilege and an honour to work with her and witness some historical developments in person during my association with her.

After her father’s judicial murder, she underwent severe hardships, tortures, incarcerations, adversities and victimisation.

Exposure to unfavourable circumstances and hardships at such a tender age ripened her political insight and she rated, considered and sought loyalty as a top priority while selecting her team. Being a workaholic, she rarely slept before 2am.

Whenever in Karachi, I would be summoned by her at 8am and would remain with her till 2am. She was so engrossed in politics that she would invite her friends plus journalists and politicians and kept working while attending telephone calls.

[Indian opposition's 'unity march' ends in disputed Kashmir](https://www.nation.com.pk/31-Jan-2023/indian-opposition-s-unity-march-ends-in-disputed-kashmir)

While speaking to me, she once said, “How can an innocent person like you be in politics?” When I shared with her my intention to join the PPP, she got overwhelmed with joy and said, “My troubles would now be over as I always felt short of loyal and sincere political associates.”

Steadiness was another of her personality traits. She was punctual to the dot and made sure that not a moment went wasted, thereby, vigorously maintaining her schedule by the minute. My elder brother died young, at the age of 36. Because of certain suspicions surrounding his death, we wanted to go for an autopsy. Benazir forewarned me, not to get it done, stressing that it would be a trauma for the family. She reminded me of the case of Shahnawaz Bhutto.

Finally, her assertion came out to be true. As Shahnawaz Bhutto’s death anniversary approached after Benazir’s marriage, I rang her up and conveyed my intention to attend the ceremony. She sent her car to receive me at the airport and made arrangements for my stay at Al-Murtaza, Larkana.

[Gold prices jump to Rs210,500 per tola](https://www.nation.com.pk/31-Jan-2023/gold-prices-jump-to-rs210-500-per-tola)

On our way back to Karachi, Asif Zardari and I travelled alone (just a few hour’s stopover at his hometown, where he had to preside over a Jirga). Since we were travelling alone, everything regarding the PPP came under discussion. At that time we were on the same page about all matters.

When in Karachi, I would be invariably invited by Benazir Bhutto at dinner time. My driver would keep waiting for me from 8 pm to 2 am. Then, Asif Zardari offered to send my driver back and that he would drop me off. After dropping me back, he would drop in at my room and discuss everything under the sun.

My association with Benazir Bhutto has been and would always remain one of the prime and most memorable highlights of my life.

She remains in the heart and mind of the common man as her legacy lives on and like her father, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, her name remains an integral link that connects and binds the party with the public.