

MONITOR

Political Parties' Internal Democracy

July 2015



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This monitor is meant to identify key developments during the month on Internal Democracy of Political Parties in Pakistan. In this issue:



Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) – Intra-party tribunal fiasco continues

Followed by a letter written by the Chairman PTI to the head of PTI election tribunal, Justice (r) Wajihuddin Ahmed, on July 4, 2015¹ in which he stated his acceptance of the findings of the tribunal's report and that Justice (r) Wajihuddin should immediately refrain from issuing any further pronouncements on behalf of the defunct election tribunal, the names of 69 members of the party as part of its Central Advisory Council were announced in order to advise the Chairman on party and political affairs till fresh intra-party elections could take place.² However, this effort did not stop the internal feud and eventually, Mr. Imran Khan met with Justice (r) Wajihuddin along with Mr. Hamid Khan, a key founding member of PTI, on July 30, 2015 to talk in detail about their reservations, especially with regards to those members whose party membership had been earlier suspended by the election tribunal.³



Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) – Imran Khan's policy statement on his own place in the party in PTI National Council meeting and implications for intra-party democracy

PTI held its National Council meeting on August 2, 2015 at Marriott Hotel in Islamabad. Imran Khan, in his address to the party members, openly lauded the former Secretary General and current Central Organiser of PTI Jahangir Tareen, highlighting his organizational skills and loyalty to the party, and former President of PTI Lahore, Mr. Aleem Khan for his generous donations to the party when it had gone bankrupt during the protests of August 2014. These are two of the four party officials who were strongly criticised by the tribunal constituted by the party under the chairmanship of Justice (Retired) Wajihuddin for allegedly rigging the party elections in 2012-13 and had asked for their suspension from the party offices. Not only this, Chairman Imran Khan went on to make some important policy pronouncements about his own place and powers within the party which have serious implications for the intra-party democracy which Imran Khan built so painstakingly. He said, *“Ab mere sey yeh poochein, key kon faisla kerey ga key nazriya kis ka kitna hai, kon faisla kerey ga key kis ne party ke liye kitna kaam kiya? Mein faisla keroon ga! Mein faisla keroon ga! Yeh mera faisla hai! Yeh kisi ka faisla nahin hai, yeh mera faisla hai! Mein hun, mein pehle din sey party mein hun, mein sari party janta hun, kya mujhe nai pata kon party ke liye kya kaam kerta hai?”*

Translation:

“Now you ask me who will decide who is how much ideologically committed? Who will decide who worked how much for the party? I will decide! I will decide! It's my decision! No one else will decide; I'm the one! I have been in the party since day one! I know all the party and don't I know who does what and how much for the party.”



PTI suspends Justice (Retired) Wajihuddin's basic party membership

Post this meeting of the National Council, Justice Wajihuddin



Imran Khan addressing the National Council Meeting on August 2, 2015 in Islamabad

1. Imran Khan's letter to Justice Wajihuddin, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, July 7, 2015, as accessed on July 7, 2015 at <http://www.insaf.pk/news/national-news/item/1790646-requesting-you-to-immediately-refrain-from-issuing-any-more-pronouncements-on-behalf-of-the-defunct-et-imran-khans-letter-to-justice-wajihuddin>
2. Notification of Central Advisory Council, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, July 7, 2015, as accessed on July 7, 2015 at <http://www.insaf.pk/about-us/office-of-the-secretary-general/item/1790647-notification-of-central-advisory-council>
3. Imran Khan resolves differences with Justice Wajihuddin and Hamid Khan, Dawn, July 31, 2015, as accessed on July 31, 2015 at <http://www.dawn.com/news/1197583>



started to appear on various television shows, portraying a campaign to promote the PTI election tribunal's decisions and reiterated that a four-member 'qabza' group, inclusive of Mr. Jahangir Tareen, Mr. Aleem Khan, Mr. Pervez Khattak and Mr. Nadir Leghari, had taken over the reins of the party and they needed to be eliminated immediately in accordance with the orders of the party's election tribunal.⁴

Following this open dissent, on August 4, 2015, an official notification⁵ was passed by the Chairman PTI, which stated that basic party membership would be immediately suspended if any comments were made on party's internal affairs in electronic, print or social media by any member of the party. And on August 5, 2015, this notification was brought to its implementation when the spokesperson for the Chairman PTI, Dr. Shireen M. Mazari, passed a notification that Justice (r) Wajihuddin's party membership had been suspended with immediate effect for openly defying party discipline and continuing to air internal party matters in public.⁶

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)– Dissolves and Re-emerges

On the night of July 23, 2015, MQM chief Altaf Hussain called on members of the Rabita Committee and ordered them to close down all offices, including the Nine Zero headquarters, on immediate basis. His orders were duly fulfilled and members of the party gathered outside Mr. Altaf Hussain's residence in Azizabad in order to extend their grievances regarding his decision along with their apologies. Media reports say that this action was taken as a result of the party chief's dissatisfaction over certain organisational matters that were not being properly handled by the Rabita Committee. Early the next morning, on July 24, 2015, the chief reverted his decision, all offices were re-opened and everyone was back to work.⁷

Following this dramatic shut down of the party, only three days later, on July 26, 2015, the party chief Altaf Hussain passed orders to sack members of the Rabita Committee that included Dr. Farooq Sattar, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Senator Nasreen Jalil and Mr. Amir Khan. There is no count recorded for the number of times members of the main executive body of the party have been sacked by the party chief.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) – Major Defections

Two party leaders from Punjab, Mr. Samsam Bokhari, former Minister of State and Information Secretary of PPPP and Mr. Ashraf Khan Sohna, former District President of the PPP belonging to Okara left the party in July and joined PTI.⁸ Mr. Ashraf Khan Sohna, who is also former Provincial



Altaf Hussain shuts down MQM and reverts his decision within a few hours

4. Exclusive Interview of Justice Wajihuddin on Waqt News, Siasat, August 4, 2015, as accessed on August 4, 2015 at [http://www.siasat.pk/forum/showthread.php?368287-Exclusive-Interview-Of-Justice-\(R\)-Wajihuddin-Ahmed-on-Waqt-News-%96-4th-August-2015](http://www.siasat.pk/forum/showthread.php?368287-Exclusive-Interview-Of-Justice-(R)-Wajihuddin-Ahmed-on-Waqt-News-%96-4th-August-2015)
5. Circular, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, August 4, 2015 as accessed on August 4, 2015 at <http://www.insaf.pk/news/national-news/item/1790802-circular-basic-party-membership-will-be-immediately-suspended-on-comments-on-internal-party-affairs-in-public-forums>
6. Chairman Imran Khan suspends basic party membership of Justice Wajihuddin, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, August 5, 2015 as accessed on August 5, 2015 at <http://www.insaf.pk/news/national-news/item/1790807-chairman-imran-khan-suspends-basic-party-membership-of-justice-wajihuddin-ahmed-aug-5-2015>
7. Altaf takes back directive, MQM offices reopen, Dawn, July 23, 2015, as accessed on July 30, 2015 at <http://www.dawn.com/news/1195855>
8. Bilawal takes notice of rift within party, The News, July 2, 2015, as accessed on July 20, 2015 at <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-326721-Bilawal-takes-notice-of-rift-within-party>

Minister, stated that he had resigned as a result of the biased attitude of PPP Punjab President Mian Manzoor Ahmed Wattoo who was appointing people from his family to party positions in Punjab.⁹ Mr. Samsam Bokhari, on the other hand, had particularly highlighted in an interview that PPP was not playing the role of an effective opposition in Punjab, which led to his disappointment and exit from the party.¹⁰ After the vacancy of Information Secretary PPP, Faisal Karim Kundi was appointed in the position.¹¹

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) – Meetings of PPP Chairman with Punjab Chapter

On July 2, 2015, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called for a meeting at the Bilawal House that was attended by Former Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, PPP Punjab President Manzoor Ahmed Wattoo, former Governor and President PPP South Punjab Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood, Mr. Qamar Zaman Kaira, Senator Sherry Rehman, Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan, Mr. Nadeem Afzal Chan, Mr. Tanveer Ashraf Kaira, Mr. Shaukat Basra and Mr. Jameel Soomro.¹² The very next day, on July 3, 2015, former Federal Minister and PPP leader Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan called on the Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to apprise him of the dilapidating situation in Punjab, especially in her own district Sialkot.¹³ The official media cell of the party reports that she particularly highlighted that projects started by the previous PPP government had shut down and nothing was being done in order to rekindle them. Media reports say that organizational matters of the party have been discussed in these meetings with regards to the PPP's presence in Punjab and the aim has been to establish direct contact with people in order to reorganize itself. It was also hinted that the chairman would visit the province himself for the purpose of its reorganization post Eid-ul-Fitr but no such action has so far come into the picture.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) – Meeting in Dubai

The Sindh chapter of the party saw some major reshuffling in its cabinet after a high-level meeting of the leadership took place in Dubai presided by co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari on July 21, 2015.¹⁴

This meeting was attended by Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah, Senior Minister for Finance Syed Murad Ali Shah, Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon and IT Minister Mukesh Kumar Chawla who all travelled especially to Dubai to meet with the Co-chairman PPP Asif Ali Zardari. Various ministers in the Sindh cabinet were assigned new departments and media reports have suggested that this action has been taken as part of a strategy for local government elections of Sindh that are due in September. The participation of chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was not reported in this meeting and the next day, Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah announced the new portfolios to the cabinet members.¹⁵



PPP meeting in Dubai on July 21, 2015

9. Ashraf Sohna leaves PPP, will join PTI soon, Pakistan Today, June 29, 2015, as accessed on July 20, 2015 at <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2015/06/29/national/ashraf-sohna-leaves-ppp-will-join-pti-soon/>
10. Why Samsam Bokhari left PPP? 10 PM with Nadia Mirza, News One, July 6, 2015, as accessed on July 20, 2015 at <http://www.unewstv.com/49838/10pm-with-nadia-mirza-why-samsam-bokhari-left-ppp-6th-july-2015>
11. Faisal Karim Kundi appointed Information Secretary PPP, PPP Punjab, July 2, 2015, as accessed on July 20, 2015 at <https://ppppunjab.wordpress.com/2015/07/02/faisal-karim-kundi-appointed-information-secretary-pppp/>
12. Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto presides over a meeting of PPP Punjab, Media Cell PPP, July 2, 2015, as accessed on July 20, 2015 at <https://mediacellppp.wordpress.com/2015/07/02/chairman-ppp-bilawal-bhutto-presides-over-a-meeting-of-ppp-punjab/>
13. PPP MNA Firdous Ashiq Awan called on Chairman PPP, Media Cell PPP, July 3, 2015, as accessed in July 20, 2015 at <https://mediacellppp.wordpress.com/2015/07/02/chairman-ppp-bilawal-bhutto-presides-over-a-meeting-of-ppp-punjab/>
14. Shah, 3 ministers attend PPP meeting in Dubai, July 22, 2015, as accessed on July 28, 2015 at <http://www.dawn.com/news/1195777/ministers-portfolios-changed-in-sindh>
15. Ministers' portfolios changed in Sindh, Dawn, July 23, 2015, as accessed on July 28, 2015 at <http://www.dawn.com/news/1195777/ministers-portfolios-changed-in-sindh>