

THE TRAITOR WITHIN

The Nawaz Sharif Story in his own words

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By

Suhail Warraich

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Dedication

Dedicated to the Constitution of Pakistan;
The honor of which has been ravaged again and
again.

Yet despite it all, the Constitution is still the only
foundation;

Upon which all the provinces, all the parties and “all
those” who take oath under it, can achieve consensus.
May the honor of the Constitution become a sacred
tradition!!

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Publisher's note

Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif is not merely an individual but an episode of Pakistan's history in himself, a leader who breathed new life into the corpse of the Muslim League, the founding party of Pakistan, a Muslim whose heart bleeds for Islam, a patriotic Pakistani passionate about doing something for the welfare of the nation, and a ruler who declared Pakistan the world's first Islamic nuclear power.

Much is said about Mr. Sharif, but his place in history is yet to be determined. However, the journey he made from being an industrialist to the prime ministership is no ordinary one. Rather it is a story of firm resolution, incessant activity and continuous struggle. Seven years have passed, Mr. Sharif is in exile; the present regime has taken the nation's economy and political situation to a juncture where every citizen is suffering from uncertainty; awaiting a deliverer.

The aim of Sagar Publishers is not only to promote literature but also to provide quality material on the country's history, politics, economy and society, so that in our nation awareness about good, responsible and well bred citizens awakes. Suhail Warraich had been a critic of Mian Nawaz Sharif when he was in office. Now he has seen him from very near during a number of interviews. After hectic efforts he has compiled the book in your hands: *The Traitor Within; the Nawaz Sharif Story*, in his own words.

Mr. Warraich has very nicely covered all aspects of Mr. Sharif's life -- childhood, youth, education, character, industrial activity, leadership and politics. In one respect it is a biography of Mian Nawaz Sharif and in another, it is a historical document in itself. It

contains ample answers to the questions that occur to the reader's mind about Mr. Sharif.

We are very grateful to Diwan Karim Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnaat Sahib, the *Sajjada Nashin* [the descendent] of *Aastana Alia* Bhera Sharif, who appreciated this work and encouraged us to realize it. The praiseworthy services of Pir Sahib and his family for the Pakistan Muslim League form part of the history of Pakistan. His and his family's association with Muslim League is only for Islam and Pakistan. For this faithfulness he has suffered many agonies and difficulties, to the extent that along with his brothers he had to suffer imprisonment, following the path of the Prophet Joseph. The basis of his relations with Mr. Sharif being Islam and Pakistan, he did not stop supporting him in this time of tribulation. We are also indebted to Sahibzada Al-Haj Muhammad Hafeez Al-Barkat Shah, the Managing Director of Zia-ul-Quran Publications, Lahore, for the guidance he provided us at every stage of compilation and publication, beside, his very valuable counsel and practical assistance. Without his cooperation this historical work could have not been produced with its present excellence. Our thanks are also due to Mr. Akhtar, the owner of Al-Tasveer, and to Zulifqar Ali Balti, who provided us most of the valuable pictures. We hope you will like our effort.

We are thankful to Mr. I.G.Awan doing the tedious job of translating this book in to English.

Sagar Publishers Lahore

Writer's note

WHY THIS BOOK?

Mian Nawaz Sharif is perhaps the only political personality whose life is still a myth. The inner details of his political life are not only hidden from his opponents but from his closest supporters. It is not that their information about him is altogether wrong, but to say the least it is incomplete. Actually Mian Nawaz Sharif keeps his secrets close to his heart and is shy of making tall claims, as is the wonton of all politicians.

While Mian Nawaz Sharif was active in politics, I was not an admirer of his policies. As a journalist I had been meeting him on one-on-one basis, at press conferences as well as at political and social gatherings but I could not get opportunity to dig him deep and to get his explanations about criticism of him from time to time. I had been covering him as a political reporter for [*largest circulation Urdu-language daily*] *Jang* when he was Punjab chief minister but the truth is I could not accept his style of politics or his policies. Mian Nawaz Sharif moved ahead as a rightist leader, climbing up the ladder of politics till he reached the ultimate political position, that of the prime minister. Ups and downs kept on occurring in politics during his second prime ministership. I had been one of those 14 journalists whom he wanted to get fired from *Jang*. The issue was tackled somehow, but the wheel of destiny could not be stopped, and it put an end to his rule on October 12, 1999. After having undergone imprisonment, court trials and difficulties, he reached Saudi Arabia [to serve an exile]. My journalistic curiosity compelled me to get first hand information about Mr. Sharif. My sincere and kind friend Suhail Zia Butt helped me. And thus one day I broke a journey to America, in Saudi Arabia, for performing Umra; where Mr. Butt arranged my meeting with Mr. Sharif. The start of the meeting was not pleasant.

However, later on a few meetings and some sweet and bitter dialogs built a foundation for my new relations with him. This is, however, a relation between an impartial journalist and a veteran politician, in which the journalist desires to disseminate maximum information to the public as his professional duty.

Thereafter, a lot of meetings were held with Mr. Sharif in Saudi Arabia and London; after every meeting it appeared to me that most of the characteristics of his personality and politics are hidden from the public eye as yet. To reveal them to the public and to get explanations about them will be like adding some new colors to the incomplete picture of Pakistani politics. I put the idea of this book before Mian Nawaz Sharif in 2003; he, after some reluctance, agreed to it with his customary large-heartedness. Thereafter the series of interviews started. Because of his shyness, besides certain reservations and because of the advice of some people, he time and again asked me to postpone publication of the book. Because of this delay, I had the opportunity for several more sessions of interviews that added to my information. Finally it was in London of April 2006 when I got a chance to meet him dozens of times within just one month and tried hard for his approval to publish the whole story his approval after a lot of persuasion. He seemed reluctant but after going through the manuscript, Mrs. Kulsoom Nawaz Sharif's heart softened, She and Hassan Nawaz hailed the book and recommended him to allow its publication immediately and thus my effort, spread over three years, bore fruit.

In *The Traitor Within: the Nawaz Sharif Story*, in his own words I have tried to answer every such question a common Pakistani wants to ask. Every objection raised or allegation leveled against him was discussed with him in detail. Many sweet and bitter questions on his political decisions, his analysis, Kargil [an armed conflict between India and Pakistan that took place between May and July 1999 in the Kargil district of Kashmir], General Pervez Musharraf and the Army, were also asked. With these answers, many incomplete stories shall be completed and at least one facet of imperfectly known events will come to the fore through this book. Now it is the responsibility of other historians to bring out the other facets. Similarly a hectic effort has also been made to gather everything together about him from [his wife] Mrs. Kulsoom Nawaz, [younger brother] Mian Shahbaz Sharif, [sons] Hussain Nawaz and Hassan Nawaz, [his military secretary] Brigadier Javed Malik and [son-in-law] Captain Safdar.

This is an effort to bring to public as far as possible all the details of his rule, difficulties and his days in exile. Around many events of his life, of his period in office, jail, and exile, a curtain of mystery had prevailed. Who knew how a young industrialist entered politics, or who knew what special skills did he use to compete successfully against very big political contemporaries to become Chief Minister of the Punjab [on April 9, 1985] Or who knows how he dealt with military ruler [September 16, 1978 - August 17, 1988] Zia-ul-Haq, prime minister [March 24, 1985 May 29, 1988] Muhammad Khan Junejo, caretaker prime minister [August 6, 1990 November 6, 1990] Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and then prime minister [December 2, 1988 -- August 6, 1990 and October 19, 1993 -- November 5, 1996] Benazir Bhutto, president [August 17, 1988 - July 18, 1993] Ghulam Ishaq Khan, and army chiefs generals [1988 - 1991] Aslam Beg, [1991 - 1993] Asif Nawaz and finally Pervez Musharraf [who took power on October 12, 1999, ousting Nawaz Sharif, the elected prime minister, thereby assuming the title of Chief Executive. Later on, he declared himself president after a referendum on June 20, 2001] I have tried to ensure that all such questions are properly answered. A general impression about Nawaz Sharif is that he is a simpleton and a straightforward man but my impression is paradoxically opposite. To me he is a very profound man with unfathomed depths, and though apparently very simple, he is extremely intelligent and intellectually very astute. He analyses each of his visitors by asking very simple questions, whereas he expresses his own thoughts after due consideration. He loves tidiness and regularity; he has a deep interest in music; he loves human beings very much; while dealing with them he demonstrates the utmost humility. Most people think he takes affairs very lightly, sees matters superficially, but in my opinion he is a very meticulous person who analyzes the matter very minutely, and always studies matters deeply. The real Nawaz Sharif is not he who is seen outwardly. Rather my impression is that the real Nawaz Sharif is not merely a sloganeering politician or an emotional man, rather he is a realistic analyst, and a very pragmatic thinker.

To interview Nawaz Sharif is an uphill task, very taxing of one's patience. He is difficult man to talk; he will talk to you on mundane matters as much as you want, but he is hesitant about recorded interviews or perhaps this is how he tests the interviewer's patience. In 2003, I stayed at Jeddah for more than a month and later on in April 2006 in London I stayed for a month and a half, I kept on

meeting him regularly; the present book is the outcome of those sessions.

The Traitor Within is being published in a style different from traditional books. Its important points, headlines, subheadings, questions and answers, all have a very peculiar style. These innovations give a new journalistic color to the book. The aim is to facilitate the readers; for this style and content I am indebted to Professor Salim Mansur Khalid, my teacher at Forman Christian College, Lahore, who took extra interest in beautifying the book, and whose commendable efforts went into arranging its index. I am also thankful to [columnist and poet] Atta-ul-Haq Qasmi for reading the basic manuscript from beginning to end; he gave me much good advice and remained prepared at times for my guidance; however much I thank him is inadequate.

This book is an attempt to touch on each and every aspect of the life of Nawaz Sharif, but its most sensitive subject is his exit from power and then from Pakistan. The title of this book has been chosen with this in mind. An attempt has been made to bring out the details of [the controversial conflict of] Kargil, Pakistan-India relations, the nuclear tests, Pakistan-United States relations and the covert and open conflict with army chief Pervez Musharraf. He speaks about Article 6 of the Constitution [which says "Any person who abrogates or attempts or conspires to abrogate, subverts or conspires to subvert the Constitution by use of force or show of force or by other unconstitutional means shall be guilty of high treason] for all these years. He repeatedly underlines his innocence, that he was deposed illegally. He insists that he will first get it decided as to who was the traitor within, and then he will take part in elections or in politics. In view of this fundamental point, the book has been titled accordingly.

General Musharraf's book "In the Line of Fire" has reopened debate on certain issues, including Kargil and the takeover. Nawaz Sharif was once again interviewed (October 2006) to get each and every answer of the points raised in Musharraf's book. I talked to him soon after his deportation to Jeddah. His dramatic comeback on 25th November was again a new mystery, which will be unfolded to the people in the days to come. My exclusive and first ever interview of General Zia-ud-Din too discloses many secrets.

Major Pirzada Muhammad Ibrahim Shah of Bhera Sharif, the publisher, deserves more than formal thanks, for he helped in many

ways; in selection of pictures, in different stages of the preparation of the manuscript and in beautifying the book. It is not irrelevant to state that the traditional qualities of pleasant nature and love of learning of the late Justice Pir Muhammad Karam Shah of Bhera Sharif have been inherited by his offspring. The continuous encouragement of Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnaat Shah, Sajadah Nashin of Bhera Sharif contributed much to the compilation of this book.

This book would have been impossible if my family had not encouraged me and borne with patience my repeated visits abroad; especially my Uncle Khalid Mehmood Warraich, Arshad Mehmood Warraich and my wife Samina. This book could have not been started if my sincere friend Suhail Zia Butt had not arranged my repeated meetings with Nawaz Sharif. The idea of this book belongs to him and to him its credit is due as well.

During the compilation and publication, at different stages Arshad Jilani (Jang), Imran Yaqoob Khan (Geo TV), Umman Aziz (TV One), Muhammad Usman (Waqt TV) Ashraf Sharif (LUMS) and Sadaf Sheikh (Gift University) assisted me; some read the manuscript and some did the proofreading. I am thankful to all of them. I am also thankful to my personal friends Tahir Choudhry (London), Faisal Aziz (Karachi), Raja Aamir Khan, Munir Ahmad Khan, Ch Fawad, Ch Jehangir Akhtar (late) and especially Amir Mir, for they gave me valuable advice at every stage of compilation and publication; which helped improving the book. Mazhar Barlas and Zulfiqar Balti provided the pictures and encouraged me with very beautiful words.

From abroad, Bhai Jan Muhammad Naeem (New York), Azim M. Mian (New York), Afaaq Khayali (New York), Ijaz Shah (New York), Hafiz Mehmood-ul-Hussain (Saudi Arabia), Raja Matloob (Dubai), Khalil-ur-Rehman (New York), Dr Manzur Ijaz (Washington), Sajid Chaudhry (New York), Amjad Nawaz Sidiqui, Rohail Dar (New York), Mian Fayyaz (New York) and especially Akhtar Khan Gopang from Dubai repeatedly kept on asking about the book that proved spur and impetus to my passions.

I want to pay gratitude to my mentor M.A.Niazi who consented to have a look at the translated manuscript of the book and despite his busy schedule he went through the book and made a lot of improvements. He got ill in the meantime and a dear friend Waqar

Mustafa did rest of the job meticulously. I am also indebted to I.G.Awan who translated the first Urdu draft of the book.

In the end, it is hoped all will like the style of narration, the information and the interviews in this book.

Suhail Warraich

December, 2007

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The Story of Nawaz Sharif

- EARLY LIFE
- PRACTICAL LIFE AND POLITICS
- THORNY PATH OF THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP
- POLITICAL UPS AND DOWNS
- END GAME
- IN JEDDAH & LONDON
- ON MUSHARRAF'S BOOK
- BACK HOME AFTER THE SECOND DEPORTATION

It took almost 50 sittings in Jeddah and London from 2000 to 2007 to retrieve Nawaz Sharif's story "The Traitor Within". Dozens of telephonic conversations also helped update the story according to the events taking place. The latest conversation was conducted after his dramatic come back soon after the second deportation. The untold stories of his 2nd forced exile and then an easy mysterious entry in Pakistan on 25th November were all tried to explore.

EARLY LIFE

- ◆ Childhood
- ◆ Migration
- ◆ Extraordinary love for father
- ◆ Education, History and favorite hero
- ◆ Memories
- ◆ Unforgettable incidents
- ◆ Hobbies

CHILDHOOD

- My correct date of birth is 25th December 1949
- I was obstinate as a child; I used to get angry if my demand was refused
- Cricket was my favorite game; Maulvi Sahib [The Quran teacher] used to punish me
- My father used to hold money in his hand very firmly for others but he always loosened his grip for me
- My father participated in the Pakistan Resolution Conference in 1940
- My father had meetings with Allama Iqbal
- I used to be very serious in school; no complaint about me ever reached home

CORRECT DATE OF BIRTH

Q. What is your date of birth? Is 25th December really the correct date or did your parents recall this date since it's a famous day?

Nawaz Sharif: My correct date of birth is 25th December 1949. It has happened time and again that my date of birth is mentioned as 1948 and even 1947 in one place. I was born two years after Independence. My father got married in 1948, one year after the creation of Pakistan, and then I was born in 1949.

How did you spend your childhood; were you a naughty boy or did you have a serious disposition?

Nawaz Sharif: Childhood! (Pausing) In fact, I do not remember my infancy; however I have heard from the elders that I was a bit obstinate; quick to be pleased and quick in getting angry, (smiling) the ingredient of stubbornness was found lavishly inside me; I never missed getting a thing once I liked it.

Did your parents submit to your desires?

Nawaz Sharif: Not always; I recall many times they did not fulfill my desires and demands. Now they tell me that I used to get angry and even stop speaking to them.

INTEREST IN GAMES

Which games were you fond of?

Nawaz Sharif: I was fond of cricket from my childhood. We lived in Lahore at 90 Railway Road, near the Technical Institute. While going to Islamia College from Railway Station you come across Dalgaran Square. Our house was on its right. Our forefathers built this house in 1930. It was like a mansion where I was brought up. At first, I joined the Convent from where I did my Kindergarten. Then I got admission in St Anthony's; by the grace of God, my schooling was excellent.

What do you mean by excellent schooling?

Nawaz Sharif: By excellent schooling I mean both of my schools were excellent.

In which subjects did you take interest there?

Nawaz Sharif: I was admitted to St Anthony's in Class II; obviously all subjects were taught in English.

How did you find the Missionary School; did you feel any sort of religious prejudice there?

Nawaz Sharif: I don't think I found anything against religion or against our values; nor anything repugnant to our Islamic culture or society. Rather we were taught Islamic studies there; the teacher was very eminent, and a noble man as well. The Urdu teacher, a Christian, was very loving to us. Most of the teachers were Christians, but they never did an undue favor to anybody. I was

strong and sturdy from my schooldays; I was in the habit of heavy physical exercise. Since my childhood, I took great interest in cricket. We used to play in the cricket ground of the Technical Institute at Railway Road. I took interest in cricket right there; we used to play cricket with people from the neighborhood. It is for this reason I gave more attention to cricket as a game.

How were you as a student, brilliant, bad or average?

Nawaz Sharif: I think I was good in my studies. My career had never been bad; many times I came second in class, sometimes tenth, but never below fifteenth. Most of the times I was second or third, but I never came first in the class. As I recall I stood second in Class IV; Major Shabbir Sharif *Shaheed* [the martyr] had been three or four year's senior to me.

Who else were your class fellows with whom you stayed in touch?

Nawaz Sharif: Naeem Bukhari, Arif Nizami and Saleem Altaf were my schoolmates, though senior by two or three years. Many famous people today in politics and in other fields of life were my contemporaries or class fellows.

Well! Tell me, did you ever do any mischief in school, or were you ever punished?

Nawaz Sharif: No. Basically I was a well-behaved boy; I was very serious in school, I never played any pranks. I never did such a thing in school as might cause anxiety or perplexity.

FATHER'S REBUKE

Did your father rebuke you in those days?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, my father used to rebuke me at several things and then my mother used to pet me and console me and give me good advice. However, my father used to maintain a serious demeanor with us.

Well! At school, did you ever think of politics or about becoming a politician?

Nawaz Sharif: No, not at all. I did not take interest in politics. My knowledge about politics was limited to famous names like Ayub Khan or other politicians.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Did you get a formal religious education?

Nawaz Sharif: In fact, I learned to read the Quran in early childhood. Then I repeated its reading many times. I recall the Maulvi Sahib, who taught me the Quran, was a very fine and nice man from Uttar Pradesh, India. He lived in Rashi Bhawan, a place on Railway Road. Apart from being a very nice man he was a *Hafiz-e-Quran* as well. He used to put a pencil in between my fingers and press them severely whenever I erred in reading the Quran. Although this used to hurt, he taught me the Quran with love and care. He never neglected our mistakes; he always punished us for them.

When and where from did you get your concept of religion?

Nawaz Sharif: Environment of our home was very religious. I mean, by the grace of God, we had been given a religious education from childhood. Many religious men used to visit our home. We used to hold religious meetings, both for men and women, at our home where lectures on religion were delivered. In the houses where parents observe religious obligations with great care and frequency, the children do follow them. As I have told you, my father used to recite the Quran aloud daily in the morning. All the family members used to listen to his sweet recitation. It was for this reason that the environment of our home was very religious.

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD

Fathers used to avoid expressing their love to their children in the good old days. Were you treated that way?

Nawaz Sharif: My father used to encourage me in studies. He had arranged a tutor for me at home. He always encouraged me to take part in healthy games; he always persuaded me to do physical exercise. He always took me with him on his walks. He got me to run daily and do exercise. I accompanied him to Lawrence Garden daily where I used to jog. Besides, every Sunday or on holidays, he used to take us with him to our factory at Kot Lakhpat. There were agricultural fields as well as dairy farms. At this time our factory had not yet been nationalized. In addition, on Sunday, he used to grip four-Anna and eight-Anna coins very firmly in his hand and invite us to open his fist. If we succeeded, the coins would be ours. In those days the one-rupee coin had not yet been minted. We used to exert our full might to open his fist (smiling). At times, our nails would scratch his hands and then he would call us donkeys. My youngest

brother Abbas, while failing to open his fist, used to warn Father to give him whatever was in his fist, otherwise he would tear apart his shirt. (Smiling) We all brothers used to wrangle with our father at one place in one room on a bed together. It was done turn-by-turn. For example if I succeeded in opening his fist, I would get all the money in it. Then it was Shahbaz's turn and then Abbas'.

So who used to win most and who used to get more coins?

Nawaz Sharif: I was the winner most of the times. Besides, to encourage me he used to loosen his grip for me.

POCKET MONEY

Did you get pocket money in your childhood? How did you spend it?

Nawaz Sharif: I used to get four Annas daily from my father as pocket money. This was spent daily. In those days Pepsi and Coke were available for two Annas a bottle. We used to go to Regal Square to take chholay from Meraj Din whenever we succeeded in putting together eight Annas. I still keep in touch with Meraj Din. Some days back I was told he was not vending from his pushcart, and then I asked after his health.

MEMORABLE EVENTS OF MY FATHER

What sort of stories did you like to hear in childhood?

Nawaz Sharif: My father was fond of telling us the events of his childhood and of his business. He used to tell that at what stage which event had taken place. For example, when in 1950 he was thinking about establishing the factory at Kot Lakhpat, he sent his brother to Havelian, near Jhelum, to buy the timber. When he reached Jhelum, he was robbed of Rs 100,000, which was the equivalent of Rs 100 million of today. My father reached there right next day; lodged the complaint with the police, who started hunting the dacoits and ultimately succeeded in arresting them. The recovery was made and thus he got the money back. My father used to narrate such events to us very fondly. He, in fact, wanted to make his children conversant with the background and history of our family. He wanted us to know the events and incidents our parents had experienced. My father told us he got his education from the Muslim High School Lahore and then he got admission in the Khalsa College, Amritsar. Afterwards, he started his business.

My father also told us he had had the opportunity of meeting Allama Muhammad Iqbal, not once but twice or thrice. [*Iqbāl, November 9, 1877–April 21, 1938, was an Indian Muslim poet, philosopher, and politician, whose poetry in Persian and Urdu is regarded as among the greatest in modern times. Also famous for his work on religious and political philosophy in Islam, he is credited with first proposing the idea of an independent state for Indian Muslims, which would inspire the creation of Pakistan. He is commonly referred to as Allama Iqbal, Allama meaning scholar*] My father used to visit the Allama at home.

He had also participated in the Pakistan Resolution Conference chaired by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, [the founder of Pakistan], in 1940. He used to narrate such events to us to make us know from which difficult stages he had made his way to his present position.



MIGRATION

- Ours was the only Muslim family in Jati Umra
- We faced no religious discrimination from non-Muslims
- My ancestors' lands were small and limited.
- Our family had sincere relationships with Hindus and Sikhs
- In 1965, I visited Jati Umra for the first time with my father and uncle
- My father settled in Lahore in 1930 and established an industry in 1937

PARENTS' MIGRATION

Q. Your family migrated from Jati Umra to Lahore. What reminiscences have you heard about Jati Umra from your family?

Nawaz Sharif: My father belonged to Jati Umra. It is a village about 20 km from Amritsar, in Taran Taran tehsil. Sikhs dominated Jati Umra. Perhaps you do not know, but the only Muslim family living in Jati Umra was ours. Our ancestors' landholdings were small and limited. My grandfather, Muhammad Ramadan, worked very hard to bring up his children. I think he did a great deed by preserving Islamic values and thereafter transmitting them into his children, while living among the Sikh community.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH NON-MUSLIMS

What kind of relationships did your family have with the Sikhs and Hindus?

Nawaz Sharif: Well, my father tells that they had very sincere and friendly relationship with Hindus and Sikhs. They never practiced any religious discrimination against us; on the occasions of marriage, death or other social gatherings, we were treated as equals. We used to visit one another without any prejudice or discrimination. The non-Muslims always treated us the same as they did all the other villagers.

Have you ever been there?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, I have been there; perhaps it was 1965, I was in Class X when I accompanied my father and uncle on a visit there. The whole family visited the village. I can never forget the love and affection with which the Sikhs of our native village welcomed us. We enjoyed the visit very much. My father used to tell us stories of our past, so we were eager to visit our native village. We wanted to see the locations of such fascinating events. We were fervently happy to meet the people who had treated our family with equality in the bygone days.

My mother belonged to Amritsar city, my father to its vicinity. However, my father had migrated to Lahore well before the creation of Pakistan. He came to Lahore in 1930 and established his engineering industry in 1937. Before Independence, it was the first engineering industry to manufacture oil expellers. Afterwards, it started manufacturing diesel engines. By the grace of God, when Pakistan came into being, our industry was diversifying. Many of our relatives migrated from East Punjab to Lahore and then they spread out in cities like Faisalabad and Lahore. My father tells us that all of them came to our home first, and then after four months moved to other places to settle permanently.



EXTRAORDINARY LOVE FOR FATHER

- Mian Sharif is the ideal of the entire family
- He was so punctual that watches could be set
- I entered politics on his advice
- Rafiq Tarar was not appointed as president on my father's advice
- 'Say not "ugh" to your parents when they grow old
- I have seen my parents offering *tahajjud* prayers since childhood
- I never saw my father asleep after sunrise
- Father always woke up at 3 am and then used to go to Lawrence Garden for his morning walk
- Father advised Kulsoom to go out and deliver firm statements
- On the advice of my father I accepted the offices of chief minister and then Prime minister

FATHER'S EXTRAORDINARY QUALITIES

Every child loves his parents but your love for your father was undoubtedly exemplary and extraordinary. Would you please tell us why?

Nawaz Sharif: It is our good luck and of course, the blessings of God that gave us an opportunity to serve our parents. The Quran also says: 'Say not even as much as "ugh" to your parents when they grow old.'

[And your Lord has commanded that you shall not serve any but Him, and goodness to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them (so much as) "ugh," nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: "My Lord, bestow on them. Your mercy even as they cherished me in childhood." (Al-Israa' 23-24)].

Praise is to God, from childhood we were brought up in an environment where respect for the parents was a priority. Our nature is also important. We are thankful to God that He blessed us by letting us serve our parents throughout our life. I think it is our good luck indeed.

Did your father Mian Sharif have any extraordinary traits that attracted you?

Nawaz Sharif: Look, I had seen both my father and mother offering the *Tahajjud* prayer [voluntary prayers during the night] regularly. I never saw my father asleep after sunrise; rather well before it he was always awake. It was the same with my mother. We may have erred in childhood and even now we do make many mistakes. However, I have seen my parents always offering prayers and fasting. I have never seen my parents miss a prayer. My father used to leave at 6.30 a.m. for work, but he never stayed asleep after 3 a.m. He would frequently drive me with him for a morning walk and exercise in Lawrence Garden [Lahore]. He used to make many rounds of a ground behind what is now the Quaid-i-Azam Library (old Gymkhana Lahore). I used to follow him, but jogging, and then he used to let me exercise along with him. Then he used to stand on his head without any support. I was in school when he used to drag me along for the walk and exercise.

After the exercise he used to offer his morning prayer in Masjid Dar-ul-Islam in Lawrence Garden. Shahbaz Sharif also accompanied us in the morning walk and exercise. We used to drive back home after having offered our morning prayer in congregation. After reaching home he used to bathe, have breakfast and then leave for his office at six o'clock. I have seen my father so punctual in his routine that we could guess the exact time by seeing him engaged in a particular activity. Such things do impress. As I grew older, I thought the man so punctual, such an exquisite administrator, with such excellent habits, honest and earnest to his cause, that he must be followed. He must have influenced not only me but all his children. In this way, he is our ideal. By his integrity and hard work, he had elevated our family to so high a status. His mettle and bravery is a guiding light for us.

POLITICAL FORESIGHT

You are generally reputed to have sought your father's advice in political as well as general affairs. Were you impressed by his political foresight?

Nawaz Sharif: Look; my father had neither a political background nor any interest in politics. Perhaps he might have had some interest for me to play a role in politics. If he had any such desire in his heart, he never expressed it.

When I first entered politics I did seek his permission and guidance. He said if I liked the field he had no objection. He would not stand in my way. Obviously, I took this step not just after finishing my studies, but also after spending some time in business with him. From 1971 to 1978 I was in business; I had started to take interest in politics. I had a keen interest in political developments, in what was going on in the country around us. However, till 1978 I was not a fervent politician at all.

Which political advice of your father's proved useful?

Nawaz Sharif: I feel proud that God blessed me with the opportunity of getting advice from my father. To have the habit of consulting the elders is in fact a blessing of God. To seek counsel from one's father is not a bad thing. It is rather a matter of pride to seek your parents' advice; yes, even about politics. I have found their advice good for me. Kulsoom's open political activity during my arrest was the outcome of his advice. It proved a good decision. Many people asked him to make Kulsoom tone down her statements lest Nawaz Sharif

had to pay the cost. However, he did not agree and said he would suggest she give sterner statements instead. (Smiling).

WHICH ADVICE AND WHEN?

And which political advice did he give and to what extent he understood the politics?

Nawaz Sharif: He had political acumen from which I benefited many times. In the last days he had grown too old, but in the past I had benefited from him very much. The media and the politicians had wanted me to stop respecting my father; violating the Quranic injunction of honoring one's parents. To respect parents is an obligation upon the children; it also includes seeking their advice. If your parents are competent enough to give advice on politics, you must seek it. I entered politics on my father's advice. He preferred politics to business for me. It was for this reason I was allowed by him to become Chief Minister of Punjab [in 1985] and then Prime minister of Pakistan [in 1990].

ADVICE ON TARAR'S PRESIDENCY

The negative spin is that whatever decision you made was according to your father's will. You revered your father only and neglected the counsels of your colleagues, thus overlooking many important issues.

Nawaz Sharif: Actually, my father used to say to me that I had a better understanding of politics, so I must decide myself. He never tried to thrust his decisions on me. I came up with the name of Rafiq Tarar for president, and sought his opinion. He opined in my favor without mentioning any other name. Parents bid their children to always follow their decisions but he never did so. Since there were many political matters where I had more information than him, I used to seek his advice after briefing him in detail. He used to tell me to take counsel of my political colleagues on such issues, and reach a sound decision. Many people ridicule me for always seeking my father's advice. Listen, if you don't respect your parents, don't try to stop me from doing so. I say those who have their parents but fail to respect them, are unfortunate. Whenever the newspapers published a news item that we had sought our father's advice, we always felt pride. The decision to make Rafiq Tarar the President of Pakistan [January 1, 1998 – June 20, 2001] was solely mine. I mentioned his name to my father and he very kindly acceded.

Did you have any other choice than Tarar?

Nawaz Sharif: The circumstances in which Tarar was nominated president were very crucial. President Farooq Leghari [November 14, 1993 -- December 2, 1997] had betrayed his own party. [In 1993, with the express support of the Pakistan Peoples' Party he ran for the office of President and won the election against Wasim Sajjad. In November 1996, utilizing his powers under Article 58 2(b) of the Constitution of Pakistan, he dismissed the Peoples' Party government of Benazir Bhutto on charges of corruption, lawlessness and extra judicial killings.] While participating in the general elections I had kept in mind that Farooq Leghari was a traitor, so I must bring such a man as would not create problems, for we wanted to serve people and not waste our energies in intrigues and conspiracies. For the very reason Tarar was chosen. I was worried about Farooq Leghari, for a man who could betray his leader, Benazir Bhutto, could do anything, which was why I could not enjoy a good relationship with him. Rafiq Tarar very successfully played his role. During my arrest, he talked to Bill Clinton when he visited Pakistan [March 25, 2000], about my acquittal. I think after Musharraf's takeover he did not quit the Presidency just to help me.



EDUCATION, HISTORY & FAVORITE HERO

- Several teachers in college used to smoke in class
- The historical role of the Punjab is cowardly
- The Sindhi judge was very much pressurised but he stood firm
- If the judge had been a Punjabi, he might have penned his decision before the trial
- As against Punjab's disposition, the Indian Rajput always fought gallantly
- I never pray only for the Muslims but for all of God's creatures
- Delhi and Lahore are very similar; Agra appealed to me very much
- I had wanted to renovate Rohtas Fort but I did not get time to do so

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Q. Do you remember any of your schoolteachers? Would you please shed light on the merits and demerits of the educational system and medium of instruction at that time?

Nawaz Sharif: (Pause) I remember the names of many of my teachers. For example, Mrs. Christopher was the lady teacher of our

first standard, whereas Mrs. Bux taught us in second standard. The name of the lady teacher of third standard I have forgotten. But Mr. de Silva taught us in fourth standard. I still remember there was a Mr. Silveira in our school. Some lady teachers were Parsis and some Christians while there was a Muslim teacher with beard who taught us Islamic studies. There was a Christian teacher who taught us Urdu. We have a lot of teachers including a British principal. At the time very strict discipline was observed; the standard of education was very high; there was always silence throughout the school. Nobody ever broke the discipline. First we sang the national anthem and then the teaching work was started. We were bound to pass fixed hours at school. Teachers' attitude towards their pupils was very loving and caring. They used to teach with extra care. As I have already told you, I never witnessed any discrimination or prejudice of any kind.

What flaws did you experience in our education system? Why do you think standard of our education is declining?

Nawaz Sharif: The basic reason for the decline of our education in both schools and colleges, in big cities and small towns alike, is the defective syllabus. No pain is ever taken about it. The second reason is that the teaching staff is usually recruited against merit. And when the quality of teachers is not good, how can they impart quality education to the children? Besides, many teachers come to school, mark their presence and then take off for the rest of the day. Education must be privatized, for it is not the business of government to run schools and universities but of the people; it is so everywhere. In all the foreign countries, all the famous educational institutions are being run and administered by the private sector.

These institutions were thought better than other schools. For example, the standard of Aitchison College [Lahore] was much higher and better than the government schools, even better than the colleges. The environment of Government College, Lahore, where I studied, was very casual; many a teacher used to smoke in class before the students. If a lecturer smokes in front of his students in class, it would definitely adversely affect the youngsters. This is a small example, but there were many teachers who observed discipline very strictly. They always spent the entire period in delivering their lectures without wasting a moment. They loved their pupils, and made them learn good things. There was a teacher who taught us Political Science, his name was Dr Safdar Mehmood, he

always taught his class with hard work and extra care. Education in Pakistan needs special attention; the standard of education in government schools where the children of the majority of our population study, has gone much worse in recent years. There is an urgent need to revise teachers' pay scales immediately; and private schools and colleges must play their role. However, the syllabus of public and private schools must be the same so that the poor and the rich find equal opportunities in education.

Which subjects did you read in BA?

Nawaz Sharif: My electives in BA were Political Science and History. In those days Mashkooor Hussain Yaad was our Urdu teacher. He used to behave with love and affection; even today we stay in touch with him. Such memories are very sweet; memories of school and college are very beautiful. My heart aches to go to the same building, environment, classrooms and playgrounds. I want to compare the environment of the past and the present. Dr. Nazir was the Principal of Government College in our days, he had a very simple disposition; he was a selfless man and I think such people in the education sector are our national assets.

FAVORITE SUBJECTS

Which were your favorite subjects?

Nawaz Sharif: I took a keen interest in history. The defeat of Ibrahim Lodhi at the hands of Babar at Panipat is a fascinating event. Babar had a very small army. He had experienced many difficulties in his early age. He was exiled from Farghana, today's Uzbekistan, after death of his father. In exile he established his army, conquered Kabul at first and then India. The Mughals made many a blunder. Otherwise, they would have not fallen prey to decline and fall.

TIMID ROLE OF PUNJAB

What has been the role of Punjab in history?

Nawaz Sharif: There is a lot of difference between Punjab and Sindh. In my case, the Sindh Judge was pressurized very much to award me capital punishment, but he refused to submit. However, had there been a Punjabi Judge he would probably have written the judgment in advance, before the trial. General Mehmood and General Musharraf pressurized Judge Rahmat Hussain Jaffery to award me capital punishment but he refused. [Jaffery presided over a trial of Nawaz Sharif and his associates for refusing landing permission to a

Pakistani airliner carrying some 200 passengers including Chief of Army Staff Gen. Pervez Musharraf on Oct. 12, 1999. Sharif had dismissed Gen. Musharraf as army chief earlier in the day while the general was on his way back from a visit to Sri Lanka, triggering a coup in support of the discharged general]

Punjab's role had not been right; Punjab always saluted every conqueror; it never resisted. However, the role of Punjabi ruler Raja Porus [circa 326 BC], against Alexander the Great was daring and commendable. He was the only exception, otherwise all of the conquerors and invaders ravaged Punjab unhindered and fought their first battle at Panipat. It had become Punjab's psyche; it was for this reason Punjab did not participate in the 1857 War of Independence. Against Punjab's character, the Rajputs of India fought very gallantly; even their womenfolk's bravery became proverbial, such as the bravery of the Rani of Chitor or that of the Rani of Jhansi.

HISTORICAL HEROES

The names of two or three favorite heroes?

Nawaz Sharif: (Pause) Indo-Pak history, especially the Mughal period [1526 - 1857], is very interesting. I think the older periods may also be very interesting but because this period is not too old, people do have more interest in it. I think at this stage I can neither tell you whether it was Mughal Emperor Babar [1526-1530] I liked very much or Akbar [1556-1605] or Jehangir [1605-1627] and Alamgir [1659-1707], nor can I say whether Lord Hastings [Governor-General of India 1813-1823] was my favorite hero or the Nizam of Haiderabad [1911-1948] or Sirajud Daula, [1733 - July 2, 1757, the last independent Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, the end of whose reign marks the start of British East India Company rule in India].

AKBAR THE GREAT

Mughal Emperor Akbar is called Akbar the Great, is he your favorite hero?

Nawaz Sharif: Look! No doubt Akbar the Great was more famous than other Mughal emperors yet he had certain negative traits in his character. He introduced a new faith that was neither Islamic nor had any connection with Hinduism or Sikhism. [Dīn-i Ilāhī or self styled "Divine Faith" was a syncretic elitist religious cult propounded by the Mughal emperor Akbar intended to merge selected elements of the religions of his empire (primarily Hinduism and Islam; elements

were also taken from Christianity, Jainism and Zoroastrianism)] I think it was a negative aspect of his life. To love creatures is good; besides Muslims, I pray for all creatures, for they are God's creation. However, I pray for the Muslims specifically, taking it as my duty. We must pray for all of God's creatures for this would also include the Muslims. You cannot separate the Muslims from the rest of creation, for you must not be enemy to other creatures.

You have certain reservations against Akbar's Din-i-Elahi, what are his positive aspects?

Nawaz Sharif: He had introduced a religion that was absolutely separate from all other religions, and it ended with his life. It is a major negative aspect of his life but there were certainly several good aspects to his character, such as treating all peoples alike without pride or prejudice. He treated Muslims and non-Muslims equally, without discrimination against any sect of his subjects, and he delivered justice to all. All these are good values. We should also bring harmony among all the sects, castes and classes of our nation in Pakistan. We should treat all equally regardless of their religion or faith. By so doing God would be pleased. God loves all His creatures without any discrimination about their religion. He would have not created them if He disliked them.

For how many times you have visited India, what did you see there with reference to history?

Nawaz Sharif: I have visited India several times. Its historical monuments are worth seeing. Once in the 1970s I toured India in my Mercedes. I met Gayatri Devi, the Maharani of Jaipur. She was a very awe-inspiring lady. I have visited the historical buildings of India as well they are worth seeing. Delhi and Lahore are almost similar cities whereas the culture of Lahore and Karachi differ very much. Taj Mahal from amongst Indian buildings fascinated me very much. Agra Fort is very well preserved; Alamgir imprisoned his father Shahjahan there [until he died in 1666], from where he could see Taj Mahal very clearly. In those days I used to think that Delhi, Lahore and Peshawar were the old historical cities, so if Delhi had been part of Pakistan we might have got a share in the historical heritage of India. (Laughter) I had a desire to rehabilitate Rohtas Fort [a garrison fort built by the Afghan King Sher Shah Suri approximately 16 km northwest of Pakistan's Jhelum city]; to settle and rehabilitate its population outside the fort, but alas! I did not get the time.

MEMORIES

- To buy kites we used to go to the old city
- I am fond of kite flying but dislike the Kalashnikov culture
- Shahbaz was rebuked even when he was the chief minister
- I love Abbas, while embracing him I always ask: "How are you Abbas?"
- Due to a cousin's difference of opinion, the family was broken
- Father was against extravagance he always wore simple outfits
- Kulsoom is a brave lady; marriage must be made by the will of one's parents
- Kulsoom sat in the car for 12 hours at stretch, it was a commendable deed

LAHORE OF BYGONE DAYS

How was Lahore during your childhood?

Nawaz Sharif: Lahore of those days was fine! Believe me, I miss that Lahore very much; we all do. Today that Lahore is nowhere to be found. In those days most of us schoolmates used to travel by Tonga. The father of a boy who lived in Mochi Gate [located within the walled city of Lahore] had a maintained a very nice Tonga for him. His father, dressed in a suit and tie, used to drive the Tonga himself. In those days Lahore was not crowded with traffic. I recall there was a hotel on the Mall, Nido's; I remember the site a bit. Near the [provincial] assembly hall, there was a taxi stand; and the area was called the Queen's Statue. Similarly the taxi stand at Regal [square] I do remember today. In those days there was very light traffic on the Mall. Even Tongas ran on it. The old historical culture of Lahore we read about was still visible in those days. I used to roam here and there, for my maternal grandparents lived on Hall Road and we used to go there to see them and thus also saw the area. Sometimes we visit the Old City to see somebody; besides, we used to purchase kites from there. (Smiling) This area was near our Railway Road residence. There was a serai known as Serai Sultan near Railway Road, a Mughal-era building. Its interior seemed to reflect the old culture. Outside the serai was a workshop, and then was our foundry, so we used to see the serai as well. On the other side of the serai, there was Landa Bazaar, at the end of which was Delhi Gate. We used to roam all around these places. The atmosphere was very pleasing.

What were your pastimes in those days and what was your favorite food?

Nawaz Sharif: Our parents did not allow us to have food from outside. My father neither allowed cooked food from outside inside the home, nor did he allow us to eat outside.

JOINT FAMILY SYSTEM

A joint family is a complex system; brothers, sisters and cousins live together. What was your experience?

Nawaz Sharif: It was all very good. Today we miss those fine days; we all were together, brothers, sisters and cousins. We loved one another, unity and cohesiveness was the hallmark of our family, we lived, studied, played and walked together and sometimes, we flew kites on the roofs inside the Old City. All these are the beautiful and fascinating romances of our bygone days.

I was fond of kite flying and perhaps I am even today, though I can't. However, I hope some day to fulfill my desire. (Laughing) I shall fly kites but I shall not follow Kalashnikov culture, not as hooligan and the ruffians do, rather I'll fly them with peace and tranquility as I had done in the past. Flying kites is not a bad thing if you avoid nonsense like the hullabaloo, music and dance, for these bad things take over, and the kite flying sinks into background.

The age difference among you three brothers is very small; did you ever fight?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes we used to have differences. Even when I was Prime minister (smiling) I used to rebuke Shahbaz Sharif, the chief minister. But he never got angry with me, rather he always digested the rebuke very quietly and then he would give his opinion on the issue. It is another matter whether I accepted his opinion or not, but he never felt bad about my censure. However, since I was imprisoned and thereafter came abroad, I stopped rebuking him. I, Shahbaz both love our youngest brother Abbas very much. I usually embrace him and say, "How are you, my friend Abbas? Where are you these days, why don't you come see me?" I talk like this, though he is only five or six years younger than me. I love him very much. We also have a sister whom we love very much. We keep in constant touch, and talk to her in Pakistan every second day. She also loves us very much. She always prays for us, we all love one other.

ITTEFAQ FAMILY DISPUTE

Something that strikes people about your family is that you were always united, but during your rule differences emerged and multiplied. Would you please tell me why the disputes in the Ittefaq family occurred when you were in office?

Nawaz Sharif: Well see, families comprise different people, with different tastes, views and opinions. Obviously, nobody can control other's way of thinking. The family elders usually do advise the younger ones, but all five fingers are not equal; everyone may not be dutiful. Even real brothers do have difference of opinions. So in our family there were certain members who wanted to run their business separately for they had their own opinion about how to do things. After their parents were no more, they decided to quit the joint family venture, resulting in the family differences and disputes. As is evident in such cases, difficulties arise. Many families face such problems, and we are not an exception. However, we, my father and

Shahbaz Sharif, tried our best not to do injustice to anybody. I was prime minister and Shahbaz chief minister, but we did not use our official positions against our brothers or cousins. Thank God, the dispute has now been settled; besides brothers and sister, we do not have any dispute with our cousins, save one or two who still have their reservations. But then they are free to use their discretion.

FAMILY'S CODE AND PRINCIPLES

To run a joint family what code of conduct and principles were established?

Nawaz Sharif: Our family members were united; they all worked together under the supervision of my father. He had two elder brothers, whom we gave extra respect, just like we respected our father, as our parents had trained us to. We were always respectful to our uncles and aunts; we always treated one another without any pride, prejudice or discrimination. Our home environment was very respectful, full of love and affection, respect and honor; elders were affectionate to the younger and the younger in turn were respectful to their elders. By God's grace, our joint family ran very successfully. My father led a simple life; he never spent a lot of money on his clothes, he never had an extravagance. Though we do not have such good qualities too much, I wear Pakistani dress, (pointing to his clothes), made of Pakistani cloth. You can see I usually wear Pakistani dress, and though sometimes I want to wear an English suit.

By God's grace, my living is very simple; I do not go out very often, and I don't have such hobbies as would cost much. It is only due to God's grace that I am free of such things. In my youth I did have certain pleasures, like having a nice car, a nice watch, or fancy shoes, but for the last eight, ten years I have abandoned these as well. By God's grace, our joint family kept running and even now it runs very successfully; brothers, four sister and we love and respect one another from the core of our hearts.

MARRIAGE

Was yours a love marriage or arranged?

Nawaz Sharif: It was an arranged marriage. My future brother-in-law had married my cousin. Since both families had already been linked by a matrimonial relationship, our marriage could easily be performed within the family.

Do you think love marriages are a good idea?

Nawaz Sharif: That question you must answer yourself. (Laughing)

Do you think the parents' will is better?

Nawaz Sharif: The parents' will be must included in whatever the children do in life. Anything, however good it might seem, that you do against your parents' will, I think, is not suitable at all.

Which trait of your wife did you like?

Nawaz Sharif: By God's grace she is an aggregate of many sterling qualities. She is a daring lady. That she was so brave, I did not know before I went to jail. She left home to agitate on the roads, for there was no male member left behind us save my old father. He decided that Kulsoom would go out of the home. She bravely confronted and combated generals. Her mettle was commendable; what men failed to do, she did gallantly. She is a nonpareil. I could not imagine she would be so brave, nor could the nation. She remained 12 hours confined in her car, hung from a crane; it is a deed to be remembered. She was neither frightened of anybody nor did she sit idle.

The generals are not trustworthy; they have been assassinating politicians and would continue to do so. Politicians are the ones who do not break the code of conduct, who abide by the law, and respect the Constitution. The generals never respected the law or the Constitution. They assassinated and arrested whomever they wanted. However, in Pakistan there are indeed soldiers who respect the law and the Constitution. They are the real soldiers. The others are bullies, torturers and not true soldiers; they come and play with the country and its people, with politicians, leaders and even prime ministers. They must be dealt with by means even above Article 6 of the Constitution. It is high time now to set a new precedent; otherwise they would not allow Pakistan to develop. Rather we would fall back into an abyss if we fail to stop them, to take them to task.



UNFORGETTABLE EVENTS

- In my childhood once uncle Bashir saved me from drowning in a canal
- Once a steel bar penetrated into my hand; it bled very heavily
- At Tehran Airport, the aeroplane was going to crash but I was not frightened
- I am not afraid of dangers I face them very bravely

DROWNING BUT SAVED

Q. Any event that is still imprinted on your mind; any injury you can never forget?

Nawaz Sharif: There are many events. I survived death many times. For example, once we went to Faisalabad in the summer, on our way back we parked our vehicles underneath a shady tree. Since the whole family was together, we thought it was a good place for lunch. We collected wood; kindled a fire and warmed the food. Meanwhile, we boys started bathing in the canal. I went into the middle of the canal and started drowning. My uncle Bashir saw me in trouble, so he jumped into the canal without taking off his clothes and saved me with great difficulty.

INJURED BADLY

When did this take place?

Nawaz Sharif: At the time I was a small school kid. I did not know

how to swim well. I had to be held upside down and the water drained out of me before I came back to my senses. And then in our house there was a fountain in the courtyard next to the gate, with steel bars on top. Once, climbing the pipe of the fountain I got very wet. Though I had coiled my feet around the pipe, I slipped, and a steel bar penetrated into my palm. I remained hanging over there, it bled very badly, and I still have a noticeable scar on my hand.

I recall another event. In 1973, I was leaving Karachi for New York to explore opportunities of importing steel. I was flying PIA. The first stop was Tehran. But instead of landing there, the aero plane kept on circling the airport for about two hours. All the passengers became worried, for the flight time from Karachi was supposed to be three hours, but it had taken five, and we had not been told anything. In the end we were told that the landing gear was not working, which meant an emergency landing was inevitable. The passengers became worried. Some started praying fervently. We saw many vehicles and fire engines on the runway. Then the crew provided us two pillows each and directed to put our heads between our knees. All the exit seats were vacated where the crew sat; they directed us not to raise our heads and to put the pillows upon our ears very firmly. We were asked to keep the same position till the first landing, which might cause fire due to friction. The other passengers were very frightened but I was not too worried, I was not frightened at all, and was observing the situation keenly. Then it was repeated that we hold our positions, for the plane was about to land. I raised my head to see the atmosphere of the plane, but it took off suddenly while landing.

The plane came down again but it took off this time without touching the runway. I was surprised as to why it was so doing; I saw many fire engines on the runway. An airhostess asked me to obey instructions. I did not argue. Then she said now they were to try landing a third time. I hoped nothing would happen even this time, but I did not violate the instructions. To our surprise, the plane landed safely, the wheel touched the runway and it started running like anything. All of a sudden, I raised my head (laughing) and saw the terminal in front of me. The airhostess then got to her feet and announced that the landing gear had opened correctly at the last attempt. All of us were surprised and happy. I remember how those two hours passed. I had also witnessed two persons seated behind

me nattering without pause; indifferent to the situation, busy in them. I saw myself not being frightened and them too, but all the rest suffered much fear.

Did you think yourself brave and fearless?

Nawaz Sharif: No, I do not talk highly of myself. Everybody is afraid of death I am no exception. God forbid that such an event take place again, after which I might say I am not afraid of the death.

However it was death, which you had witnessed from near?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes but I must say I am not afraid of danger; if it comes I can face it bravely.



HOBBIES

- I had a craze for singing Muhammad Rafi's songs
- I understand *Raag Bhairvi* and *Raag Darbari*
- I was fond of seeing films of Dilip Kumar, Madhubala and Waheeda Rehman
- I have a music collection of songs of the Sixties and Seventies
- I did the fastest driving on the Motorway at 230 kilometres an hour
- Winter is my favorite season; I like mountains and love the nights at Murree
- I played cricket in Lawrence Garden to meet the public
- I absolutely do not like *Siri Payay*, but I do like dishes like *Shab Degh* and *Aaloo Gosht*
- I like exquisite watches and fine shoes very much
- I am very fond of electronics and the latest gadgets

MUSIC

Q. Everybody has an aesthetic sense and so does a prime minister. So do you like music?

Nawaz Sharif: I do have an aesthetic sense; I think someone who likes music, is basically a nice person. I like [Indian singers] Muhammad Rafi, Lata, Asha Bhonslay and Talat Mehmood.

GOOD VOICE

People say you like to sing. Is your voice good enough?

Nawaz Sharif: There was a time when I used to sing for friends, especially Rafi's songs. At marriages I did sing songs on the demand of my friends. Similarly, I used to recite the Quran in a very melodious voice, even nowadays I recite in the same melodious way.

Do you have an understanding of ragas?

Nawaz Sharif: I do understand *Raag Bhairvi* and *Raag Darbari* to some extent; I do have a bit of understanding of *Raag Sham Kalyan*.

FAVORITE SINGER

Who are your favorite singers?

Nawaz Sharif: I like the songs of the Fifties very much; a voice likes Rafi's I have never heard in my life. I like his song for the film *Dedaar*, "*Hooay Hum Jis Ke Liye Barbaad*" very much.

You must have watched Pakistani and Indian films?

Nawaz Sharif: I like Indian and Pakistani films of the 1960s and 1970s. However, that craze has gone with the wind long ago. I used to watch films of [Indian artists] Dilip Kumar, Waheeda Rehman and Madhubala very fondly.

Which period's music does you like the most?

Nawaz Sharif: I also like the music of the Sixties and Seventies; I did have a complete music collection of that period, which I have lost now. However, I am trying afresh to collect them all again.

Who are your favorite Pakistani singers?

Nawaz Sharif: From amongst Pakistani singers I like Noor Jehan, Mehdi Hassan, Zubeida Khanum, Naseem Begum, while Ahmad Rushdi and Salim Raza sang very fine songs. “*Dil Ka Diya Jalaay*” is my most favorite Pakistani song.

Do you have a fad for driving?

Nawaz Sharif: I did have an interest in nice vehicles, and driving them.

When did you learn driving?

Nawaz Sharif: I learned driving in matric. My first car was an Opal. In 1974, I bought a Ford Mustang and in 1977, a sports car and thereafter, I bought the Mercedes.

THE FASTEST DRIVING

When and where did you drive a car the fastest?

Nawaz Sharif: In 1974, while abroad, I drove the Misrati car at 150 miles an hour at the track as a test drive. In Pakistan before the opening of the Motorway, I drove a car at 230 kilometers an hour. In Jeddah I did not drive frequently, but now in London I intend to drive myself.

What is your favorite season?

Nawaz Sharif: I like winter very much. I like the mountains as well. We have a house in Murree Hills since 1960; I like the nights at Murree.

As Prime minister you used to play cricket in Lawrence Garden. Wasn't it a waste of time and money?

Nawaz Sharif: Playing cricket used to relax me and make my mind fresh. Besides I had the opportunity of meeting common people there. It is correct the people did raise objections, but I think that to have close contact with the public, playing cricket was a must. In Lawrence Garden I had the opportunity of meeting journalists besides common workers, so the objections held no ground.

Your keen interest in food has been noticed worldwide. Which dishes do you like most?

Nawaz Sharif: Dishes like *Shab Degh* and *Aaloo Gosht* besides other Pakistani dishes. I am personally fond of boiled chicken or grilled

free-range chicken. I usually do not take lunch on doctor's orders. I like pasta and French fish very much. I do not like *Siri payay* at all. I don't know why journalists connected this dish to me! (Laughing)

You have a reputation of being fond of costly watches and fancy shoes. Is it correct?

Nawaz Sharif: In the bygone days I was indeed fond of costly and nice watches, but for about six seven years I have not bought a new watch. On the day the army took over, I had in my briefcase a very fine watch, travelers' cheques worth \$60,000 along with many personal documents. The army confiscated my briefcase and later returned it emptied and broken. Similarly I was also fond of fancy shoes, but it has been a long time since I bought a new pair. I have distributed a lot of shoes among my servants. However, I still have some watches from my collection with me.

How fond are you of electronics?

Nawaz Sharif: I have been fond of electronics and gadgets since my childhood. I always hastened to buy whatever new electronic device came in the market. I had some of the most modern tape recorders; many were lost during the takeover. Similarly with video, I had the most modern technology with me. The VCR replaced the projector and now we are using digital technology. Even now I keep with me the most modern cameras, projectors and video cameras; you may call it a craze or a hobby.



PRACTICAL LIFE AND POLITICS

- ◆ Business
- ◆ Entry in Politics
- ◆ Challenges as Chief Minister
- ◆ Zia, Junejo and Me
- ◆ Compromise with Benazir Bhutto
- ◆ Allegations upon Allegations

BUSINESS

- Before nationalization Ittefaq Foundry had seven and a half thousand workers in the factory
- Ittefaq Foundry denationalization was not manoeuvred by any generals, It was restored on Zia's insistence
- We had to bear losses in business after coming into politics
- It is not true we benefited, because of politics our assets decreased
- Politics and business cannot go together
- Had people like Dr Mubashir Hassan not made blunders, Pakistan would have progressed ten times more than South Korea
- Only with fundamental infrastructure can equality be brought. Where there is a cow, there is milk
- The antipathy towards 'twenty two' rich families was wrong. These families were developing Pakistan

INTEREST IN BUSINESS

Q. When did you start business?

Nawaz Sharif: A short time before nationalization, I had started taking interest in business. I used to go to the foundry's office at first and then after nationalization I used to go to the office of our textile mill, for the textile sector was not nationalized. Nationalization had caused a very big loss to Pakistan. At the creation of Pakistan, there were about a hundred workers in our foundry. The number had swollen to seven and a half thousand, two and a half thousand daily wagers, by the time it was nationalized. At Independence we had receivables of a million rupees, but could not recover them for those people did not migrate to Pakistan. Our business was so vast that we even manufactured cannon ammunition. We manufactured road rollers and agricultural implements; we were the first to manufacture wheat threshers. The Nawab of Kala Bagh Malik Amir Muhammad Khan used to encourage us. We used to export to Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia. I used to go there and meet clients. Our foundry had a name and a demand; our father did business on cash. We never got loans from the banks. After nationalization, we established a steel mill in Dubai. In those days we did not distribute the profit, but used to re-invest it. That caused our industry to flourish by leaps and bounds.

FIRST TRIP ABROAD

What were your feelings on your first trip abroad?

Nawaz Sharif: In 1965 my father sent me to Kabul; it was my first trip abroad. I attended an industrial exhibition there. We had already been exporting diesel engines to Afghanistan. My father also sent a senior manager of the factory with me who was in charge of everything during the visit. He gave me very little money for shopping. Later, my father sent me to Iran, Iraq, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Now he gave me the money for the journey and other expenses, which I spent so carefully that I even took back part of it, unspent and handed it back to my father. (Laughing) My father thought I had been brought up very well. He said I was on the right track. Next time, in 1969, he sent me to London and Italy to textile exhibitions.

I continued my education while increasing my participation in the business. I attended the exhibition and went to Udine, a place near Venice. At the weekend I went to Venice, an hour away by train,

which I found very beautiful. After concluding my business, I reached London. I had limited money with me, not more than two or three hundred pounds, which finished in two or three days. I came back the same day. I thought I must keep more money with me for one has to pass through many situations while traveling. We too have experienced shortage of money at times. I must tell you that we all were paid salaries, now we sometimes receive dividends. I recall very well, in Pakistan, the salary system was in vogue in our home; many times at some social occasion my wife asked me for the money to buy something and I had to tell her I had no money at all. We were bound to live within our salary; we have had all such sanctions enforced upon us.

Your question made me recall very old memories; I tell you my father was a very simple man. I never saw him spending money extravagantly in my life. He never spent an extra penny on his person. His lifestyle was very simple; he was the only man who never had meal away from home, he never went to a restaurant by himself, or with our mother or us. And I have not had enough time for dining out since I entered politics.

Did General Zia and General Jilani plan to restore the Ittefaq Foundry back to your family?

Nawaz Sharif: We didn't want Ittefaq Foundry restored. My father had established a steel mill in Dubai. Shortly after the 1977 Martial Law, Zia-ul-Haq visited Dubai. Brigadier Anwarul Haq, Pakistan's ambassador there, made my father meet Zia. Though we did not have even a single friend in the armed forces, he was our benefactor. He introduced my father to General Zia, saying he was the man who had set up a steel mill in Dubai. Zia recognized my father, saying well, he must be Mian Sharif of Ittefaq Foundry. Then he asked my father to come back to Pakistan and run his factory. He reiterated that my father must come back, get his factory restored and run it himself. This is the true story of how the foundry was restored. All the rest are fabrications.

Actually, Ittefaq was not unique. Many other mills were denationalized. I think the government had failed to overcome the difficulties in running the foundry so it was denationalized for this reason and restored to its previous owners. I tell you categorically that we were not interested in its restoration because it had become heavily indebted, whereas we ran it as a debt-free enterprise. Now it was not possible to successfully run a unit under so heavy a debt. In

addition, during nationalization, too many workers had been recruited who proved a drain on its resources. We visited the Foundry to assess whether we could run it or not. We saw neither raw material available in it, nor things that could help us run the mill. It was, however, will of God that helped us and we could run the mill after its restoration.

POLITICS AND BUSINESS

You belong to a business family and then you entered politics. What kind of difficulty did this create? There are two opposite stories about your business. One view is that your politics created a lot of hurdles for your business. The other view is that it caused great benefit to your business. What is the truth?

Nawaz Sharif: The truth is, and I tell you clearly, I am grateful to God for being honored with power. However, in our business, we had to bear many losses. When I was chief minister, the Federal Government created undue hurdles for our business. Then, large losses were caused when I was in the opposition. For example the MV *Jonathan*, carrying scrap from America, was stopped at Karachi port for a pretty long time. This transaction alone caused us a loss of Rs 600 million. No business can find it easy to bear so heavy a loss. During our days in opposition, all banks were directed to withdraw all facilities from our enterprises. In the circumstances, to continue running a business was not an easy task. Since such traditions exist in Pakistan, our business flourished before I entered politics and declined afterwards. We have to suffer huge losses indeed.

Despite all this, still some people say your business flourished after you entered politics because you benefited from your official position?

Nawaz Sharif: Perhaps you do not recall the time before nationalization, for you must be too young. Before nationalization, our business was running very well, but afterwards it caused a huge loss. We established a factory in Dubai when I had not yet come into politics. The plant was very good. Now, by God's grace we have established a factory in Jeddah, as you know, without any loan from Pakistani banks. This had been done without benefit from politics or office. By God's grace; we have been establishing factories since 1937. It is up to the people which angle they view it from. You journalists can depict the issue with whichever angle you like. What can we do? The assets by God's grace we had in the past were many times

greater than what we have today after I entered politics. This should be in your knowledge too.

Does it mean your assets have decreased after you came in politics?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, after entering politics we have been caused huge losses, and due to the tyrannies of the government our assets have decreased very much.

Did you explore a solution?

Nawaz Sharif: Unfortunately, we have reached a conclusion we did not want to, that business and politics cannot go together. Had our business not been prey to politics, Pakistan would have earned a good reputation among the nations. It pains me to see we are at a standstill but countries like South Korea that borrowed our five-year development plan in 1960s, have made such tremendous progress. Such things have contributed to our decline and fall.

Did nationalization cause a loss to Pakistan's industry? Would you please tell what have been the hurdles to development in Pakistan?

Nawaz Sharif: No doubt Pakistan made marvelous progress in the 1960. If we could have maintained that pace we would have been included in the list of industrially developed countries, not only in South Asia, but all Asia. However, it was our bad luck that we failed to maintain this pace. Nationalization was the biggest reason; it stopped the pace of development, the biggest loss to our country.

I will give you an example. In the 1960s, before nationalization, we had decided to start car manufacturing in Pakistan. We had done surveys and had planned to manufacture cars in Pakistan; we would have brought our cars in the market well before South Korea, for at the time Pakistan was making progress by leaps and bounds. The public outcry that Pakistan had only 22 families was wrong. Though we were not included in the 22 families, it is my conviction that whosoever gave this fallacy had shown the worst enmity to Pakistan.

22 FAMILIES AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY

Wasn't the aim of giving the concept of 22 families to create economic equality, to eradicate inequality between a few families being too rich and the masses too poor?

Nawaz Sharif: No, it was not so; at the time, wealth was not abundant. You may please see the people establishing the industry,

were not taking everything to their homes. The profit they were taking to their home was either 1 percent or 2 percent or at the most 5 percent. I do not think any industrialist could earn more than this then, whether it is Ahmed Dawood, or the owners of Habib Bank. They built the Habib Bank building in Karachi. If he was taking money home, he would have not erected that highest building. He was earning money from small branches; he had no need to beautify his branches throughout the country. Why did he need to lend money to the industrial sector in Pakistan? He was making investments in big enterprises to create employment opportunities in Pakistan. The money so invested was providing employment. New opportunities were being created for new investment; technology was spreading, wealth was being circulated widely.

Tell me, what did the 12 big families of Japan do? Did they take their wealth to their homes? Today Japan is the most prosperous country of the world. How did it attain this position? It used the opportunities of the progress. They spread industrialization; today the turnover of each of their industries is beyond a hundred billion dollars, earning profit of more than ten billion. Do you think their industrialists take the profit to their homes? It was Pakistan's bad luck that people like Dr Mubashir Hassan advanced such concepts to popularize their politics. I am constrained to name people like Dr Mubashir Hassan, having no foresight but narrow thinking to grind their political axe, for causing irreparable loss to Pakistan. Had they not done so, Pakistan would have made ten times more progress than South Korea.

So you do not agree with the concept of economic equality?

Nawaz Sharif: I do agree with the concept but the way they proposed leads to destruction. Do you see economic equality in Pakistan today? When you have nothing, you cannot bring economic equality. At first you need to construct infrastructure, then you should make economic equality. The opportunities for employment do not create themselves. The government taxes the industrialists to spend on the public to bring economic equality. By so doing, it distributes resources among the entire population. If your efforts result in shrinking the industrial sector, how would you create and spread economic equality. You must spread industry throughout the country, enlarge the sector first and then bring it into the tax net. If you have a cow, you would get milk from it. If you don't have the cow, how would you get milk?

ENTRY IN POLITICS

- I decided to enter politics during the Pakistan National Alliance movement
- I accepted a provincial ministry after seeking Air Marshal Asghar Khan's permission
- I was appointed minister by the efforts of Brigadier Qayyum; I had no introduction to General Jilani
- Everybody is a creation of the establishment; it is the character afterwards that matters
- I had relations with General Iqbal. He introduced me to Brigadier Qayyum
- General Jilani disclosed to me that if Bhutto had conducted a re-election, he would have won again

AN INDUSTRIALIST POLITICIAN

Q. What does the scion of an industrial family have to do with politics? How did you become interested in politics?

Nawaz Sharif: (Pause) As I have told you, I was a student of history. I had been reading national history. The different stages, and who

had played what role at which stage; all this I had read very thoroughly. During Bhutto's regime, our factory was nationalized. I wanted to study his policies, which had made our economy unstable. Till then I had no interest in entering politics. However, in the late Seventies some inclination was created in me for by then I was reviewing the country's current affairs very minutely. I was very fond of reviewing the current situation. Shahbaz also had an interest in politics. We both used to update our information.

PNA MOVEMENT

The Pakistan National Alliance Movement [1977] played a key role in politics. What was your role in it?

Nawaz Sharif: I participated in its rallies and processions very regularly. I think there was a moment during this that I decided to take part in politics. Memories lead to other memories sometimes, but sometimes memories grow weak. It was in such a moment that I decided to join politics.

TEHRIK-E-ISTIQLAL

How did you join Air Marshal Ashgar Khan's Tehrik-e-Istiqlal?

Nawaz Sharif: Because in those days his leadership impressed people very much. I was among those people. It was one of the reasons I joined his party. He called me to every party meeting. There used to be Asif Fasihuddin Wardag and many others. I was introduced to Mian Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri during these meetings. When I got an opportunity to join Zia's Punjab Cabinet I sought formal permission from Asghar Khan. Gen Ghulam Jilani Khan was then Punjab governor. He decided to take me to his cabinet so I thought it necessary to seek the permission of my party leader.

PROVINCIAL FINANCE MINISTER

Many stories are told of how you befriended General Jilani. Your opponents allege you set up a factory for him and in return he appointed you as finance minister?

Nawaz Sharif: General Jilani was a very fine man. This allegation holds no water so I do not think it necessary to answer. However, for the record, let me tell you that I had a good relationship with General Iqbal, who had been Corps Commander of Lahore in Bhutto's day, and through the PNA movement. He had good ties with Brigadier Qayyum, who was a fast friend of General Jilani. While thinking over

his cabinet, he by chance asked Brigadier Qayyum to help him choose its members. On the spur of moment, he proposed my name to General Jilani. Brigadier Qayyum told him that I belonged to a business family, and had an excellent background and knowledge of the economy, finance and industry, so he recommended me for the Finance portfolio. Till that time I had no introduction to General Jilani. However, later on I found him an aggregate of many qualities, a very fine man. He told me that when he was Director General of Inter Service Intelligence [ISI] he told Mr. Z A Bhutto, if he had conducted a re-election, he would win the elections again, and if not with a two-third majority, with at least a simple majority with great ease. His recommendations are still on record.

How was your experience as provincial finance minister? How did you complete your journey from provincial finance minister to chief minister? What impediments did you face? How did you prove yourself worthy, or was it the establishment that made you chief minister?

Nawaz Sharif: (Pause) I worked as provincial Minister for four years. I had developed political thinking and politics had become part of my life. I was ambitious to serve the nation. I had a desire to get ahead in this field. In 1985 I contested provincial and national seats from Lahore and by God's grace won both with overwhelming majority. My opponent was Jamaat-e-Islami candidate because the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy [MRD] had boycotted the elections.

After winning, I did not express the desire to be chief minister, for there were many members vying for the post. Perhaps I was not even a candidate. However, it would be false if I said I did not have the desire. Having an aim in life is a good thing, and to serve the nation was my aim. However, being over-ambitious is not a good thing at all. Since I was prepared to serve my country, when by God's grace I was burdened with the responsibility of the chief ministership. I tried my best and succeeded in discharging my duties earnestly and honestly. The people of Pakistan liked my role, as afterwards the nation expressed its confidence in me. I think my services as Punjab chief minister positively contributed to my future political career.

PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

Your opponents say the army moved you up, elevating you as chief minister. How far these allegations are correct?

Nawaz Sharif: Look, the establishment has been playing a specific role in Pakistan and this role, though unwanted, always prevailed. No politician can claim he has no relation with the army, because the establishment has forcibly chosen a role in politics since Independence Day. No one is an exception in Pakistan. For example, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who had enormous political potentials and qualities, had good ties with Ayub Khan. He was a minister in his cabinet, so he rose and had a very good introduction to the people of Pakistan. Later, he started his independent political career. If the term 'creation of the establishment' is used thus, no one in Pakistan is free of this taint. So someone should be assessed by the role he plays in the independent phase of his career. What is his mind, his thinking and what are his ideas and claims about democracy? How does he perform practically? You cannot assess him only by that one aspect, for in Pakistan it is inevitable to have links with the establishment at the start of one's political career. However, the test to me is what one does ultimately. We must give weight to that.



CHALLENGES AS CHIEF MINISTER

- Benazir Bhutto's procession of 10th April 1986 was enormous
- In elections, all the powers united together met defeat at the hands of the PPP
- The no-confidence motion against me was tabled with Junejo's consent
- Zia-ul-Haq's favor caused my opponents to lose hope
- I wanted to witness Benazir's procession, but could not
- Zia-ul-Haq and Junejo had a dispute over my removal
- Yousaf Raza Gillani was very active against me but now he is a good friend

BENAZIR BHUTTO'S RETURN TO PAKISTAN

Q. When Benazir returned to Pakistan on 10th April 1986, you were the Punjab chief minister. What were your feelings on seeing such a large procession to receive her?

Nawaz Sharif: Benazir Bhutto's reception was great. The crowd was very large without doubt; despite the agencies claiming it was not too big. But the news coming to me from my own sources told the procession was enormous. The rally held at night was immense as well; I really wanted to witness it, but could not get an opportunity. Politicians do see opponents' processions and rallies and compare them with their own to assess where they stand. Such comparison in politics used to be very useful. However, I missed the chance. Apart from the size of the procession, the passion of the people was such as is seen very rarely in history. Benazir Bhutto very bravely returned to Pakistan. She created a place for herself, and it became clear to everyone that the coming political contest would not be easy. A cutthroat competition was inevitable.

Did you find yourself mentally prepared to contest her?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes to some extent I had prepared myself to combat and compete with her. I was prepared to face the challenge.

Perhaps at the time, the challenge was not for you directly for you were chief minister. Prime minister Junejo was above you, but how did you feel that you would face the challenge?

Nawaz Sharif: I had no intention of leaving the field. (Laughing) At the time I was thinking that since I had joined the field so I had to be prepared to meet the challenge as well. There was another aspect. True, her reception was exemplary but our government was well established and working very positively; developmental work was being carried out, people were pleased with us, our voters and supporters were happy and satisfied. However, there was a huge political power in front of us, not easy to combat in elections. You must have seen that we united all forces together but failed to defeat a single party, remaining well behind them.

CH. PERVEZ ELAHI'S NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION

Do you think Muhammad Khan Junejo backed Ch Pervez Elahi's no-confidence motion against you?

Nawaz Sharif: No, not directly. However without his consent those people were not so daring as to move the motion against me. Remember, Ch Shujaat Hussain was a member of the Federal Cabinet at the time.

Is it true that General Zia-ul-Haq's consent was behind the motion?

Nawaz Sharif: I think General Zia neither gave his consent nor assent because he had a dispute with Prime Minister Junejo on the issue. When the motion was being prepared, but had not yet been moved; Zia had said no conspiracy would succeed against Nawaz Sharif. His words made those people lose hope. All their efforts ultimately went up in smoke. Junejo also did not play the role he ought to have. Rana Naeem had the leading role in it, while Hamid Nasir Chattha and some others were very active with respect to Pir Pagara and Junejo. Since they both belonged to one group they hatched an unholy conspiracy against me. Besides Nasrullah Dreshak from Rajanpur, Ch Shujaat and Rana Naeem, also members of Junejo's cabinet and some others, were very active. There was another who was very active against me but now I enjoy good relations with him. I am impressed by him, he is a good man; he has put up a bold front. He is Yousaf Raza Gillani, He too was then a member of Junejo's cabinet. If Junejo was innocent he should have censured his cabinet members. Without his consent such an action by his cabinet members cannot be understood.



ZIA, JUNEJO AND ME

- Zia played no role in making me chief minister
- My relationship with Zia developed during my chief ministership
- I cannot be held accountable for Zia's steps of breaking the Constitution
- Muhammad Khan Junejo had never been my leader
- Junejo wanted Malik Allah Yar as chief minister in my place

ZIA-UL-HAQ: BENEFACTOR OR DICTATOR

Q. You rose as a democratic leader but you had ties with Zia. Now after such a long journey, how do you view your relationship with him, now that you are hundred percent a democratic leader whereas he was a full dictator? Against this backdrop how do you explain your relationship with two men of paradoxically opposite philosophies?

Nawaz Sharif: It is very delicate question. It is correct that people say he was a dictator but he had no role in my inclusion in the Punjab Cabinet or in my election as chief minister. It was General Jilani who played that role. However, I know that before including me in his

cabinet and then elevating me as Chief Minister, Governor Jilani had sought Zia's clearance. There were a number Malik Allah Yar Khan and to an extent Ch Abdul Ghafoor, who's of other candidates, such as Makhdoomzada Hassan Mehmood, names were under active consideration. However, General Zia-ul-Haq did not suggest anybody to the governor. After having clearance from General Zia, General Jilani decided to appoint me chief minister in accordance with the Constitution as it then stood, with the chief minister and prime minister being first nominated by the provincial Governor and the President of Pakistan respectively and then they were bound to get a vote of confidence from their Assembly. This Article was repealed in 1989. I did not have any relationship with Zia, but I developed ties with him during my chief ministership. I had only one opportunity to talk to him on the telephone when I was finance minister.

However, as chief minister I had the opportunity to talk to him after every two or three days. When my relationship developed, I found him a very kind hearted man. As to the feelings among the people that he was a dictator or a constitution breaker, a man like me cannot defend him. However, he was very affectionate to me, he always extended his cooperation and used to pray for me and so, even today I feel obliged to him. I am speaking the truth; I am under his obligation from the very core of my heart. It is not such a thing as I can forget overnight. I acknowledge his kindness to me. Afterwards God gave me an opportunity to start my political career that I am trying my best to continue till today.

WHY NOT SUPPORT JUNEJO?

It is commonly said that despite, being a chief minister of his party you left the elected prime minister, Junejo, and supported General Zia-ul-Haq. Was there a justification?

Nawaz Sharif: Well, Muhammad Khan Junejo never had been my leader. Before he was elected Prime minister I had not met him. When I was elected Punjab chief minister, he was not happy because he wanted Malik Allah Yar in my stead. Perhaps he considered me as new and raw in politics whereas Malik Allah Yar had been his colleague in the assembly in bygone days. I never expressed my views about this, so since it is first time I'm doing so, I want to talk openly. He had never been my leader. When the party was established, all made efforts, not a single individual. It is evident he was to be the party president and I the provincial head. He suffered

doubts about me. May God bless him? Even today I pray for him. He turned against me because of his own friends who hatched a conspiracy. They were sponsored and supported by Pir Pagara, and moved a no confidence motion against me. Junejo, too, fell prey to the conspiracy. He might have thought if he got rid of me it would go in his benefit.



COMPROMISE WITH BENAZIR BHUTTO

- PPP workers abused me when I went to the airport to receive Benazir
- I was given no protocol at the Governor House
- Many hurdles were placed in the way of my taking oath as chief minister
- I talked to the president when the governor refused to administer the oath to me
- Though Benazir visited Chief Minister's House, her tone was threatening

ATTEMPT FOR COMPROMISE

Q. Between 1988 and 1990, when you were chief minister and Benazir Bhutto prime minister; an attempt for compromise was made. Why it was not concluded?

Nawaz Sharif: When she was elected prime minister, I had already taken oath as chief minister. When, after two days, she came to Lahore, I went to the airport to receive her; I even went into the aero plane to receive her. There was a strange crowd at the airport, and many people shouted slogans against me. Although the

circumstances were embarrassing, I didn't care much. The truth is that the insulting slogans pulled me up; I thought it should not have happened. However, before this, when I attended the oath taking ceremony of the governor nominated by Benazir at the Governor House, people had used abusive language against me. They were perhaps unhappy at my presence as chief minister. I was given no protocol despite my prerogative; I was made to sit in the public like a layman, whereas on such occasions the chief minister is always seated on the stage. I felt worried but kept quiet. Later the events of the airport took place.

ATTEMPT TO STOP OATH AS CHIEF MINISTER

Was an attempt made to stop your taking oath before this?

Nawaz Sharif: Hurdles were created.

Is it true that Governor Sajjad Quraishi was asked not to administer oath?

Nawaz Sharif: I do not know whether or not the governor was telephoned not to, but he was not prepared to administer the oath to me. When I asked why, I was told it was not yet possible. I had already got the vote of confidence from the assembly. Since I was an elected member and then had got the vote of confidence from it, I thought it better to talk to the president as the governor had refused to administer the oath. The president called the governor thereupon and then he administered the oath.

Do you think at the time you were ready to compromise with the PPP? Who was responsible for the failure, you or Benazir Bhutto?

Nawaz Sharif: I think as a chief minister I was prepared to compromise, for it was my first experience of being in the opposition to a government. I was mentally prepared; I had accepted their mandate and was ready to cooperate with the central government. In this spirit I went to the airport to receive Benazir. It was my duty and in a spirit of hospitality I received the prime minister, even going inside the plane. However, I do not want to dilate on such things for now we are making efforts to get democracy restored. We are at war against dictatorship, but I mention these things just to answer your question. Since I was prepared to work with the federal government I was right to expect a reciprocal response. I hoped so but perhaps it was not right. However, I am grateful to Benazir Bhutto. She later on

visited the Chief Minister's House, which was not a routine. The prime minister used to come to the Governor House, not the Chief Minister's House in the past. She stayed at the Chief Minister's House for quite some time but her speech was very cold. She might have been angry with me then.

Was another attempt made after this?

Nawaz Sharif: As chief minister I conducted several sessions of parleys for a compromise with her. General Aslam Beg wanted the parleys conducted, but my meeting with Benazir was not very pleasant. We talked of cooperation in the Chief Minister's House meeting; yet her tone was a little threatening. We gave her gifts and a ceremonious reception. When we talked she said I would have to do so and so. Perhaps her advisors might have given her counsel to behave like this. I thought a very fine opportunity was lost. The political parties then spent several years in confrontation. If only it had not happened! After these experiences we have reached the conclusion that political persons must not confront one another nor call on the army or seek help from the powers that be, to topple their political opponents.



ALLEGATIONS UPON ALLEGATIONS

- I have never got a plot
- Even before me plots were allotted, I just continued the practice
- It was I who stopped the plot politics
- I stopped duty-free import of vehicles for generals
- Never in my life did I use the secret discretionary funds
- My pay was always sent to Gulab Devi Hospital
- Zia-ul-Haq's death is a mystery that I could not solve
- ISI played a role in bringing the Jamaat-e-Islami to the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad

PLOT POLITICS

Q. Your opponents say you did plot politics and horse-trading as chief minister. How far is this true?

Nawaz Sharif: The allegation may be true if I had allotted plots to myself or I had obtained them for myself by any means. Thank God I have neither taken a plot from the government nor have I done such things as such. It was a practice since Ayub Khan's days that also continued under Bhutto and which I did allow during my regime. There were chief ministers who did take plots in their own names,

such as Sadiq Hussain Qureshi [*Nawab Sadiq Hussain Qureshi served as both Governor and Chief Minister of Punjab under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the 1970s*], but I neither got a plot as minister, chief minister nor as prime minister. However, the practice of allotting the plots continued until I had the honor of stopping it. When in 1991 I was elected prime minister I banned the plot policy, and allotted plots to nobody save the cricket team that won the World Cup and to a few widows whose husbands had died in harness. In my second tenure I also did not allot a single plot to anybody and thus the practice discontinued. I also ended many privileges. For example, as I stopped the duty-free import of vehicles for the generals who would sell the vehicles so imported and pocket millions in profit.

Later on, I banned the privilege of the chief minister, prime minister and president to import duty-free vehicles. I never imported a duty-free vehicle as minister, chief minister or even as prime minister, despite, according to the import policy, having a right to. I did not use any secret fund or any other fund put at my discretion despite being accountable to none for them but God.

But aren't you alleged to have used secret funds upon journalists and others?

Nawaz Sharif: No, I never gave a penny from secret funds to journalists. Since I never used the secret funds, from where would I give the money? I was the only prime minister who never used a penny from his secret funds. You can confirm my claim from the official record.

USE OF DISCRETIONARY FUND

You did use discretionary funds?

Nawaz Sharif: I never used my discretionary funds. By God's grace, I always donated my salary to Gulab Devi Hospital [a charity hospital in Lahore]. God, by His grace, had showered upon me all the blessings since childhood. I never felt a need to go beyond such things. My conscience is satisfied by God's grace in this respect. You may see it part of the tradition that I started the seven-marla scheme as chief minister, I got the land demarcated for it and handed over the plan to Junejo, the then prime minister. Thereupon we made arrangements to distribute the land to the shelterless. In my 1997-99 tenure, the Mera Ghar Scheme was excellent. The land where those houses were being built, which was worth billions of rupees, was to be distributed to the poor. We allotted agricultural land to the *haris*

[landless tillers] in Sindh. Meet them; they are now prosperous, for they are earning a lot from those lands. By God's grace, their farms are lush with wheat and cotton crops, whereas they had no shoes to wear before this. Now they own good houses and fertile land. That is what I am proud of, the system thus spread by God's grace. I am proud that God let me do such a great deed.

You are accused to have started the no-confidence motion against Benazir and then yourself not let it succeed?

Nawaz Sharif: I did not let it succeed? But why?

Because in case of success Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi would have become prime minister. The intelligence agencies had also uncovered a plan named "Midnight Jackal"?

Nawaz Sharif: No I think I do not have knowledge of any such thing. I do not know who had coined the term 'Midnight Jackal'. It may belong to the agencies; I have no knowledge of it. I do not remember its details, which were published in the newspapers in those days.

POLITICS OF CONFRONTATION

Peoples say confrontation made you a big politician. Is it true?

Nawaz Sharif: This you can judge better, for I cannot say anything about myself. At the time, a specific kind of ideological and political confrontation was prevailing. I, too, was a part of it. Perhaps people therefore say confrontation suited me the best. However, I served the poor, and executed projects for public welfare that contributed to my political success.

ZIA'S DEATH

President Gen. Zia-ul-Haq was your benefactor. Who was responsible for his death in your opinion?

Nawaz Sharif: The truth is I do not know at all. I tried my level best but I could not solve the mystery. Even as prime minister I had tried to unearth the cause but to no avail. It is still a mystery for me. Nobody could arrive to a conclusion as to that was responsible, and what were the causes for his death.

FORMING THE IJI

Another big allegation is that the IJI was formed by the ISI, an intelligence agency controlled by the Pakistan Army. Lt Gen Hamid Gul, then ISI's Director General, confesses that he had done the job. As a founding IJI member, what do you say about this?

Nawaz Sharif: I think the allegation is childish. No doubt, Aslam Beg and Hamid Gul gave the idea. We also wanted all the friendly parties including the Jamaat-e-Islami to contest elections from one united platform. No doubt, General Hamid Gul played a role in uniting us. Perhaps the Jamaat was not mentally prepared to ally itself with us. It wanted to contest independently. My view is that the ISI played a role in bringing the Jamaat into the IJI. [*The Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) was formed in September 1988 to oppose the Pakistan's People Party (PPP) in elections that year. The alliance comprised nine parties, of which the major components were the PML and the Jamaat-e-Islami [JI]. The IJI won only 53 seats in the National Assembly, compared with 92 won by the PPP. Most IJI seats were won in Punjab. Nawaz Sharif emerged from the 1988 elections as the most powerful politician outside the PPP. In December 1988, he succeeded in forming an IJI administration in Punjab and became the province's chief minister. It was from this power base that he waged the political battles that eventually led to his becoming prime minister in 1990. In the supercharged atmosphere of the 1990 elections, the electorate surprised observers. Neither the IJI nor the PPP was expected to come up with a firm mandate to rule. Yet the IJI received a strong mandate to govern, winning 105 seats versus 45 seats for the Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA) -- of which the PPP was the main component in the National Assembly]*

In the 1993 national elections, the IJI coalition no longer existed to bring together all the anti-PPP forces. The religious parties expended most of their energies trying to form a workable electoral alliance rather than bolstering the candidacy of Nawaz Sharif.

ATTEMPT TO POSTPONE THE 1988 ELECTION

It is said the chief ministers had attempted to get the 1988 elections postponed. Is it true, as has been claimed many times, that after Zia's death, you people met General Aslam Beg to ask for a postponement?

Nawaz Sharif: I do not remember any such thing. After dissolving the assemblies, General Zia was himself in power in the Centre for he had no prime minister as such. In the provinces there were caretaker chief ministers; General Fazal Haq in the Frontier, Akhtar Ali Qazi in Sindh, me in Punjab and I do not remember the name of the Balochistan chief minister at that time. Anyhow, as the news of the aeroplane crash was received, Ghulam Ishaq Khan took over as president. General Mirza Aslam Beg raised no objection and let Ghulam Ishaq Khan take charge in accordance with the Constitution. Then he called our meeting and decided the elections would be held on the date already announced. I think no attempt was made to get the elections adjourned.

THORNY PATH OF THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP

- ◆ First term
- ◆ First term projects
- ◆ Differences with army chiefs
- ◆ End of first term
- ◆ Mistakes of the first term
- ◆ Period of opposition

FIRST TERM

- President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and army chief Aslam Beg both wanted to make Jatoi the prime minister
- Ghulam Ishaq Khan changed his mind after seeing the result of the 1990 elections
- I had disputes over policy with Ghulam Ishaq Khan but no personal differences
- Benazir kept on contacting us on the one hand, while on the other she had contacts with Ghulam Ishaq Khan

PREPARATIONS FOR MAKING JATOI PRIME MINISTER

Q. Is it true that you became the prime minister after the 1990 elections suddenly, upsetting the original plan of making Jatoi prime minister?

Nawaz Sharif: Many people including Ghulam Ishaq Khan were expecting Jatoi to be prime minister. This I know very well. Ghulam Ishaq Khan appointed Jatoi caretaker prime minister because he and even Aslam Beg hoped Jatoi would become prime minister ultimately. This information I had collected from my own sources. However, when Ishaq saw the result of the elections he changed his mind, as he realized the election result was in my favor. So the

establishment was forced to accept me. Ishaq was the first to openly express his views. After hearing him, General Muhammad Aslam Beg also changed his mind. These are the inside facts which I am exposing only today. After witnessing the mandate Ghulam Ishaq Khan changed his mind and decided that to make Jatoi prime minister was all but impossible.

DISPUTE WITH GHULAM ISHAQ KHAN

In 1990 when you formed government you had good relations with Ishaq at the beginning but they deteriorated in the end. Why?

Nawaz Sharif: I had old ties with Ishaq. He was Senate Chairman and then became the president after Zia's death. I enjoyed good relations with him till he started playing games with me. I think I never said a contemptuous word against him, I always showed him respect. I never cheated him. I never used my powers beyond my jurisdiction. He had differences with us over some policies. For example, he was against the denationalization policy, and he used to make statements about this. I think there must be an environment of cooperation between the opposition and the government. When we decided to make Benazir Bhutto Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee, he [Mr. Khan] resisted our decision. We wanted to create an environment of cooperation with the opposition but he was not happy with it, rather he expressed his anger. Then when I spoke to him about the need to modify the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution to waive off its some parts to restore the supremacy of Parliament, he did feel very bad.

[The amendment to the Constitution was passed in 1985 changing the system from parliamentary to a semi-presidential by giving the president a number of additional powers. Article 58 2(b), which granted the discretionary power to dissolve the National Assembly, was invoked three times in the 1990s - by president Ghulam Ishaq Khan against prime minister Benazir Bhutto on August 6, 1990, by president Ghulam Ishaq Khan against prime minister Nawaz Sharif in 1993 and by president Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari against prime minister Benazir Bhutto in November 1996. In the second instance, the Supreme Court reinstated Nawaz Sharif as prime minister, but the resulting stalemate ended with the resignations of both Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The use of Article 58 2(b) was almost exclusively justified by the president as necessary, for the removal of corrupt governments that, it was asserted, had lost the confidence of the people. Elections were held each time that caused the ruling party to lose its majority or plurality in the National Assembly. In 1997, the Thirteenth Amendment was passed, stripping the President of the power to dissolve the National Assembly and call for new elections, effectively reducing the Presidency to a ceremonial figurehead. The power of the President's office was partially restored by the Seventeenth

Amendment. The power to dissolve the National Assembly and dismiss the prime minister is now subject to Supreme Court approval.]

I think that was the moment he started turning against me. There were no personal reasons. The dispute was only over policies.

ISHAQ KHAN AND BENAZIR HAD LINKS

You have enumerated three differences. You mentioned economic policy and political policy towards the opposition and the government. Was the third difference in you trying to talk to Benazir Bhutto, which he opposed?

Nawaz Sharif: We were trying to create a relationship with the PPP. Benazir was in contact with Ishaq on one hand and on the other she was talking to us. After dissolving our government Ghulam Ishaq Khan settled affairs with Benazir and took [her spouse] Asif Zardari in his cabinet besides many others from the PPP. The matter was thus exposed, the secret contacts proved. It was very painful for me that we were trying to end our differences but she had developed ties with the other side. The fact thus came to the fore that we had been used. I do not want at this point to cause any bitterness; but it is a historical fact. Now that we are partners in the ARD, the PPP and the PML-N have to decide which policies to adopt that may strengthen democracy, and we must not waste our energies defeating one another.



FIRST TERM PROJECTS

- I planned the Motorway Project as chief minister
- Where are the kickback allegations now?
- The Yellow Cab scheme benefited poor people
- Had we adhered to the free-market economy, the country would have progressed by leaps and bounds

MOTORWAY

Q. You started the Motorway Project in your first term. When did the idea come to your mind?

Nawaz Sharif: When I was chief minister, indeed even before that. However, as chief minister I had done a lot of work on it. But then the project was beyond my purview and budget, otherwise I would have started it as a provincial project long before. The present Motorway's alignment is kept on the alignment of Sher Shah Suri's Grand Trunk Road. When the British constructed the GT Road they changed Sher Shah's alignment. The original GT Road passed by Kalar Kahar Lake, where we have constructed the Motorway.

Are you impressed by Sher Shah Suri?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, for he did great deeds in a very short reign. He executed public welfare projects and did not spend his treasury merely on historical buildings and forts. He spent money on things of public interest and welfare. He preferred public welfare and

wellbeing to any other thing; he completed these projects very expeditiously. He was a very good ruler.

MOTORWAY KICKBACK ALLEGATIONS

Many objections have been made, that the Motorway was disproportionate to the national economy, billions of rupees were misappropriated, heavy bribes were taken and the Sharif Family received kickbacks from Daewoo, and so on.

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, when the project was being executed allegations were leveled that Nawaz Sharif had taken bribes and kickbacks, but nobody says so today. People rather admire me for completing such a big project. The issue had been discussed, the newspaper used to write that I had taken billions as a bribe. (Laughing) I am perplexed over the amount of bribe they claimed, which exceeded even the project cost. The army regime has investigated the matter threadbare; had there been a misappropriation of a penny, I would have been punished for it. Now everyone appreciates the project as very useful. "Nawaz Sharif has done something very good." Nobody talks of commissions, bribes or any share from the contract. Now people admire me, which makes me happy. It is actually a certificate of my honesty, that the allegations once leveled against me have been withdrawn. I think that is the best proof of my innocence.

YELLOW CAB

Yellow Cab project was also started in the first term. Objections were made that the economy was badly affected; the loan was not returned. How do you see the project yourself?

Nawaz Sharif: I think all false allegations have gone into the dustbin, as they proved groundless. The poor class took the benefit of this project. If the project had continued, today there would have been no unemployment problem on one hand and on the other, respectable means of travel would have been provided to the public.

But you did not restart the Yellow Cab project in the second term. Had you realized it was just a waste of money?

Nawaz Sharif: In my second term I wanted to restart the project but due to heavy economic sanctions I could not. We were waiting a suitable time but we found no opportunity. Then after the atomic explosion, the economic sanctions imposed were so heavy that we could not start the project as the economy was weakened further.

ECONOMIC VISION

How far was your economic vision materialized in the economic reforms? How many Yellow Cabs did you distribute, how much benefit did people get from the project. Similarly, was your economic vision materialized in the Motorway project?

Nawaz Sharif: Well, if you glance over the world's economic history and you see what policies transformed certain countries into the most developed nations, you can better judge which ought to be the economic policies to achieve the desired goal. The world was once divided into two blocs, communist and free economy. Communism included the socialist republics; even China was a closed economic state some years back, due to which its economy could not really flourish. On the opposite side the open-market economy made progress by leaps and bounds. You may compare the economies of Russia and America. The difference is vividly clear. You can compare eastern and western Europe as well. You may compare Japan's economy in Asia with those Asian countries whose economy was closed.

What is the contribution of the Motorway Project?

Nawaz Sharif: Had the Motorway's momentum been maintained, it might have connected Pakistan's warm waters to the Central Asian States. They would have had to direct all their commercial activities to Karachi, for most are landlocked. They now route their trade through Azerbaijan but if the Motorway was constructed, Pakistan would have become a hub of their trade and commerce activities by providing them very easy access to the Arabian Sea. The project was not limited to this, but was also the largest plan for domestic traffic and communication. It was a multidimensional plan, with defense as one of its aspects; fighter aero planes, including the F-16, can land on it. It thus meets national defense needs as well. If you can see 20 or 25 years ahead, you have to plan such projects today. If you want to increase your exports, and upgrade and multiply your industry, you will have to build infrastructure at first. For the purpose you need another seaport. We developed Gawadar Seaport. It was imperative; for God forbid, if a war starts and causes damage to Karachi Port, Gawadar will satisfy our strategic as well as immediate economic needs. Please tell me how beneficial is the plan? Also the coastal highway that will connect Gawadar with other parts of the country would enhance not only tourism but also would result in speedy development.

*You have been alleged to get commission in Motorway Project.
There must be some truth into this allegation.*

Nawaz Sharif: Military Government has tried its utmost to find some thing but has failed. These were mere allegations to defame me.

How many people benefited from the Yellow Cab Scheme?

Nawaz Sharif: A huge number. After factoring in multiplier effects, millions, counting the owners of the Yellow Cabs, those who are engaged in tyre repairs, denters, painters, mechanics and ordinary workers and their family members. Thus the number of beneficiaries goes up to the millions.



DIFFERENCES WITH ARMY CHIEFS

- After becoming army chief Gen. Asif Nawaz did not treat the prime minister as prime minister
- An army chief, in the company of two other generals, used to make fun of the prime minister
- Gen. Aslam Beg himself decided to dispatch the army to Iraq and then he himself started opposing this
- Through diplomatic sources, the message was received if army was called back we would have to cut a sorry figure
- A complaint against Aslam Beg was made to President, but instead of resolving the issue, he kept enjoying the situation
- Asif Nawaz was very arrogant; he openly talked against the government
- I had recommended a name other than Asif Nawaz to the president

- The President, without consulting me appointed Waheed Kakar Chief of Army Staff
- Waheed Kakar dispatched the army even before receiving the order dissolving the assemblies

DISPUTE WITH GENERALS BEG AND ASIF

Q. It is said that you did not have a good relationship with General Asif Nawaz despite you and the president both having appointed him. Is there any reality in this?

Nawaz Sharif: No, my relationship with all of them was very good. I wanted to keep good relations with Aslam Beg and Asif Nawaz as well. I did not have any personal dispute or grudge against the latter. However, it was a matter of regret that when he was appointed army chief he did not treat the prime minister as prime minister. He did not give the respect due to the office of prime minister. There was also an army chief, who with two other generals, used to make fun of the prime minister. He used to say very odd things about the prime minister. He used to openly criticize our policies. I'll give you an example.

At the start of the Gulf War [1991] Aslam Beg and we decided together to send the army to the Gulf, but after it was dispatched he issued a paradoxically opposite statement. He neither took the government into confidence nor did he consult me about this. I read his statement as a newspaper headline announcing a new policy opposing the government's policy. Then I received a message through diplomatic sources to withdraw our troops if we did not know why we had dispatched them to Saudi Arabia. It made me ashamed, and wonders how I could face a friendly country, the Islamic countries and the rest of the world. How ridiculous a situation for a prime minister, that an army chief had announced a policy opposite to his government's announced one in an open press conference.

Naturally I referred the matter to Ghulam Ishaq Khan, but he did not take any step to solve the problem. He could have called Aslam Beg and me and might have mitigated the situation by resolving the misunderstanding between us. He could have asked

Aslam Beg to issue a statement refuting his previous statement on pain of being dismissed, but the president did nothing. Rather he kept enjoying the situation. May God bless him, but Asif Nawaz was an arrogant man. I did not have any personal enmity or grudge against him. He was so arrogant that he openly opposed the government and talked ill of the prime minister. When Aslam Beg was due to retire, the panel he sent included the names of General Shamim Alam, General Hamid Gul and General Asif Nawaz, in that order. However, I had recommended another name to the president.

It is widely speculated that you had recommended the name of Generals Hamid Gul or Rahmdil Bhatti?

Nawaz Sharif: No matter whom I had recommended, Ghulam Ishaq Khan had picked Asif Nawaz from serial number three. I think he had already talked to Asif Nawaz, and might have told him I had not recommended him. Anyhow, Asif Nawaz knew very well that I had not recommended him. This was perhaps why he nursed a grudge against me. From Day One, he had reservations in his heart against me but I tried my best to get him in line with me. I never made him feel anything but I kept noticing such things from his end. I also kept on receiving news that he did not have a good opinion of me. Anyhow he suddenly died.

ASIF NAWAZ'S POLITICAL LINKS

Is it true that Asif Nawaz wanted to dissolve your government and that he had political links?

Nawaz Sharif: According to my information he had links with politicians. He used to ask them why the government was not running right, how was it running without setting priorities? Yet the government business was being done correctly. The economy was progressing fast. However, he wanted to create a lack of confidence about the government among the public. His talk was so bitter whoever might be in power, he would have taken a bad view of him. The army chief must mind his own business. He should have pleasant relations with the prime minister. But alas! I found his behavior lacking in this respect on many occasions.

Fingers were raised against you about General Asif Nawaz's death. What do you say about this very serious allegation?

Nawaz Sharif: It is deeply regretful that such doubts were raised. It would have been better had they not been. However, nobody can go

so far. I was alleged to have poisoned him. Foreign experts were called in, and it was exposed that no such thing had happened. You must note that no such issue was raised when he died, but during the 1993 election campaign, the issue was raised against me, as I remember.

DISPUTE WITH GENERAL WAHEED KAKAR

Was there a difference of opinion between you and Ghulam Ishaq Khan on Waheed Kakar's selection?

Nawaz Sharif: I had no dispute with General Waheed Kakar; Ghulam Ishaq Khan appointed him army chief [1993-1996] without seeking my opinion. He thought it unnecessary to take my advice on this, despite being constitutionally bound to do so. Ishaq used to talk to the defense advisor in my stead. I used to receive the news later through other sources. I am a cooperative man but when the business of government is not done according to the law and Constitution, when a man starts thinking himself a megalomaniac; things go wrong and cause confusion. Despite all this I accepted Waheed with all my heart. However, when Ishaq dissolved the assembly, I received the order later, and the army reached the TV station first, which was illegal. The president is bound not to move the army within the country without the prime minister's consent, which I was then.



END OF FIRST TERM

- Despite the restoration of the assemblies, Ishaq still stuck with his viewpoint
- Waheed Kakar encouraged Ishaq not to leave
- Ishaq and I decided to quit simultaneously
- Moin Qureshi was the president's choice, but I agreed to his name
- The Jamaat-e-Islami broke away for it was impossible for Qazi Hussain Ahmed to achieve his aims remaining in IJI
- Confrontations among the agencies go on
- Brigadier Imtiaz did not tap Jatoi's phone
- My father thought there was no harm in going to the people after quitting the government

ISHAQ'S STUBBORNNESS

Q. Ishaq dissolved the assembly, and then the Supreme Court restored it. So why did you resign after you had said you would not take dictation. People say you were frightened when the generals asked for your resignation.

Nawaz Sharif: No, no, there was nothing like this. It was not submission at all. I think the government had turned into an Augean's stable so I thought I should seek a new mandate from the

people, for president Ishaq still stuck with his viewpoint despite the Supreme Court of Pakistan having decided against him. He should have quit and gone home, but he did not quit in his stubbornness. General Kakar backed him. According to my information Kakar was playing a negative role. Ishaq had asked the provincial governments to stop cooperating with the federal government. Manzoor Wattoo in Punjab was asked to stay firm; it was done with the chief ministers of Sindh and Balochistan. In Punjab Ghulam Haider Wyne did not obey Ishaq. He was thus replaced. Our majority was reduced to a minority, so negative a role did they play. Such a negative role affected democracy and the state adversely. Due to personal interests those people in history caused a heavy loss to the nation.

Benazir Bhutto and I come through constitutional and democratic ways. We did not violate the law and the Constitution. If somebody says so, he or she must tell us what violations of law and the Constitution we committed. We ran the country according to the Constitution, but presidents like Ishaq and Farooq Leghari, who had enormous powers, worked even beyond the 1973 Constitution. They acted according to their sweet will, causing havoc to the nation. These people, including the generals, made the government and the opposition fights so that they thirsted after each other's blood. It is my view that they had been framing policies to stop the government and the opposition coming near each other. Their policy was that of "Divide and Rule." They grinded their own axe without thinking the country was being destroyed. I must include an incident here.

One day, I received a surprise telephone call. I was told the caller's codename. He was Air Vice Marshal Farooq Omer, the PIA Chairman. He told me that President Ishaq had arranged a special aircraft for the assembly members who had been kept at a particular place, and who were to take part in the no-confidence motion. Now a PIA aero plane was to shift them to Lahore. He asked somebody to tell me that it was to take off at a certain time, so if I could do anything I must, for they wanted to pass a no-confidence motion against Ghulam Haider Wyne. At this time, the entire government machinery was in the clutches of Ghulam Ishaq Khan, so I could do nothing. I just want to tell you how the establishment was using the state machinery against the elected and popular government.

MOIN QURESHI'S SELECTION

Then who brokered the compromise name of Moin Qureshi for the interim set-up?

Nawaz Sharif: Different names came under discussion.

Who was it that decided that you both would quit making way for an interim set up?

Nawaz Sharif: That we both decided mutually while fighting. (Laughter)

If you were fighting, how did you decide the matter mutually?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, I said to him if he did not abandon his stubbornness, what was the solution? He said I might quit office. I said the Supreme Court restored me; if I quit, would he also quit the Presidency? He answered that he would, so I said we both should quit.

Were the results of the 1993 elections correct, in your view?

Nawaz Sharif: At that time too we fought against the establishment.

No election results in Pakistan so far have been thought to be correct. Common people think all elections were rigged, and to call them transparent is incorrect.

Nawaz Sharif: My father wanted me to go to the people, for they knew the government had done good things, they liked the government, and their grief was very great. Especially after the dissolution of assemblies, people had registered an agitation that proved we had our hand on the people's pulse. With this in mind, we preferred to go to the people afresh.

Why did you decide to quit the government? How was the agreement concluded to contest elections? Who gave the advice? Ishaq should have gone, but why did you quit?

Nawaz Sharif: You are right. Since the Supreme Court had restored my government, I should have stayed.

How was Moin Qureshi selected? Later on, you expressed anger against his policies but it is said you had consented to his selection?

Nawaz Sharif: I think I did give my consent, for many other names were discussed, but we both agreed on his name. I did not know him well. Ishaq knew him better than me he was his special friend.

Who proposed his name?

Nawaz Sharif: In fact three four names were under discussion, since I had no objection to him, the name of Moin Qureshi was agreed on.

HOW THE IJI BROKE

Why did the Jamaat-e-Islami oppose you in the 1993 elections? Qazi Hussain Ahmed Sahib issued very harsh statements against you. How did the IJI break up?

Nawaz Sharif: There was no specific cause. I don't know even today why the Jamaat broke away from the IJI.

It is possible that you did not acknowledge his due status.

Nawaz Sharif: No. I think we had a good relationship with them but he had been giving very harsh statements in the newspapers that pained us though I never expressed my agony to him. Perhaps there were some other aims in Qazi's mind, which, he might have thought were impossible to achieve while being in the IJI.

AGENCIES IN CONFRONTATION

Another negative aspect of that period was that the agencies were in confrontation with one another. At one end was Brigadier Imtiaz of the Intelligence Bureau and on the other were ISI and Military Intelligence. Why did you allow such a confrontation, or why did you not stop the army? Later on, an allegation was made that Brigadier Imtiaz had been tapping the army chiefs' telephones. In return he alleged they had been recording their phones. What was the reason for this series of fights?

Nawaz Sharif: No, such things are minor and I don't know about them. Many things do occur at a local level; confrontation among agencies, whether IB, ISI or MI, continues.

During the days of Brigadier Imtiaz even your allies complained of being recorded.

Nawaz Sharif: Please! No prime minister wants to take such steps against his own allies.

In those days Mr. Jatoi and others said their telephones were being tapped.

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, I sensed that if Mr. Jatoi had said such a thing, it must have contained some truth. I took notice of the complaint and asked Brigadier Imtiaz why he had done so. However, I do not recall

the causes of such recordings. I had taken notice. I had not directed the tapping; the agencies themselves were doing the recordings. I recall Brigadier Imtiaz telling me that he did not tap the telephone the question did not arise. He had briefed me especially on this. However, the ISI might have done the tapping, but the IB had been accused mistakenly.



MISTAKES OF FIRST TERM

- My policy was not to dislodge the governments in Afghanistan
- I wanted a good relationship with the Northern Alliance as well
- ISI had its own priorities in foreign policy; and the army chief backed it
- ISI played a role in making two persons renege from the Peshawar Pact
- The intelligence agencies had created the Taliban as well

MY JURISDICTION

Q. Do you think you made mistakes in your first term? After being deposed from the prime ministership there is time to ponder the mistakes one intends not to repeat. Had you made any political mistake or had you decided not to fight the establishment?

Nawaz Sharif: I am not a confrontational person. Basically I am a peace-loving man, but I want everybody to play his role and exercise his powers within the ambit of the Constitution. No one should go beyond his jurisdiction. When you cross your limits and trespass into another's jurisdiction, you are held guilty but not anyone else. I did

not have time as prime minister to trespass into others' jurisdictions, nor was I fond of poking my nose into others' affairs. If I can discharge my duties well, it is I think an achievement. I do not need to trespass into others' jurisdiction at all. For example, the GHQ [military General Headquarters] affairs must be dealt with by the GHQ itself. Though the prime minister had the entire jurisdiction, I did not like to intervene in others' affairs. It was not my job to look at what was happening in the GHQ daily, who was being transferred where. I mostly left matters to them for it was their job. However, later on, I was asked if recruitment in the army was made on merit how Pervez Musharraf became a general (laughing) or how Yahya Khan became the chief. Now I think the power of transferring Corps Commanders must rest with the Defense Ministry.

FOREIGN POLICY

How free were you in making the foreign policy?

Nawaz Sharif: There were differences on the foreign policy.

It is heard that foreign policy was also taken care of by the GHQ. Benazir also says the GHQ had told her that it would make foreign policy for Afghanistan and India.

Nawaz Sharif: Pakistan's foreign policy does have some peculiarities. For example, the policy on Afghanistan was not being acted upon. My government's policy was not to take part in destabilizing the government in Afghanistan. Pakistan must not interfere in its internal affairs or that of any other country. We had a good relationship with Taliban and I also wanted to have good ties with Rabbani, the chief of the Northern Alliance, but the ISI had its own priorities and preferences. The Chief of the Army Staff enjoys good relations with the ISI, and favors the agency, ignoring the government policy. This becomes the root cause of differences. The government of Pakistan had a policy of establishing good relationship with both the sides, so that we should not become a party to any side in their internal issues.

PESHAWAR PACT

You had got concluded the Peshawar Pact among the warring Afghan factions of Afghanistan? After the Pact was signed you led them to Saudi Arabia as well. Then why did the Pact fail?

Nawaz Sharif: It was my first term, when I led the Afghan leaders to Saudi Arabia and made them sit together in front of me. At the time,

there was no Northern Alliance or anything. They were all united, the pact was concluded, but some people reneged on the Pact.

Who made the mistake, the Afghans or any of our agencies?

Nawaz Sharif: I myself was surprised as to why it had happened. At present I cannot say anything exactly. The ISI might have played a role by winning over two or three persons who had reneged. Afterwards the Taliban were established, who had established Taliban and who played a role in bringing them at the front is now a part of history. Besides many elements, the secret agencies had played a very active role.



PERIOD OF OPPOSITION

- The Deliverance Movement was not backed by the agencies
- Farooq Leghari, even after becoming president, played in the hands of the agencies
- I got the Mehran Bank Scandal file from a banker, not Asif Zardari
- Leghari had decided to dissolve the assemblies before I met him as opposition leader
- Leghari opposed Zulfikar Khosa's inclusion in the cabinet but we refused to comply
- If Benazir and Gen. Waheed Kakar had good ties, the credit goes to her, not him
- I opposed an extension for Kakar, for he had played a negative role

DELIVERANCE MOVEMENT

Q. Between 1993 and 1996 you remained in the opposition. In this period you launched Deliverance Movement. Doesn't launching an agitation movement against a democratic government harm the democratic process?

Nawaz Sharif: (Pause) I think there must be tolerance. We must accept one another's mandate. It ought to be so in Pakistan's politics but since it was not, we followed the tradition. We had faced such movements too. The agencies do play a part, but I say they should not trap one. As for the deliverance movement, neither did I launch it on agency advice, nor did they ever trap me. Since ours is a nationwide political party, it does not suit us to play such dirty and shameful games at all. By God's grace, we are not agency puppets, but firm people. In Pakistan, unfortunately, there are parties inside and outside the assemblies which dance to the agency tune. I do not know whether I should name them or not, but I cannot resist saying that Farooq Leghari, that shameless man, despite being President of Pakistan, was a puppet in the hands of the agencies. He is known to be corrupt, and an agent of the agencies. He had committed open corruption in the Razi Farm Scandal in DG Khan. We had unveiled his corruption with authentic documents, but he was left so unbridled in the army regime that even the National Accountability Bureau did not touch him. NAB was established to take the corrupt to task, but injustice was done to many people. Many innocents were arrested and the corrupt set at large. Among them Leghari is at the top.

MEHRAN BANK SCANDAL

It was alleged that Asif Zardari disclosed the secret of the Mehran Bank Scandal to you. Many friends of Leghari think Zardari did this to keep Leghari under pressure.

Nawaz Sharif: Nobody gave us the file of the scandal. However, the key figure, the banker, who was under pressure, had himself told us the entire story, for his life was at stake. He had also narrated the story to a friend, it was all true. Now the culprit (Farooq Leghari) is not just safe from NAB, he enjoys the support of the agencies, and he is also playing for the agencies sitting over there. Not only politicians, but also many others are playing the same dirty game. However, it is extremely regrettable, most shameful, that a man, being President of Pakistan, plays in the hands of the agencies.

DEAL WITH LEGHARI

But with the same Leghari you are castigating, you did a deal and got Benazir Bhutto's government dissolved?

Nawaz Sharif: I made no deal.

But you had met Leghari as Leader of the Opposition?

Nawaz Sharif: No, he had invited me and my party as President of Pakistan, so we visited him. We did not conspire with him.

Do you not think it was a mistake to go for that meeting?

Nawaz Sharif: We did not conclude a pact with him, either written or oral. He invited us to a meal, and we went. We heard his talk and he ours, and that's all. Neither our friends nor we joined his caretaker cabinet.

But that meeting facilitated Leghari in dissolving the assemblies and you in winning the resulting elections, so there must have been some mutual understanding?

Nawaz Sharif: No, there was no plan. He had already decided to dissolve the assemblies before he invited us to lunch. He had already decided what he was to do. He wanted to keep it secret, so he did not disclose it to us.

FORTY SEATS OFFER

He says you had offered him 40 seats prior to the elections. Did you?

Nawaz Sharif: What for? We had no need to offer him 40 seats.

President Leghari repeatedly says you had offered him 40 seats but he refused to accept.

Nawaz Sharif: (Angrily) He is a liar. He is an expert liar; what to speak of seats, we offered him nothing. If we had made him an offer we would have done so in the elections. When I won the elections and was elected as prime minister he opposed making Zulfiqar Khosa a minister very fiercely. I resisted and refused to comply. He created the first problem for us on this issue. I told him even if he got angry I would include him in the cabinet for he was one of our sincere friends. In another affair he acted the same, but I resisted to the last and did what we had to do.

There was another major event that played a very important role in the days to come. As the opposition leader you opposed an extension for General Kakar. That caused Jehangir Karamat to become army chief. You even held a press conference on this. What was your role in this decision? Why did you oppose Waheed Kakar and favor General Jehangir Karamat?

Nawaz Sharif: At that time the news of Waheed Kakar's extension was being published in the newspapers, without any refutation from the government. I thought since he had reached superannuation, he should not be given an extension so as to give a chance to others. It was a principled stand, which I expressed. Waheed Kakar had no distinction that an extension was unavoidable. Rather he had played a negative role when Ishaq dissolved the assemblies, so he was not eligible to get extension. It was the voice of my conscience that I expressed. What are you worried by?

JEHANGIR KARAMAT'S APPOINTMENT

It was said at the time that you had an understanding with the army on issuing that statement?

Nawaz Sharif: No, I was not even acquainted with Jehangir Karamat then.

CONFLICT WITH LEGHARI

Did the Presidency start creating problems for you just after you became prime minister?

Nawaz Sharif: When I was elected prime minister I did not create problems. We did not have any enmity against President Leghari in our hearts. Neither were we angry with him nor had we any dispute with him. I started off with very pleasant relations with him, but he at the very outset asked Shahbaz Sharif not to take Zulfiqar Khosa in his cabinet. He also asked us not to make Khosa's son president of the district. He directed not to take other persons in the Punjab cabinet and to run affairs in Punjab in such and such a manner only. He also asked us to put DG Khan Division at his discretion only. It does not behove the man sitting on the apex seat in Pakistan to talk like this. It was he who started creating problems, not me. Such things ultimately caused tension between the president and the prime minister. Similarly you mention the army chief, as to how and why such conflicts occurred with him. I think if you review the situation you will conclude that none of the prime ministers of Pakistan ever violated the law and Constitution, nor did they break any tradition. Rather always the men in uniform trespass the law and Constitution, and that caused the tension. It is my conviction and tested analysis. For example, if Benazir had good relations with General Kakar, it was Benazir due to whom relations were maintained. The credit goes to her, not him.

POLITICAL UPS AND DOWNS

- ◆ 1997 Elections
- ◆ Important Decisions
- ◆ Confrontation with Judiciary
- ◆ Nuclear Testing, Army and India
- ◆ From Karamat to Musharraf
- ◆ Political Problems
- ◆ Kargil
- ◆ Ceasefire in Washington

1997 ELECTIONS

- The 1997 elections were transparent in all respects
- Invisible powers never give you a reception with open hearts
- Leghari wanted to keep the balance of power with himself
- Many people wanted the elections postponed

INVISIBLE POWERS

Q. In the 1997 elections you got a heavy mandate from the electorate. You had run an excellent election campaign. It was, however, surprising that the PPP got no seat from Punjab. That caused some doubt about the elections. Today how do you see those elections? Had you had the support of the invisible powers?

Nawaz Sharif: I do not think the reservations about elections you expressed are justified. The elections were transparent in all respects by Pakistani standards. However, you may assess those standards as you like. In Pakistan perhaps the tradition has developed for people always to oppose the incumbent party in the next election because of disappointment. This factor cannot be overlooked. In the elections, Farooq Leghari did not want us to win so many seats. Meraj Khalid was the Prime Minister, and I do not refer to him, but his cabinet members did issue statements that reflected they wanted the

elections delayed. Such ambiguities were created in abundance till the last moment rumors were floating continuously. Besides, the slogan ‘first accountability, then elections’ was being raised. Some political parties that today are part of the MMA tried to get the elections delayed. Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal [MMA-United Council of Action] is a coalition between religious-political parties formed after Pakistan became a part of the War on Terror] too raised such slogans. I have certain extreme reservations about Leghari’s political role as president, but he was firm about not delaying the election beyond ninety days. It was commendable of him. However, as I know he did not want either the PPP or the PML-N [The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz led by Nawaz Sharif] to win an absolute majority, because he wanted to keep the balance of power in his hands so that he might make prime minister whomsoever he liked (laughter). He wanted to form a government of his own choice.

ELECTION RULES AMENDED

To save you from disqualification during the 1997 elections, rules were amended to relax the upper limit of a company’s controlling shares. Is it true the rule was amended on your protest? Does it not prove that you, Leghari and the establishment were colluding?

Nawaz Sharif: We had protested legally against the rule. The record is even available today it is not concealed. He was forced to amend the rule on my agitation; it is not democracy that a few days before conducting elections you amend rules and regulations just as General Pervez Musharraf deprived Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif of their party’s president ship by amending the law before elections. In such circumstances, he says he conducted elections. Was this an election? It was a mockery of the nation and democracy. We raised objections on all the demerits and shortcomings of elections; perhaps Benazir too fought against these things. Nobody spread a red carpet for us to come and enjoy the fruit, no agency, establishment or any invisible power helped us till today, so such things must be cast out of the mind. In the 1997 elections, the public gave me votes, so against the will of the president and many other powers, the people elected me.



IMPORTANT DECISIONS

- The decision to make Shahbaz Sharif Punjab chief minister proved correct
- Those who opposed Shahbaz ultimately sided with military setup
- I did not want to change Akhtar Mengal in Balochistan, but my political allies forced me
- I am yet sorry for dislodging Mengal from the chief ministership
- Mehtab Abbasi proved a good administrator his performance was commendable
- Liaqat Jatoi's government was not successful; so we suspended our own government

SHAHBAZ SHARIF'S CHIEF MINISTRY

Q. After the 1997 elections your decision to make your brother Shahbaz Sharif the Punjab chief minister was heavily criticized. Do you think your decision was correct?

Nawaz Sharif: I think some people might have criticized my decision; you must know better who they were. They had lobbies that raised much hue and cry in the media. Such lobbies work with politicians, but we are to judge whether, despite criticism from one

group or another, the decision proved good or not. In my opinion the decision ended in providing a very transparent and effective administration in the Punjab; development was done on a larger scale, by God's grace. Shahbaz Sharif took very good steps for improving the education system; he took good steps in improving the health department's efficiency as well as the healthcare system. Similarly roads and bridges were constructed on a vast scale throughout the province. Not only in Lahore but also in Faisalabad, Multan and Rawalpindi, development was executed at the fastest pace. During that period, merit was the only criteria, the booty mafia in examinations was crushed; each walk of life was improved, the efficiency of government servants was enhanced. Perhaps in the Punjab after a very long time, such good and useful work was done. We are to judge the result of the decision, no matter certain quarters criticized it. If the result was in favor of the nation and the country, the decision was undoubtedly very good.

Your political allies became angry with you; you had to pay a heavy price for your decision regarding Shahbaz Sharif.

Nawaz Sharif: Well, everybody has personal interests as well. However, if anybody gets angry at a good decision, he has a right to. You can see to whom the political allies of mine who got angry ultimately went with the military setup. In the hour of need, they did not wait a moment to leave us. We always talk to stay united but if we make decisions on merit they prove better for the nation.

MEHTAB ABBASI AND AKHTAR MENGAL

You said a very curious thing, that when you were prime minister very good works were done in Punjab. Why were such works not done in the rest of the country, where you were equally prime minister?

Nawaz Sharif: No, I think in the North Western Frontier Province very useful public work was done. Mehtab Abbasi proved a very good administrator whom people admire even today. If you talk of Balochistan, Akhtar Mengal had done a very commendable job over there. The team was very good; I supported Mengal but my senior colleagues, who have now left me, forced me to replace him. They said since Muslim League was in majority, it would make no difference if the chief minister was replaced. I replied to them that even with our majority we should not replace the chief minister who was doing well, but my senior party members got the decision in

their favor. While he was running the government well, we should have not replaced him. However, as I said about the larger interest of unity, two of my seniors ultimately got him replaced. I was forced to decide against my own will. I am sorry even today for having replaced Mengal.

LIAQAT JATOI

But Sindh was never controlled properly. Why?

Nawaz Sharif: The team in Sindh was not working properly. Liaqat Jatoi was not doing well, so I had to suspend our own government even though nobody ever suspends one's own government. I think it is the only precedent, when we suspended our own government in Sindh. Since it is a unique example, it should be admired.



CONFRONTATION WITH JUDICIARY

- The judiciary's role in history has been dubious
- As a result of the connivance of the judiciary and the army leadership, the country has been deviating from its right path
- Judiciary had itself held Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah accountable
- Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah wanted to be prime minister
- Farooq Leghari and Justice Sajjad Ali Shah had decided to oust the prime minister
- The allegation of working on the judges is false
- A judge who takes oath under a PCO [Provisional Constitutional Order] should be prosecuted for treason
- I had absolutely no role in the attack on Supreme Court

FIGHT WITH SAJJAD ALI SHAH

Q. You are alleged to have fought against the judiciary as prime minister. Didn't you respect institutions at all?

Nawaz Sharif: I did not fight against anybody. The judiciary performed its own accountability itself and I think this was absolutely right. The judges themselves played a role against their chief justice for he was doing wrong. Who was the wrongdoer? Sajjad Ali Shah and nobody else.

Benazir Bhutto says Sajjad Ali Shah wanted to be prime minister or president.

Nawaz Sharif: I too have heard this. At least he wanted to be caretaker prime minister or president. At any rate, he wanted to become more powerful. He was not even respecting the prime minister. He was waiving the 13th amendment off today, the 14th amendment tomorrow; he might have hit the whole Constitution one day. He had said he might throw out of the window a consensually passed amendment in one second. Now tell me when respectable members of the judiciary themselves, among others, Justices Saeeduzzaman Siddiqui and Ajmal Mian had risen against him, what could anybody else do? [Military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf dismissed 18 judges of the country's superior courts, including Supreme Court Chief Justice Saeeduzzaman Siddiqui, following their refusal to take fresh oaths under the Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) issued by Musharraf after he seized power in a coup that toppled the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.] They were respectable judges, they refused to take oath under the PCO, and they sacrificed their Chief Justiceships. They were indeed worthy of respect. The nation must give them respect. By God's grace, their sacrifice will bear fruit. They had not risen against their Chief Justice out of whim. Rather they saved the judiciary, their own institution. In this situation Farooq Leghari came forward and colluded with Sajjad Shah to oust me from power.

Do you have any proof of this collusion?

Nawaz Sharif: Sajjad Ali Shah and Leghari had been openly planning how to oust the prime minister. We had the proof of this in reports we received from the intelligence agencies.

Was it in your knowledge?

Nawaz Sharif: It was very much in my knowledge. They had formed a conspiracy, and they were sheltering each other.

WORK ON JUDGES

Farooq Leghari once said you told him you were working on the judges, meaning that you were trying to win them over.

Nawaz Sharif: No, not at all. It is impossible to win a judge for a false purpose. If you are not rightful or principled, how can you win anybody's favor? Judges had themselves taken action against Sajjad Shah after observing his decision. These are Leghari's allegations, and do not contain an iota of reality.

ROLE OF JUDICIARY

What do you think has been the role of judiciary since Independence?

Nawaz Sharif: The judiciary's role in history had been dubious. In my opinion Pakistan has been deviating from its true path due to the judiciary and military leaderships' mutual connivance. The basic cause of democracy's not taking root is this very collusion. Had the judiciary been doing its duty properly, no matter how heinous the blunders of the military leadership, Pakistan would have adhered to democracy successfully. If the judiciary had given very first decision against military's first assault on the rule of law, matters would not have reached this pass. I am convinced of this. However, the judiciary had been supporting dictators in the name of the law of necessity. What an irony!

If you return to power, what sort of judicial reforms would you like to introduce?

Nawaz Sharif: I think there is a dire need to reform the judiciary. It must be held accountable. If we are afraid of anybody, we cannot impose reforms but if we are sincere in implementing reforms, if we are sincere in setting Pakistan on the track of democracy, we should speak bravely against all those who have done wrong. And when the time comes we must act. I want a consensus with Benazir on this, and we should work united in this direction. We should first hold judiciary responsible for whatever wrong they had done, and ask them why it was so. However, we must respect that part of the judiciary which made sacrifices for principles and democracy. And then we should make the judiciary an institution in which people can show confidence, can start trusting; which metes out justice and

decides always according to the law and the Constitution. The matters of appointment; accountability and removal of judges should be brought in the parliament for discussion and decision, and not left to a single authority to decide. In the Charter of Democracy we have decided to appoint judges through Parliament.

Do you think there should be a parliamentary committee to appoint judges?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, of course! The modus operandi of appointment must be very transparent. The reputation of the judge so appointed must be above any suspicion. I think in Pakistan the supreme bodies of the lawyers, like the Supreme Court Bar Association and the High Court Bar Associations should also have a role. They must recommend unanimously the names of candidates to the government for final selection. The present method that the government and the chief minister recommend the names must be stopped at once. All this must be done freely, without influence from anywhere. The judge, who violates his oath and takes oath under PCO, should be prosecuted for high treason under Article 6 of the Constitution as well.

You have been accused of attacking the Supreme Court?

Nawaz Sharif: I did not make people attack the Supreme Court; I knew that any such attack would bring grave consequences and a bad name to the government. There were a few people who attacked the Supreme Court. Though Sajjad Shah's role was not to be appreciated, it still did not deserve an attack. It was a wrong act and should not have happened. I was not at all in favor of such an attack. It was heinous. A few people went there and did what should not have been done. Is it not a fact that I, as prime minister, appeared before the Supreme Court to prove that no one in Pakistan was above the law. I set a precedent for the first time in the history of Pakistan.



NUCLEAR TESTING, ARMY AND INDIA

- I decided to respond the moment India tested its nuclear device
- Jehangir Karamat was not in favor of testing. He thought it would anger America
- It was the cabinet and not the army that made the decision to develop friendly relations with India
- A Kashmir solution is possible only by talks, not by war
- Kashmir was on the agenda from Day One, I don't know what Gen. Musharraf takes credit for
- It had been decided that the Kashmir issue would be solved in 1999
- All the heads of the armed services had saluted Vajpayee at the Governor House

DECISION OF EXPLOSION

Q. Did you ponder well the pros and cons of the decision of nuclear testing?

Nawaz Sharif: When India exploded the atomic bomb I was on a visit to the Central Asian States. I was not expecting such an event, but when I got the news I talked to General Jehangir Karamat about making arrangements for our own tests. He asked that we discuss the issue after I came back, but I said he must start preparations at once. He was of the opinion that we should not test, for America would get angry. However, I was of the opinion at the very beginning that we should test without accepting any pressure from anywhere, so I carried out the tests.

WHO WAS REALLY INCHARGE OF THE PROGRAM?

Why did you ask Jehangir Karamat about testing? Was the army the real in-charge of the atomic program?

Nawaz Sharif: Though I could have spoken to the scientists, Dr. Qadeer or Samar Mubarakmand too, since the army had an indirect link with atomic program. When I talked to him on telephone, I felt as if he had some reluctance, and I had also spoken with the scientists. When I came back it had become the country's Issue Number One. I had decided from Day One to test for no other option had been left with us. I had prepared myself mentally for the test when India did its tests. On my return, I immediately summoned the Defense Committee of Cabinet, which then met repeatedly. All the three chiefs of the armed services and the Chairman Joint Chief of Staff attended these meetings. Then I discussed the matter with the president and then with the heads of friendly countries. Within the country I also invited media as well as representatives of different walks of life to discuss the issue. I wanted everybody to participate. I had also discussed the issue with members of our parliamentary party besides many other forums. But I had made up my mind from Day One that what I ought to do, I would do, for we had no other option.

KARAMAT'S RESERVATIONS

What were Jehangir Karamat's reservations?

Nawaz Sharif: He had a Hamlet-like disposition, to do or not to; he was at a loss as to what to do or not to do. However, the Air Chief was very clear that there was no other option at all. The Naval Chief

too had certain reservations like the army chief. He said we must ponder the consequences of the sanctions that might be imposed upon us. Pakistan would come under pressure. However, such things did not impress me; I was firm that since we had no option left, we must test in response; otherwise our survival would be at stake. Thereafter, I received calls from world leaders. Clinton and Tony Blair called me, besides many others. Some of the reports of their calls are with me. [Clinton-Nawaz Sharif talk is annexed at the end of the book.] They tried to persuade me not to test. However, they offered a package of five billion dollars for Pakistan when they saw I was not going to stop.

When I refused to accept the package, they threatened me with sanctions that might prove very harmful, but I stood firm. I carried out the tests and when afterwards I told Clinton that we had tested our nuclear devices, he said then he was unable to do anything for us, for his hands were tied and he was obliged to impose economic sanctions on Pakistan. President Clinton said to me that he was bound by law to impose sanctions but he appreciated me, saying that I had played with a straight bat meaning thereby that I did not cheat him. I thanked him for this. He talked to me in this way, and then he became a friend of mine. He used to call me on different issues, including Afghanistan. At the time, Clinton told me he had secret information that some people were prepared to wreak havoc on his country. He alleged that Usama bin Laden and some other persons who had Taliban support, were involved. I think this was why they had attacked their bases in Afghanistan with missiles. However, I recorded my protest to Clinton on this. I used to make him understand that he should think well before taking any such action.

ECONOMIC EFFECTS

Was Pakistan economically weakened after the explosion or do you think your decision was correct?

Nawaz Sharif: We were surviving. Though Musharraf claims he got our loans rescheduled, the fact is it had started in our time. Ishaq Dar concluded the matter but its result came to the fore after our government was ousted. You may see how Vajpayee visited Pakistan after the tests, whereas before India was in the habit of talking to us very arrogantly. Their tone changed. The Indian prime minister visited and appreciated Pakistan. He also recognized Pakistan in his heart and visited Minar-e-Pakistan as a symbol.

THE ARMY AND RELATIONS WITH INDIA

It is said the Pakistan Army opposed friendly relations with India? Had you discussed the issue with the Army?

Nawaz Sharif: No, the Pakistan Army did not oppose it; no such thing was ever brought to my knowledge.

But did you ever talk with the army about friendship with India?

Nawaz Sharif: It is an affair in which army had no role. If we want to befriend India, it is for the Cabinet and Parliament to decide, not the Army. However, it is communicated to the army chief, that we want to establish relations with India.

Why did you decide to establish friendly relations with India?

Nawaz Sharif: I think we can solve Kashmir issue by talks. It is the only way, for you cannot solve the issue by fighting. It may aggravate the tension and that's all, as you have seen for the last 50 years.

Did you also keep in mind what the Pakistani economy would have to undergo?

Nawaz Sharif: Obviously, when a country is not under pressure, it has a very neat and clean environment, and its economy will flourish automatically but if you always talk of attacking India, your economy will fall into an abyss. If you really want to make progress you have to solve such issues at first. When I learnt Vajpayee too had goodwill for us before the nuclear tests, we met in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Conference. Both sides wanted to sit and talk on all the issues including Kashmir, which is fundamental. Musharraf has said twice that he has got Kashmir issue included in the talks whereas the issue had been on the agenda from Day One. I do not know what he tries to take credit for, but he may say so on his own. The fact is that Kashmir is the bone of contention; the fundamental issue. Without its solution first, no friendly relationship with India can be established.

Did you talk with Vajpayee about Kashmir?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes I had talked to him on Kashmir issue; and we both had decided to solve the problem in 1999 through back channels. What a big thing it was that all parties were agreed to a solution of the long-standing issue. At the time different proposals to its solution were under discussion; Vajpayee too was anxious to solve

the issue swiftly, and so was I. Even now if an attempt is made, though it is a very big and complex issue, it can be solved, for in the world many big and complex issues have been solved through talks.

When Vajpayee planned to visit Pakistan, the news was that the army was opposing the visit. Did the army not salute Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee?

Nawaz Sharif: It is not correct that the army did not salute the prime minister of India. It is also said they were not ready to receive him at the border but this is wrong. There was no such thing. It was I who planned to receive the Indian Prime Minister at the Governor House along with my cabinet, the service chiefs and the Chairman of Joint Chief of Staff Committee. We gave him a reception there when he arrived by helicopter.

Did the army commanders salute the Indian prime minister?

Nawaz Sharif: It is clear that when any head of state visits a country he is saluted by the services chiefs. Our Chief of Army Staff is always reluctant to salute the prime minister of his own country, but he feels no hesitation in saluting foreigners. (Laughter)

It is heard that in your days considerable progress had been made on Kashmir through back-channel diplomacy. Was this true?

Nawaz Sharif: It is true. Much progress had been made. Before signing the Lahore Declaration, Vajpayee said to me that 1999 would be the year of a solution of the Kashmir issue. The solution would be acceptable to both India and Pakistan. I said that the solution must also be acceptable to the Kashmiris, and he agreed to this. So we started back-channel diplomacy but then Kargil happened. India stopped the talks, alleging Pakistan had stabbed it in the back, which was not a false allegation at all.



FROM KARAMAT TO MUSHARRAF

- The Agency reports were opposed to make General Musharraf Chief
- The intelligence agencies reported that Musharraf was very short tempered
- Several generals got angry when I replaced General Jehangir Karamat
- The decision to appoint General Musharraf army chief was made in haste
- I made a mistake not to appoint Lt Gen Ali Quli Khan, the most senior general, as Chief
- General Iftikhar and his brother had a personal grudge against Ali Quli Khan
- The army chief and the president are not meant to interfere in the powers of the prime minister
- The president and army chief, blackmail the prime minister
- Articles 58 (2b) caused irreparable loss to the country and democracy

- Jehangir Karamat's National Security Council proposal was an attempt to establish the rule of the army over the prime minister
- Prime minister has constitutional right to call explanation of the army chief regarding any matter
- The Army has always pressurized the prime minister illegally and interfered in the business of government

DISPUTE WITH JEHANGIR KARAMAT

Q. It is generally felt that you failed to develop good relations with any Chief of Army Staff. You even removed Jehangir Karamat, a General with a democratic mind. What was the reason?

Nawaz Sharif: I always fought for supremacy of the Constitution and the principles of democracy. I never compromised on principles. If a cheat, a fraudulent scoundrel, refuses to mend his ways, it does not mean his criminal activities are legalized. If there are twenty thousand thieves in London, it does not mean the theft is no more a crime. It is my aim to fight for the supremacy of law and Constitution in my country, for it is my country and I love it the most. It is my promise; by God's grace, I shall keep my word. The central point of my movement was a democratic and stable Pakistan. It is said evil raises its head when goodness keeps quiet. It is an irony of fate that those who caused harm to the nation were never punished. Those responsible for the secession of East Pakistan were left without being held to account.

Our tragedy is that, right from the start, opportunists had been trespassing into the corridors of power by illegal means, throwing the elected government out of office. Political parties prepare their manifestos according to the will of people, then get assent of public in general elections, and become able to rule the country according to the will of the masses. The prime minister and his cabinet are responsible to run the country according to their manifesto as approved by the people. The prime minister is responsible for implementing his manifesto according to the Constitution for he is elected by the votes of the people, therefore the president and Chief

of Army Staff have no right to interfere in the prime minister's powers under the constitution.

My experiences as prime minister were very bitter both the times; the undemocratic powers of the President under Article 58 (2) (b) and support of army chief to him, make the prime minister ineffective, his constitutional powers thus cease to operate. They both, in connivance with each other, blackmail the prime minister, hurt his constitutional supremacy, his right to rule, that he obtains from the public through votes and to whom he is ultimately accountable. Such a tug at war usually ends in the dissolution of the democratic system in Pakistan as with the dissolution of the elected assemblies in 1990 and 1993. Even before the dismissal of the government, the Army had taken over the TV Station and all-important buildings. General Kakar was army chief, and without permission from the federal government, he had no power to dispatch troops but he violated the law.

Farooq Leghari was Benazir Bhutto's choice. When he became president, he withdrew from the PPP that looked after him for thirty long years. I mean, it was the PPP that made him a politician, for before joining the party he might be a Sardar but not a politician. It was the party that gave him very important and prestigious positions inside and outside the party and it was the PPP that offered him the Presidency in a plate. The harm caused by article 58 (2b) is irreparable. The powers of the army chief do not let him poke his nose in the country's internal politics. And we all must understand. So General Jehangir Karamat's National Security Council proposal was an undemocratic attempt to establish the unlawful jurisdiction of the army over an elected prime minister. When his attention was drawn to this, he, like a gentleman and a good officer, accepted his fault and submitted his resignation. General Jehangir Karamat said that his resignation was a lesson for his successors. In my opinion the army chief must not use his powers illegally for it gives birth to many problems and confusion that result in chaos, and causes indiscipline in the administration of the country. When I dismissed General Musharraf, the circumstances were highly aggravated; it was in fact a continuity of the circumstances that had developed since Kargil, so I was forced to take such step.

As prime minister I always gave respect to the army chief; it is my conviction that the prime minister and the federal government must not interfere in army affairs, for it has its own jurisdiction.

However, I think the government has the right to call explanation of the army for any of its steps. It was my right to call for an explanation from the army chief on army issues. Despite my prerogative, I left the army to discharge its duties and run its affairs independently. However, it is very regrettable that the army always interfered in the affairs of the government and has always attempted to suppress the prime minister and hurt his authority. For this purpose it occasionally has connived with the president as well.

When you replaced Jehangir Karamat did you feel the army might take it adversely?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes I did, and later I learnt some generals had taken it adversely. They thought the prime minister should not have done so. However, I think it was a matter of principle and one should not compromise on principles. If you start compromising you stand nowhere. You cannot tolerate someone ignoring the authority of the prime minister and trying to overstep you.

APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL MUSHARRAF

Was your decision to replace General Karamat with General Musharraf made in haste or after due consideration?

Nawaz Sharif: I think it was a decision made in haste for I did not expect General Jehangir Karamat to issue such a nasty statement and that I would have to ask for his resignation. However, it happened all of sudden. We were in a hurry to select a new incumbent, and we should have chosen the first in seniority. It was my fault; I should have appointed the most senior general, Khalid Nawaz or Ali Quli Khan. At the time wrong advice was given to me that so-and-so general was on somebody's side and so-and-so was relative of so-and-so. I later on learnt that Defense Secretary Iftikhar Ali Khan and his brother had a personal grudge against General Ali Quli Khan, and they had taken revenge from him by hindering his promotion. However, I have learnt the lesson that the most senior must not be ignored except if he has a major disqualification. Since General Ali Quli Khan had no demerit at all, it was indeed my mistake that should not have been done with the most senior general.

General Ali Quli had admired you for this confession in an interview with Rauf Klausra of "The News".

Nawaz Sharif: Well.

REPORTS AGAINST GENERAL MUSHARRAF

But you must have pondered upon the merits and demerits of your decision to appoint Musharraf?

Nawaz Sharif: (Pause) I must tell you clearly that the intelligence agencies' recommendations were against the appointment of General Musharraf as army chief.

What did the agencies report against him?

Nawaz Sharif: Their view was that Musharraf was not fit for the job, because he was very hasty, liable to flare up quickly and a man who decides without due consideration.

Which of the agencies said so?

Nawaz Sharif: I would not name the agencies, but theirs is the responsibility to make recommendations. I am talking of the relevant agencies. Their view was that Musharraf was not suitable as army chief for he was a carefree person. He does not give importance to consequences of important matters. There were, of course, some other things which I cannot disclose on the basis of which agencies thought him unfit for the position.

Why did you appoint him despite such reports?

Nawaz Sharif: I thought I should not go deeply into the matter. If I chose anyone from the first four positions it would make no difference. But today I regret this. I should have appointed the most senior general as Chief of the Army Staff for there was nothing wrong with him. Since it had been a tradition usually to ignore the most senior general without reason, I thought there would be no problem. I think such a policy is not good at all.



POLITICAL PROBLEMS

- The Jamaat-e-Islami had protested at Vajpayee's arrival with help from the intelligence agencies
- Mian Azhar intrigued with the army; he met General Musharraf in an aeroplane
- General Mehmood had continuous links with Mian Azhar; he had made him president of the PML-Q
- The Army and the ISI exerted pressure for Benazir's accountability
- All such steps were taken against Benazir just to prove that politicians are untrustworthy
- During my rule Asif Zardari was never arrested
- Benazir Bhutto was advised to leave the country before the court's announcement of her conviction
- The action against leading Urdu daily *Jang* was a blunder; it was in fact Saif-ur-Rehman's doing

ACCOUNTABILITY BY SAIF-UR-REHAMAN

Q. In your second term several complex political problems arose. You developed such a system of accountability that it took down your Leader of the Opposition. Do you think this was democratic behavior?

Nawaz Sharif: The system of accountability so evolved was mistaken. We were under tremendous pressure from the Army and the ISI to take such measures against Benazir and the opposition, deliberately to remove the public's trust in politicians.

ZARDARI'S IMPRISONMENT

Now you talk of democracy but Asif Zardari remained behind bars throughout your tenure, and Benazir Bhutto was also convicted.

Nawaz Sharif: Our government did not arrest Asif Zardari even once. I was also against Benazir's arrest though Saif-ur-Rehman wanted to get her arrested. Ch Shujaat is witness to the fact I opposed the proposal and wanted Benazir to leave the country before she was to be awarded punishment, so that she might not go to jail.

During your rule journalists were harassed and stringent measures taken against Jang. What do you say about it now?

Nawaz Sharif: It was my fault. I know you were included in those 14 persons who had been asked to be fired from the Jang Group. It was ill-doing of Saif-ur-Rehman. However, I do not blame him alone. It was our mistake.

CLASH WITH MIAN AZHAR

In your second tenure, your colleague Mian Azhar became disenchanted with you. Is it true that his father helped your father financially when your factories had been nationalized?

Nawaz Sharif: Not financial help as such, but he was a good friend of my father, who always respected him. His brother Mian Muhammad Aslam did have a good relationship with our family. Had Mian Aslam been alive, he would have not let Mian Azhar follow the course he did. Similarly, if his father had been alive, he also would have not let Mian Azhar get distracted. His father was a very nice man; his brother Mian Aslam had also a very kind disposition. He was our steel agent, he had a showroom in Badami Bagh; he used to buy steel in bulk from us. When Ittefaq Foundry was nationalized my father asked him to lend him the extra furnace

he had with him uninstalled. He agreed, so after such a major blow, we came back in the field. We took a major risk and restarted our manufacturing, just to continue to develop Pakistan. Then we paid them. It was indeed their kindness that they lent us the furnace on those terms and conditions. It was for this reason my father and family gave them respect all their lives.

We ourselves had offered Mian Azhar the Mayorship of Lahore, and helped him, though it is God who helps. Thereafter, I offered him the seat of MNA I had vacated and then got him elected. Then by God's grace, I elevated him to the Punjab governor. Then he turned his face from us, which we did not expect. We did well by him as far as anyone could. We looked after him like anything but he did not prove a friend. I feel great regret for what ought not to have happened, has happened. My father took me to his house and said to Mian Azhar's father that we wanted him to allow us to appoint Mian Azhar the governor. We took care of him in every respect but he has now changed.

What was the cause?

Nawaz Sharif: I must speak the truth: he was made to dream very golden dreams. I had information about the links Mian Azhar developed with the army. While returning from Malaysia, he had met General Musharraf on the aeroplane. Later General Musharraf kept the link with him through General Mehmood and it was he who made him president of the PML-Q. [Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid-i-Azam was formed in 2001, and strongly supports Musharraf]

CONFRONTING JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI

The confrontation with the Jamaat-e-Islami aggravated with Vajpayee's visit in Pakistan, and the baton charge increased the bitterness.

Nawaz Sharif: Please tell me who had thrown stones on the vehicles of the Indian prime minister or of diplomats? Who took out processions on the roads? We had information that Jamaat workers were on the roads but behind them were the agencies, which made videocassettes and films and then exhibited them to the Jamaat, saying they had been persecuted badly by the government through the police lathi charge. Please tell me why the Jamaat did not protest against MMA leaders who visited India and had talks with Indian leadership, and got the news printed in the newspapers with huge headlines. At the time, I had not visited India. Rather the Indian

prime minister had himself visited Pakistan, then why such a huge agitation was made so that windows of the cars of diplomats of even friendly countries like Germany and Turkey were smashed? It was not the Jamaat alone; rather it was backed by the agencies. Where had these people gone when Musharraf visited India? Why did they not agitate on that occasion? Even MMA leaders have visited India, so why no agitation against them?

SHARIAT BILL

You are accused of trying to impose a dictatorial system through the Shariat Bill.

Nawaz Sharif: It is absolutely incorrect. I did not want to change the system at all. I wanted to legislate to eradicate sectarianism, extremism and belated justice. The Shariat Bill was an attempt to this direction. We had taken action against religious extremists and terrorists with extra zeal and bravery, action the army cannot do. Some reservations emerged about the Shariat Bill, so afterwards we did not stress its approval much.



KARGIL

- Without asking the prime minister, the Army was deployed at Kargil for four months
- I learnt from Vajpayee what our army was doing in Kargil
- The decision to start war is not supposed to be made by the generals only, but by the entire nation
- The prime minister was kept in the dark about Kargil
- Even the Air Chief, the Naval Chief and the Corps Commanders were not informed
- Two thousand seven hundred army personnel were martyred. Where was the generals' wisdom?
- Kargil operation was badly planned. Its aim was to sabotage Pakistan-India parleys
- General Musharraf came to me with a request to bail them out
- I had to listen to hot words from Clinton and Tony Blair, but I bore them

- Kargil harmed the dignity and status of Pakistan

THE MUJAHIDEEN OF KARGIL

Q. How did the Kargil conflict start? How far were you taken into confidence as prime minister?

Nawaz Sharif: As prime minister I was not taken into confidence at all. And when after four months I was told a bit, it was said the attack would neither cause any trouble nor result in loss of life. It was also said the army would not participate in the attack; rather it would be made by the Mujahideen exclusively. However, when the attack was made, the entire Northern Light Infantry perished; two thousand martyred and hundreds wounded; the death toll was higher than that of the 1965 and 1971 wars put together. When such heavy losses took place I reminded Musharraf that he had said no loss would be caused to the army, and asked what was happening. He said the Indians were carrying out carpet-bombing. I then asked whether he hadn't known that the Indians could do so. He said no, he hadn't. I was informed that our men were being killed like anything by Indian bombardment for there were no roofs on the trenches. I must tell you that when the Washington Pact was concluded, the Indian Army had got Kargil vacated. They were advancing swiftly. It was I who saved our army from dishonor and disgrace.

The army claims you had been briefed. Is it true?

Nawaz Sharif: I was not told about the subject. (The telephonic conversation between General Musharraf during his visit to China and his Chief of General Staff, Lt Gen Aziz Khan, provided by intelligence agencies to Nawaz Sharif, is annexed at the end of the book.) I am yet to say many things about Kargil that I still have in my heart. I have not spoken on the issue the way I want to, for it is a very delicate issue. At the time I took the responsibility of Kargil on my shoulders to save the army from disgrace. This is a fact without an iota of exaggeration. Kargil is a long story; events thereafter were linked to it, especially the takeover of 12 October 1999, which was a direct consequence. This misadventure would remain secret no more, like the Fall of Dhaka. If God willing, all the facts were brought before the people, those responsible would be taken to task.

If the army had conquered Kargil without taking you into confidence; maybe they just meant to give you a big surprise?

Nawaz Sharif: Armed Forces of Pakistan are not allowed under law to deploy without prior approval of the Federal Government or the prime minister. They are bound to get clearance from the prime minister or Federal Government first. War is not fought only by the generals but by the entire nation. It is not an adventure limited to the army rather it embraces every activity of the nation. God forbid, if the army was defeated, it was not the defeat of the army only but of the whole nation. It is necessary that the generals alone should not decide how to tackle an issue but the entire nation, including the nation's political leadership.

POLITICAL AIMS OF KARGIL

Some of your supporters say Kargil was a political strategy, and its real aim was to oust you.

Nawaz Sharif: It may be possible but I don't know what the thoughts of its planners were. I cannot understand till now why the Kargil expedition was launched, what our targets were, what we wanted to achieve and what were the army's aims. At least the political leadership should have known the real aims and targets of such an expedition. Let alone the political leadership, I think even the army leadership was not clear about the aims and objects of the Kargil War. They failed to apprise or convince the political leadership on this. It is my personal view that the army leadership had no objectives except to publicize the Kashmir issue in the international community.

Unfortunately the tables were turned on us; the international community pressurized us alleging that we were terrorists and that ours was a rogue army. They said Pakistan had moved in the wrong direction, while peace talks were being conducted. It is, I think, regrettable and painful. I may reach a definite conclusion after evidence is collected. It may have been a conspiracy to dislodge me from power, a conspiracy of hidden internal enemies of Pakistan to weaken the country and its government. However, before coming to a firm conclusion, I need certain information. The veil drawn over the issue would be raised ultimately. Even if the aim was to highlight the issue internationally, there was no need to sacrifice so many men of the Pakistan Army; all the Northern Light Infantry units perished, a death toll even higher than that of the 1965 and 1971 Wars combined. Was such a heavy loss of life unavoidable for so petty an aim? Was it

the only way to internationalize the Kashmir issue? There were many ways. I had to listen to hot words when I visited America and England. I think the expedition gave us a bad name. We met such heavy losses that we were unable to make them up.

What sorts of losses were caused?

Nawaz Sharif: Before Kargil people felt India had been behaving unjustly to Pakistan; for it neither solved the issue at the negotiating table nor agreed to solve it any other way. India was under pressure; it had carried out nuclear testing before us, we just responded, otherwise we wouldn't have tested. The responsibility for the tests rested on India's shoulders. Our generals foolishly reversed the situation and shifted the responsibility to Pakistan by the fruitless Kargil adventure. They do not think about the results before making decisions. Without asking permission from the prime minister they had started moving on Kargil in December or January. They told the prime minister even after four or five months that it was not the army but the Mujahideen who were engaged at Kargil. However, it was Vajpayee who told me that it wasn't the Mujahideen but the Pak Army which was attacking.

What did you do after receiving Vajpayee's phone call? Did you take the army to task?

Nawaz Sharif: A few generals had felt the Kashmir issue was going to be solved through back-channel talks. Some people were perhaps unhappy with the peace process. I think the army leadership was against the peace talks so to sabotage the talks, they launched Kargil.

MISTAKES AT KARGIL

You say you were not taken into confidence about Kargil, yet you yourself visited the Kargil war front. You raised slogans over there. Didn't you thus help the army indirectly?

Nawaz Sharif: In fact Pervez Musharraf insisted time and again that I visit the war front and meet the troops. Then one day he came to me and said the situation at Kargil had gotten worse. Our peaks and posts were falling to India. I asked him whether he had not kept in view this possibility when planning the operation. He replied they had kept all this in mind, but they thought since they were on top they would beat the Indian troops, but now the enemy was advancing in thousands. Thereupon I asked him how the army made plans, why he had not reviewed the operation from this angle, why

he had shown this slackness in planning. He replied that what was done was done; now I must think of a solution. The operation was in the knowledge of General Pervez Musharraf, Lt Gen Aziz, then Chief of General Staff, General Mehmood, the Corps Commander of the area, and General Javed Hassan, the Division Commander of the Northern Areas. It was not in the knowledge of even any other corps commander. The Naval and Air Chiefs were also not informed. Just think, the prime minister was not informed, the Defense Minister and even the Defense Secretary were not informed. Since nobody concerned was informed about the operation, it was bound to fail. When nobody is taken into confidence, planning is defective, all relevant things are not considered. Such a defectively planned operation cannot succeed. After keeping in view all these factors, what emerges is that the aim of the operation was to disrupt the prime minister's efforts to solve the Kashmir issue peacefully. It was nothing but a conspiracy to sabotage the peace talks on Kashmir.

EVERYONE WAS UNINFORMED

When you were not informed about the Kargil operation and you also did not think it right, why did you support the Army? You visited the front and raised slogans. Please explain this anomaly.

Nawaz Sharif: General Musharraf asked me to conclude a solution to the Kargil problem, and then a number of meetings were held. At first, the Defense Committee of the Cabinet met. We also had a meeting in the Corps Commander's office. Then they asked me to arrange a meeting in Lahore inviting all concerned persons. Many people, including the Naval Chief and other army personnel attended that meeting. They said that though they all were part of the armed forces they were kept uninformed about the conflict. It was a very complicated issue; the Chief of Army Staff had taken nobody into confidence, not even his Corps Commanders. However, he asked me to seek out a solution. In the course of discussion, it was resolved to talk to President Clinton to intervene and broker a ceasefire. There was an impression that if no immediate action was taken we would lose the battle and, of course, a lot.

What was the impression? What were we to lose?

Nawaz Sharif: The impression communicated to me was that if we delayed a ceasefire we would lose the war. We were on the verge of a very disgraceful retreat, an ultimately dishonorable defeat. Now they shifted all responsibility to the prime minister's shoulders to bail out

the army at any cost. Then I used all of my energies to get the army out of this disgraceful situation. I called Bill Clinton and had to listen to his hot words. Tony Blair also flared up and asked why we had launched the operation at Kargil unduly. This operation gave a bad name to Pakistan everywhere in the world. All the allegations and responsibility were shifted to us. The whole world held Pakistan responsible for the operation. Our peace process with India was adversely affected. We lost the trust of the Indian leadership, who were compelled to blame Pakistan for stabbing them in the back. Such an action is not desirable for any free country, and the civilian leadership has to bear the brunt of others' blunders.

WHO WON AND WHO LOST

Anyhow an impression appeared that the military leadership had won the war but political leadership lost it?

Nawaz Sharif: I think the army created the impression that they were about to conquer, but it was the prime minister, who stopped them. But the facts were opposite. General Musharraf ran to me do something, to bail them out.

Why did you not speak out? You should have told the truth to the people.

Nawaz Sharif: I did not speak the truth for I loved Pakistan and its army; because of that love I tried my best to save Pakistan's honor and dignity. I, therefore, accepted the responsibility myself and bailed the army out. We bore everything with silence for it was matter of our honor and of our motherland's. It is the essence of the whole story; this is the truth without an iota of falsehood. We gave this sacrifice for the honor of our army, for our prestige and for our motherland, and accepted all responsibility for the expedition. I did whatever I could do for my country but the generals' gang now sitting in Pakistan gave me an evil return. It is very regrettable, very painful. However, these sacrifices saved the country.



CEASEFIRE IN WASHINGTON

- General Musharraf came to meet me at the airport when I was to leave for America
- He was impatient; he wanted me to settle the Kargil issue at once
- So they made the mistake and we bore the brunt
- Clinton was scheduled to visit Pakistan for three days but he stayed for a few hours due to the Martial Law
- During Kargil War General Musharraf, without seeking permission from the prime minister, moved the nuclear arsenal
- President Bill Clinton had sincerity in his heart for Pakistan
- Bill Clinton had become a personal friend; he called me on telephone during his visit to the Gulf
- I saved the army from shame
- Musharraf and his colleagues gave the wrong message to the army, which shows they knew

in their heart of hearts that they were in the wrong

- The General kept on giving the message that they were to conquer Kashmir but Nawaz Sharif stopped them, while the truth was altogether opposite
- I cast everything out of my head but the generals kept their malice in their hearts
- Kargil's malice caused us to be ousted

TALKS WITH CLINTON

How did the talks with Clinton go?

Nawaz Sharif: When I was to leave for America to meet Bill Clinton, the General [Musharraf] came to meet me at the airport. He also requested me to say certain things to Clinton so that we could come out of the difficult situation. He wanted a safe passage out of the grim situation he had himself created. On his insistence I had called Clinton on telephone; we exchanged formalities and then I requested an appointment with him. However, I had indirect channels of communication with him besides, and we had been receiving messages from America calling for a ceasefire. I requested Clinton for a meeting, and he asked when I wanted to meet him. I said I wanted to meet him the day after. He was surprised and said that the next day he was having a party at his house to see off his daughter who was going back to school after the vacations. I said to him that though he was very busy, and though I knew the following day was Sunday and also July 4, America's Independence Day, I was in a hurry.

Clinton was kind enough to say, "Nawaz! All right, I shall have to reschedule my program. Well I will let you know after a while." I thanked him. I called him Bill or Mr. President and he called me Nawaz or Mr. Prime Minister. He rang me in an hour and asked if it was possible for me to meet him at one o'clock the next day. I had already checked the flight time. I would reach at noon, God willing. We reached accordingly and Clinton spent three hours with us apart from a small break.

After discussion and deliberation, he asked me whether he could talk to the Indian prime minister. Then he talked to Vajpayee at 1.30 am in the night and told him that I was with him. I had suggested to Clinton that we were ready to stop fighting, and we wanted to get the Kashmir issue resolved. Our demand was thus very interesting. The Indian reaction was more interesting, that if a ceasefire was an act of kindness on their part, why we wanted to get Kashmir issue resolved on our terms. They said to the American president that Pakistan had started the war so they were free to continue it or otherwise.

Similarly, about a Kashmir solution, they refused to help us any more. However, Clinton's role was very positive. He promised to take a personal interest in solving the issue; he also made constructive efforts for a ceasefire. He ultimately got it. We wanted him to get the Kashmir issue resolved. He promised he would. And this promise was very important with respect at the time. My relationship with him was developing in a way and I hoped I would persuade him to resolve this longstanding issue. During the meeting Clinton also said that we had done an injustice to India, for while we were in talks with them, our army had started an unprovoked war against them. He said the army should have not done so.

Afterwards, when Clinton visited Pakistan during Martial Law, he stayed only for three hours whereas he had promised me that he would visit Pakistan for three days and would like to see certain places, including the Khyber Pass. We had planned the details of his visit, but when he visited Pakistan he delivered a lecture to the generals.

MOVEMENT OF NUKE WARHEADS

How far is it true that President Clinton had informed you about the movement of nuclear warheads in Washington?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, he told me that nuclear warheads in Pakistan had been shifted from one station to another during the Kargil conflict. I was perplexed to hear such news from Clinton's mouth, for I had not been informed of this. He told me the news was authentic that nuclear weaponry was shifted for deployment. He asked me why I, the Chief Executive, had not been informed. Now if the information was authentic, should General Musharraf carry out such a fateful movement without the prime minister's consent? It might have caused irreparable loss to the nation, and the responsibility would

have been shifted to the government's shoulders. Such behavior by General Musharraf was misconduct and totally irresponsible.

SINCERITY OF CLINTON

How sincere was Clinton to Pakistan?

Nawaz Sharif: I think he was truly sincere to Pakistan. The words he used, that countries are not run like this, were the best proof of his sincerity to Pakistan. By de-tracking and re-tracking, democracy cannot be run; it is the people who have the right to run the country according to their free will. Only they and nobody else can bring change. It was his advice to generals who were not acting right. This had caused loss to Pakistan in the past and will do so in the future as well. It was indeed sincere advice for the country; he had something good in his heart for Pakistan that he expressed before the nation.

Do you have any link with Clinton as yet?

Nawaz Sharif: Later on Bill Clinton became my personal friend; sometime ago he rang me up during his visit to the Gulf. He asked about my well-being. However, I never asked him for my help.

GOODNESS REWARD

If you honorably affected the ceasefire; then what happened between you and Gen. Musharraf?

Nawaz Sharif: I digested the entire episode. I cleansed my heart, for it was my Pakistan and it was the passion of my patriotism that made me do my duty. I saved the army from dishonor. God has made me do so, otherwise many more martyrs were expected, many people were saved, and honor and dignity as well. Though we lost India's trust, my conscience was satisfied. It was such a jolt that we are bearing the brunt till today. I am satisfied I did my duty as I ought to have done. I had to bear its brunt personally, for illegal measures were being taken against me, yet I cast the matter out of my heart. But Musharraf's gang had a peeve in their heart that I had saved them from disgrace. In return, they disseminated the message in the army that they were about to take Kashmir but Nawaz Sharif created hurdles and effected a ceasefire, but the truth was opposite.

If the ceasefire had not been affected immediately, we would have suffered very heavy losses. I do not use the word surrender, but in fact the situation was thus: our supply line had been broken and we were losing our posts one after the other. Our soldiers had been

clamoring from their bunkers for arms and ammunition. Let alone arms, even rations were not reaching them. They were compelled to eat grass and snow after the supply line was broken. India had caused havoc. In the absence of supplies how could our soldiers fight? Even their survival was at stake. We were diplomatically isolated. Despite all this, I cleared my heart, digested the national insult and kept on cooperating with the army openheartedly. However, they kept a grudge in their hearts and inflamed the issue. They toppled the government and ousted me because of that very grudge and malice.



END GAME

- ◆ Conflicts with General Musharraf
- ◆ Decisive Moments
- ◆ Role of the Army
- ◆ Intelligence Agencies
- ◆ Miscellaneous

CONFLICT WITH GENERAL MUSHARRAF

- Two months before October 12, in a private meeting, Musharraf said, “The Prime Minister is a big bastard.”
- Generals were scared that they might be taken to task over Kargil.
- I was toppled so that no action could be taken against Generals regarding Kargil
- I appointed Musharraf Chairman to make him feel secure so that he might work with peace of mind
- General Tariq Pervez told him they were not taken into confidence over Kargil
- I tried my best to keep good relations with the army but they did not respond in that spirit
- General Musharraf insisted very strongly on Tariq Pervez’s dismissal, I agreed to avoid tension

- The army got headlines printed in the newspapers that he was dismissed for the offence of meeting the prime minister
- When three days passed without a refutation being published, I took it that they were dishonoring the prime minister
- It was over the issue that I decided to dismiss General Musharraf
- We have been receiving news that the army was about to take over
- A few days before, new earphones had been given to the security staff of Prime Minister's House

REASON OF CLASH

Q. After the ceasefire in Kargil, what was the reason for the conflict with General Musharraf?

Nawaz Sharif: In fact he was not clear in his heart. He was continuously thinking like this, he had malice in his heart still, despite me having cleared mine. Some generals were suspicious that I was going to take action against them for Kargil. Since General Musharraf, General Aziz and General Mehmood felt guilty for the loss of Kargil; they decided to topple our government just to safeguard them.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

But instead of any punishment you rewarded him by making him the Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee?

Nawaz Sharif: In fact at the time General Pervez Musharraf was feeling insecure, He had fallen prey to a Kargil phobia. I think he was dissatisfied; he was afraid that he might be displaced as army chief by being appointed as Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, for the post was vacant. He was afraid but I told him I had cleared my heart; I forgave him despite his huge mistake, for I knew to err is human. I gave him another chance. Instead of displacing him, I

appointed him to the higher vacant post just to ease him out of his state of insecurity. I thought he could work with peace of mind on both positions, but since the human being is thankless by instinct, he should have been thankful for this favor but truly has Hazrat Ali said, "Beware of the evil of the man to whom you do a favor."

THE TARIQ PERVEZ AFFAIR

Had you been holding meetings with General Musharraf during this period?

Nawaz Sharif: He had been disseminating opposite news in the units. I was regularly receiving reports of this. Thereafter, Musharraf started using abusive language against me in his meetings. I have the secret reports. However, I do not bring my person in this issue for it was an affair above persons. At one stage, he asked me to dismiss General Tariq Pervez for misconduct. He said his behavior was not good, his tone in meetings was not appropriate. Though such a reason was not enough for ending his service career, he insisted. Perhaps he was angry with General Tariq, for he had said in a briefing in Quetta that he was a Corps Commander, yet he was kept uninformed about Kargil, and asked why he had not been taken into confidence while deciding the attack. Musharraf had failed to give a satisfactory reply. Tariq perhaps also said he should be obliged to Nawaz Sharif who had saved him and the army from dishonor. He had bailed them out, so nobody knew how heavy a loss would have occurred. Such words irritated Musharraf whereas he should have paid attention to them. But he could not digest these words and finally resolved to get such a forthright man, who called a spade a spade, out of the service.

However, similar action should have been initiated against all the Corps Commanders for they had not been taken into confidence either. I have proof that they were not taken into confidence (Report of telephonic talk between General Aziz and General Musharraf is annexed at the end of the book.) So he approached me to remove General Tariq Pervez, and insisted again and again.

In the end I agreed to his request only because I wanted to release the tension, the contentious atmosphere. I wanted to remove the man himself but if not, I thought I must create a tension-free environment at least. I was patient to the last. As you have asked, it was he who did not want good relations, for I had left no stone unturned to maintain good relations. When I removed General Tariq

Pervez, the following day's newspapers were filled with the story that General Tariq had been sacked because he had met prime minister. I talked to the Defense Secretary, also a retired army officer who can be contacted any time (Laughter). I told him General Tariq had not visited me and even if he had done so, it was not an offence, for there was no ban on generals or commanders meeting the prime minister. What sort of message was being given to the nation? It was an attempt to finish the prime minister's authority. It was said that a general was being punished for meeting the elected prime minister.

I asked the Defense Secretary to approach Musharraf and get a refutation from him published. He was approached but he refused to refute the news. We knew the news was leaked by ISPR [military's Inter-Services Public Relations office], so the army should also issue its refutation, but they did not refute this false news. General Musharraf had left for Sri Lanka. I asked the Defense Secretary to contact him in Sri Lanka. I also asked General Iftikhar, the Defense Secretary, to ask Saeed-uz-Zafar, the acting army chief to talk to General Musharraf in Sri Lanka to refute the news, but of no avail. He hesitated and said he was not able to get him on the line from Sri Lanka. When till the third day no refutation was issued, I lost my long-standing patience. If the prime minister's authority ceases to work in accordance with the law and Constitution, he is unable to further undergo such a grim situation, so I took notice of it. This was the last straw, the cause of the decision to dismiss General Pervez Musharraf.

Along with this, another very important event also took place. General Musharraf replaced Commander of 111 Brigade. With the posting of the new commander, we noted certain changes in the security staff of the PM House. They had new earphones, they were very keenly observing each visitor and they were checking our movements as well. They had got new communication sets. I mentioned to my Military Secretary Brigadier Javed Malik that I had observed something new. The security people were acting strangely. Why? He talked to the Commander of 111 Brigade and then those sets were withdrawn. I was amazed why without my consent or knowledge they had brought a new thing into the house. They were withdrawn on my mentioning it. I had been receiving information from other sources as well. This information was very strange. Pervez Musharraf's remarks and statements in his private meetings reflected the possibility that a military coup was being prepared.

What sort of information was being received about these private meetings?

Nawaz Sharif: Intelligence Bureau gave me a tape of a talk of Pervez Musharraf two months before October 12, in which he said, "This Prime Minister is a big bastard, he will never appoint me Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee." In another private moment he said, "I will sort this bastard out." Despite all this I kept myself under control and thought I should not go by personal remarks, but keep the national interest in view. I appointed him Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee despite his having abused me.



DECISIVE MOMENTS

- I was asked to sign an order dissolving the assemblies but I said, “Over my dead body”
- I threw the paper away; I was warned that I would pay for that
- The generals had decided to depose the elected government in advance, to launch a mutiny in a few hours was impossible
- There was no option left but to remove General Musharraf. I tried to pre-empt his plan
- General Zia-ud-Din had no demerit; he knew everything very well
- General Musharraf himself had said Zia-ud-Din was the most intelligent general
- The risks of dismissing Musharraf had to be taken. Otherwise, the prime ministership would have become the subject of contempt
- When decision to dismiss Musharraf was taken, he was in Sri Lanka and not in the air
- I directed the Corps Commander of Karachi to receive the retired chief of army staff with respect

- To save democracy from assault, the decision to dismiss Musharraf was inevitable

DANGER OF TAKEOVER

Q. You decided to sack General Musharraf. Was this because you had already judged the army was about to take over?

Nawaz Sharif: Sufficient information was being received that army was about to take over. The fundamental reason was that they were feeling guilty for Kargil. To save their skins and to avoid any further inquiry they were anxious to take over.

WHY DISMISSAL IN THE AIR

It is said you dismissed the army chief when he was in the air. Why did you not wait for his arrival?

Nawaz Sharif: I have told you about the Tariq Pervez issue. However, the other reason for his dismissal was that an elected democratic government was functioning in the country; there was a dire peril to it from adventurers. They had a guilty conscience about Kargil, they were criminals in law, their hearts were not clear, they bore a grudge, so they were in search of an opportunity to sack the prime minister so that the chances of any accountability could be eliminated. Amidst such grim situation, a prime minister is duty bound to safeguard the Constitution from extra-constitutional steps. I did my duty to save democracy from deviation. In this respect my decision was right.

You said that he was in the air when sacked. Not true, in fact he was in Sri Lanka but was to return that very day. I wanted to decide the matter a couple of days before, but I did not do so for he was in a foreign country. I thought it improper to dismiss him during his foreign visit. I, therefore, decided that that he would receive the order on his arrival. I directed the Military Secretary to tell Corps Commander of Karachi by telephone to welcome the retired army chief with respect and take him to his house. He was also asked to tell him that since the decision to dismiss him had been made he must rest at home peacefully. We had directed the Corps Commander to receive and take care of him in an honorable way. All the other Corps Commanders were also informed. I also asked General Zia-ud-Din, the new army chief, to inform all the Corps Commanders, including the Chief of General Staff General Aziz and General Mehmood

accordingly. We did not have any desire to take revenge from them. We had retired him with respect and honor.

'THE HIJACKING'

You are accused of stopping the aeroplane in the air and attempting to take the lives of the passengers, including General Musharraf, and to have hijacked the aeroplane.

Nawaz Sharif: All such stories are wrong, frivolous and false. Musharraf may fabricate as many as he desires. Look! Sitting on land, how could I stop the aeroplane in the air? I had never thought of such things in my life, so how could I do so as prime minister? If this was the case, why had I asked the Corps Commander of Karachi to take care of the retired army chief? This proves that I had no bad intentions. There was no need for such plot. Rather I had also asked Ghous Ali Shah to personally go to Karachi Airport, give him my message and to conduct him to his house respectfully.

RISK WAS THERE

When you made the decision you must have felt the danger of being toppled.

Nawaz Sharif: The risk was there, but a prime minister has to take such risks. Evidently, for the sake of the nation, to save the Constitution from extra constitutional steps, I was bound to do so. When the constitutional authority of the prime minister and the writ of the government are at stake; when one is being forced to compromise on principles, when the value of constitutional posts is reduced, it is inevitable either to quit the post or to take the risk. The circumstances were that the news was spread that General Tariq Pervez had been dismissed merely because he had met the prime minister. After the publication of this news it was impossible to continue as prime minister without taking strong action against the wrongdoer, for it was contemptuous.

WHY GENERAL ZIA-UD-DIN?

Do you still think General Zia-ud-Din was the right choice? Many people disagree on this.

Nawaz Sharif: General Zia-ud-Din was fit for the post, for he had no demerit at all. His qualification was complete, he was the most senior army officer; he had served at different positions in the army. He had served as a commander and was thought an intelligent officer. He was Director General, ISI, with an understanding of every issue. He

was serving at a very important position. When he was appointed Director General, ISI, General Musharraf had proposed either General Aziz or General Zia-ud-Din for the post. He wanted to post him as Chief of General Staff otherwise. He had himself appreciated him as a very intelligent general with many merits.

Is it true that General Zia-ud-Din's selection was made because he was a Kashmiri? Do you believe in biradari-ism [ethnic nepotism]?

Nawaz Sharif: I do not believe in *biradaris*, you need not ask such questions.

WHAT ELSE?

Did you have no option but to dismiss General Musharraf?

Nawaz Sharif: No, I did not. You know what had been done to our prime ministers. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was hanged, Junejo was dismissed, and Benazir's governments were terminated. When such excesses had been inflicted upon prime ministers, do you think they should not create hindrances in the way of the generals for the sake of peoples' rights, for the dignity of the prime minister ship, for the glory of the public mandate? They must resist.

THEY WERE ALREADY READY

Is it true the army decided to take over all of sudden, or was they already ready?

Nawaz Sharif: The generals were already ready to take over, for it is impossible to launch a coup in hours. On the night of October 12, General Mehmood and General Ali Jan Orakzai came to me and said, "Sign the paper." It was an order from the prime minister dissolving the assemblies. I refused to sign and threw the paper away, saying "Over my dead body". Thereupon the generals said, "You will pay for this". Afterwards, I was shifted to a room a few feet square; its windows were painted over so that I could not see outside.



ROLE OF THE ARMY

- The wording of the army's oath must be changed so that any illegal order of encroaching upon the Prime Minister's House is not carried out
- Parliament, assuming the role of the Supreme Court, should punish the violators of the Constitution
- The Eighth Amendment was not a safety valve but an obstacle for the government
- The army has no right to indulge in politics, how it can conduct accountability of others?
- Had the army been conducting its own accountability, people like Yahya and Musharraf would not have become the army chief, the secession of East Pakistan could have not happened
- Nobody has ever been taken to the task for embezzlements in defense transactions
- Accountability for a few rupees is not a deed; the country breakers have been left unaccounted

- When I dismissed Admiral Mansoor, President Leghari and Jehangir Karamat opposed me

CHANGE IN ARMY'S OATH

Q. You have ruled the country twice. What do you suggest to remove the conflict between the elected governments and the army?

Nawaz Sharif: Every army man takes oath under the Constitution. He should abide by his oath. In my opinion, the wording of the oath should be changed so that if a commander or an army chief orders the army to occupy and encroach upon the Prime Minister's House or other buildings, they must refuse to follow the order as illegal, unconstitutional and contravening their oath. In the army's oath it is already mentioned that they shall remain faithful to the Constitution and the civilian government. From henceforth, it should be resolved that whosoever imposes martial law, breaks his oath and sabotages the Constitution, shall be punished under Article 6 of the Constitution. Parliament, assuming the role of the Supreme Court, must give exemplary punishment to the violators of the Constitution.

EIGHTH AMENDMENT

You repealed the Eighth Amendment. Its supporters claim it was a safety valve, and the repeal paved the way for the army to take over.

Nawaz Sharif: What does that mean? It was not a safety valve but an obstacle in the way of the government. The issue is that the army does not have a right to rule the country. What does it have to do with politics? The army is no entity to take over the government to conduct accountability of politicians. Had they been conducting accountability in the army itself, people like Yahya Khan and Pervez Musharraf would not have become the army chief?

But it is army's view that they come to safeguard the country. If the country reaches the verge of destruction, shouldn't the army come out to save the country?

Nawaz Sharif: The country is defended on borders, not by sitting in Islamabad.

ARMY TAKES OVER AS A COMPULSION

Army says it has to come out of compulsion?

Nawaz Sharif: Yet when they go back they leave the country worse off. Please tell me whether the country had not gone to ruins whenever the army ruled it. East Pakistan would have not seceded if Sheikh Mujeeb-ur-Rehman had been given the opportunity to rule all of Pakistan according to the mandate the people gave him. The army did not accept the mandate. I say they should be taken to task. There is no need for accountability through army's NAB; rather it has aggravated the situation. Would you please tell me where has such accountability led the country?

TRAGEDY OF EAST PAKISTAN

Do you think the characters responsible for the tragedy of East Pakistan should be taken to task?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes they must be, for without their being held to account, the task of accountability cannot be completed. That is the real accountability. Accountability for a few rupees is not accountability but that of those responsible for the debacle of East Pakistan. The people, who broke away half the country, have been left unaccounted but those who have made a few rupees are taken to task. You know a defense deal is always big, for ships and submarines, aero planes and tanks are all costly items.

EMBEZZLEMENTS IN DEFENSE TRANSACTIONS

Have embezzlements in defense transactions ever come to your knowledge?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, a lot of embezzlements are in my knowledge, but they are as yet unaccounted.

Shouldn't you have conducted accountability?

Nawaz Sharif: Accountability has its own time.

When was the time? Were you going to take them to task?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes it can be done. In our time, we did take Admiral Mansoor-ul-Haq to task; we dismissed him, for he had minted money from embezzlements in the submarines deal. I took the step and dismissed him despite the army chief Jehangir Karamat and President Leghari bitterly opposing my decision. I, in the presence of

Jehangir Karamat, asked Farooq Leghari to talk to Mansoor-ul-Haq and charge sheet him, but he said that it was very difficult for him. Then I directed the Defense Secretary to talk to him and get his resignation. He went to his house and talked to him and he himself tendered his resignation, and thereupon I settled the issue. By so I initiated the accountability of those who had been thought above the law. It was the first step; later on the allegations were proved. However, now it has been learnt that NAB has done a plea bargain with Mansoor-ul-Haq; look at NAB's role. I had told General Jehangir Karamat that certain things had been proved against Admiral Mansoor so he should be taken to task but he proposed that I leave the matter, and take no action.

What was the reason Jehangir Karamat gave?

Nawaz Sharif: There was apparently no reason for it, except he wanted me to stop taking further action. Perhaps I should not have accepted his request. Just see how flexibly prime ministers behave with their army chief, but look how they treat their elected prime ministers in return.



INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

- Two generals proposed that we allow drugs smuggling officially but I turned down their proposal
- Without the government's consent, operations are launched in foreign countries
- For the agencies' wrongdoings, governments have to take the blame
- [Former prime minister of Bangladesh] Hasina Wajid, [Former prime minister of India] Gujral and [former president of Bangladesh] Hussain Muhammad Irshad accused the ISI of interfering in their affairs
- The ISI does not work under the government
- The Chief of Army Staff thinks himself a king or a super prime minister
- Asif Nawaz took his cap off to avoid saluting the prime minister
- If the army wants to rule, the Chief of Army Staff should be elected

- Until the ISI is curbed, the political system cannot be stabilized
- As prime minister my telephones were tapped; a serving Brigadier was involved
- No uniformed officer should be included in the ISI

AGENCIES ON THEIR OWN

Q. Most prime ministers have complained that the agencies had been doing their own will, over and above the government. What was your experience?

Nawaz Sharif: In Pakistan the intelligence agencies have grown too powerful and are functioning according to their own will without telling or asking anything from the president or the prime minister. They do whatever they like, whereas nowhere in the world intelligence agencies do this. The government is held responsible for whatever the agencies do inside or outside the country. However, in Pakistan agencies make blunders and the governments are held responsible. For example, during my first term two generals called on me. When the meeting started one of them said, "To boost the economy of Pakistan, drugs should be smuggled abroad under government supervision. By exporting heroin the country's economic destiny will change." I was taken aback to hear him and asked how could he say such things. He was abashed, and replied that it was just a suggestion. Then other general added, "All the developed countries have made progress with black money, whether it is England or Switzerland, all has done this. America has looted the wealth of other countries, so let us take the opportunity and make the country prosperous." I turned down their proposal very strongly.

INTERFERENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY

Benazir Bhutto says the intelligence agencies interfere in foreign policy. What was your experience?

Nawaz Sharif: What to say and what not to say! A prime minister has to have a large heart, for he has to keep many secrets. In my second term I visited Dhaka for a tripartite conference where I met Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral. He expressed good

feelings for Pakistan. However, he told me that the ISI was involved in sabotage in India, creating law and order problems but without government approval, whereas their agencies in India were not allowed to launch such operations abroad. However, I said to him that it had become a fashion to blame the ISI for every problem. During the same meeting Hasina Wajid complained to me that the ISI was involved in Bangladesh politics and was giving funds to her opponents. In Dhaka my third meeting was with former president Hussain Muhammad Ershad; he said he was pro-Pakistan and loved the Pakistan Army but the ISI had broken away 18 members of his party and got them to join Khalida Zia's party. He had documentary proof. Now please tell me whether an intelligence agency can be given the right to poke its nose in the internal affairs of a foreign country. This way they made those countries against Pakistan. Hasina Wajid knows well what role ISI played against her. This is why whenever she comes to power she extends her hand to India for friendship. Do the agencies know all the delicate aspects of foreign policy? Agencies make blunders but the governments are constrained to bear the consequences.

How did the ISI's role become enhanced?

Nawaz Sharif: Because of the repeated military regimes, its role has been enhanced to the maximum. Now these agencies do not work under the civil authority. Benazir Bhutto has the same complaint. The ISI has abducted the entire political system. The Chief of the Army Staff, after taking charge, starts thinking himself a king or a super prime minister. He thinks himself so powerful that he does not like even to salute the elected prime minister. When General Asif Nawaz was army chief I once visited the GHQ. He took off his cap inside just to avoid saluting me. However, General Waheed Kakar always saluted me on my visits to the GHQ. The but during many briefings in the GHQ the army chief as well as several other generals used to keep their caps off inside the room just to avoid saluting me, the elected prime minister. They don't hesitate to salute the Indian prime minister but avoid saluting their own. I sometimes think the way the generals are eager to take over the government, the Chief of Army Staff must be elected, (smiling) for if they are to rule the country ultimately, they must get some votes at least.

What should be the ISI's real role?

Nawaz Sharif: In Pakistan ISI does not do anything but politics, forgetting its real duty. It has assumed the duty to break and make

political parties; it plays a very important role in changing the loyalties of politicians. Rigging elections and manipulating the political system, so the country cannot be stabilized. Its real role is to assist in the defense of the country, not to do politics.

How can the political role of ISI be finished?

Nawaz Sharif: It is high time to change its charter. In my opinion, no uniformed officer should be included in the ISI setup. It should work under the direct supervision of the civilian government, like the Indian model where no serving or retired uniformed person is employed in the intelligence agencies.

SURVEILLANCE OF PRIME MINISTER

Did you ever feel that you as prime minister were under surveillance?

Nawaz Sharif: In 1997 when I was prime minister, my telephone calls were tapped. I learnt through my own sources that the ISI had been recording my calls. Thereupon I got a formal inquiry conducted by General Zia-ud-Din, the then ISI chief. His enquiry showed this was true. He checked my residence in Lahore and found the charge correct. Now please tell me who had allowed them to record the calls of the prime minister? Brigadier Ijaz, posted in ISI Lahore, was responsible for recording my calls there. These are the facts that lead to big events; it is a true story I am telling you. There were a lot of people involved in this episode. It is a recorded event, though maybe now they might have destroyed the record. But the matter was probed, and the report was found correct.



MISCELLANEOUS

- I was not afraid of prison, but to refuse the offer of going to Makkah and Madina would have been a refusal of God's blessings
- I was informed that the Saudi government was conducting parleys for our acquittal
- To me it is better to call my stay in Saudi Arabia *hijrat* (migration) rather than exile
- I will ask the public why it kept quiet at the dismissal of an elected government
- The people who speak the truth before you and admire you in your absence are good
- Islam teaches us moderation and temperance. I am against extremism
- What benefit has been derived out of killing thousands in 9/11?
- American policies are wrong. Clinton was an intellectual; Bush is doing unprincipled things
- I do have differences with Shahbaz Sharif on many things but it is healthy

- Shahbaz would say that no stern or harsh view should be kept about the army. Now he has come closer to my point of view

WHAT WAS THE DEAL

Q: Everybody wants to know about the deal for your going to Saudi Arabia.

Nawaz Sharif: It is correct that I knew the Saudi government was conducting parleys. I was not afraid of prison, but to refuse to go to Makkah or Madina would be to refuse God's blessings. It is the grace of God that I am living here with my family and with all the facilities. I feel uneasy to call this exile. Rather you may call it *hijrat* (migration) instead.

QUESTIONS TO PEOPLE

People kept quiet on your dismissal from power. Why?

Nawaz Sharif: It is correct the public kept quiet. Many questions are to be put to the people, as to why they kept quiet when their elected prime minister was deposed? Whenever I have an opportunity to go to Pakistan I will ask the people why they kept quiet while I had withstood all the tests of time. Many allegations were leveled against me but I proved innocent. Who but the present regime is my worst enemy; if there were anything against me they would have taken me to task. I shall ask the people why they did not protest my dismissal. I shall not contest elections until I receive the reply. To build the character of the nation, such an act is necessary. I am not in a hurry to get power, but to create public awareness is my foremost duty.

FLATTERY OR THE TRUTH

Whom do you like more, flatterers or those who always call a spade a spade?

Nawaz Sharif: I like people who always call a spade a spade to your face. Even if you do not like what they tell you, they are not backbiters, but rather admire you in your absence. Such people are indeed your best friends; they speak the truth to your face and defend you behind your back.

But flatterers mostly succeed before the rulers. Why?

Nawaz Sharif: Such people are usually opportunists, they admire you but not without a vested interest. I think rulers should try to avoid such people. Flatterers very easily trap rulers. There is no one who dislikes flattery; everybody enjoys admiration of his policies and affairs, it is only human. However, rulers must keep in view other aspects as well and should always search for those who speak the truth. But such people are very rarely found. I have told you just now that he is your best friend who speaks the truth to your face, calls a spade a spade and defends you at least, if not admires you, in your absence. I think such people are also very nice morally, but at present such people are a rare commodity.

MODERATION IN ISLAM

After your removal from the government, 9/11 took place in America. What is your opinion about it?

Nawaz Sharif: Islam teaches moderation and temperance. I am against extremism. Tell me, who was the real target of 9/11? What was the consequence of killing innocent citizens, what kind of benefit did the Muslim World derive? Islam is the religion of peace and moderation, temperance and tolerance. There is no room in it for killing human beings and destroying properties. Was the behavior of Saddam Hussain reasonable? He attacked Iran and Kuwait, brother Islamic countries. The people of Iraq are still bearing the brunt of his follies. Extremism always results in destruction. However, it does not mean American policies are correct. President Clinton was an intellectual politician. George Bush attacked Iraq without UN assent. This step was totally wrong. The world did not support him due to his very unprincipled stand.

USAMA BIN LADEN

You are also alleged to have moved the no-confidence motion against Benazir Bhutto after having got funds from Usama bin Laden?

Nawaz Sharif: All such allegations are false. I am of the considered view that terrorism is wrong, and it causes harm to Islam.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WITH SHAHBAZ

Newspapers usually publish reports of differences of opinion between you and Shahbaz Sharif. What is the truth?

Nawaz Sharif: Shahbaz does have his own viewpoint with which I do not agree, and it ought to be so, for it is healthy. My view is that generals have done mistakes so they should bear the consequences themselves. However, Shahbaz Sharif is a bit soft on this issue; time and again he advises me not to take a stern and harsh view about army rule. However, I tell him that such a compromise would harm our image as well as harming our nation. What sort of compromise can you make with traitors to the Constitution? Some peoples say the army must be given a safe exit. Can you give a safe exit to the dacoits who rob your house? Would you say to him, "Here, brother! Here is the gate, please go out safely." He who commits burglary should be booked and tried under the law. These are the things that count most. Initially his views were different but now he seconds me. I think the majority of our nation now agrees on this. I know it. Even sitting here I have my fingers on the pulse of my nation. I know how and what our nation thinks. Perhaps today the nation now recalls whatever we did.

SCANDALS

When you were in power, a lot of allegations were leveled against you. Even you have been involved in scandals with several women.

Nawaz Sharif: Such rumors and scandals do make rounds but there is little truth in them.

Your scandal with Indian national Dilshad Sheikh had been a talk of the town. Even it was claimed that some agencies had tapped your telephone talk with her and that in this tape you are heard singing Indian songs to her?

Nawaz Sharif: I have never met any woman named Dilshad Sheikh. I, too, have heard about the scandal. On investigation I learnt that a woman from India wanted to meet me through Sehgal family. She had been asking about me on phone and the agencies scandalized it.

And pamphlets were distributed in the Punjab Assembly about your ties with Tahira Syed.

Nawaz Sharif: No comment.



IN JEDDAH & LONDON

- ◆ Exile in Jeddah
- ◆ Days and Nights of London

EXILE IN JEDDAH

The author's special report was printed in daily Jang on the exile of the Sharif Family in Saudi Arabia was the first time the feelings and routine of the family directly reached the people of Pakistan. This reportage-cum-interview has become a memorable testament of history.

- A movement may start without leader
- Justice Shafi-ur-Rehman should have been in charge of accountability instead of Saif-ur-Rehman
- Our government did not arrest Asif Zardari even once
- I opposed the idea of sending Benazir to prison
- Ch. Shujaat will testify that I had said Benazir should leave the country before she was awarded punishment
- We had to face bitter economic problems after the nuclear explosion

INTRO

More than a year has passed since the Sharif Family went into exile in Saudi Arabia. Much water had flowed beneath many bridges; but information about the family of Nawaz Sharif, twice Prime Minister of Pakistan, has never come to the fore in detail. This report about the affairs of the family was compiled after face-to-face meetings, observations and telephonic discussions. Truth and only the truth is the basis of the report.

It was the first chance for me to see and assess the Sharif Family; its religious inclination, habits and manners, way of talking, etiquettes of sitting and talking, and drinking and dining. Nawaz Sharif is now learning how to use a computer and the Internet, and spends his leisure time with his grandsons (paternal and maternal). Perhaps he has got such leisure for the first time in his life. In the evening, wearing a tracksuit, he takes a walk in the palace. Shahbaz Sharif too walks and exercises. He is learning Arabic from a tutor, and speaks Arabic very well now. He acts as an interpreter between the family and the Saudi Government. *Abba Jee*, or Mian Sharif, already fond of reading, regularly studies religious books. Husain Nawaz is the most energetic member of the family in Saudi Arabia. He goes daily to look after the steel mills. Captain Safdar takes care of the domestic affairs. Kulsoom Nawaz is indifferent to politics and perhaps after about 15 or 20 years she is able to pass time with her husband. The most serious and taciturn member of the family is Abbas Sharif. He offers his prayers and spends his time in worship. The most interesting personality of the family is Suhail Zia Butt; he causes every meeting to erupt in laughter. He zealously participates in the Muslim League's affairs in Saudi Arabia. He takes deep interest in politics. Clad in a long tunic and a turban, when he goes to Haram Sharif, the ushers pay him *Salam*, bowing before him.

Suroor Palace of the Sharif Family is divided into two parts, each with a separate kitchen. Shahbaz Sharif and Abbas Sharif live in the side portion; all the members of the family take deep interest in the menus. There is available on the dining table everything that can be found in Pakistan. During my stay I ate fresh mangoes, beans and vegetables from Pakistan. If anything is baked in the central kitchen, it is always sent to the side portion as well, and vice versa. When family members go to Makkah or Madina from Jeddah, they stay in the Royal Guest House or in hotels. During their stay in their palace, they pass most of the time talking to one another.

For this report, interviews of family members of the family were taken at intervals, and a fresh interview was taken after President Musharraf's latest address to the nation.

SHARIF'S STORY IN JEDDAH

The Sharif Family's exile from Pakistan and its stay in Saudi Arabia is under a fabulous shroud of secrecy. Everyone in Pakistan with an interest in politics is anxious to learn details of the condition of the Sharif Family. Because of these circumstances any news about the family becomes a thing of suspense.

I happened to perform Umrah en route to America when I found an opportunity to realize my desire to learn about the details of the Sharif Family affairs. My desire seemed fulfilled as I was in Jeddah. Comprising wide roads, clean avenues and big houses, this area of Jeddah is the upscale Al-Iman Street.

Turning out of the Trade Center of Jeddah in the end, I stopped at a main gate on a spacious road. My heartbeat increased for my destination was in front of me. It is the place where Sharif Family is residing. Saudi Army guards opened the gate when they heard horn of my car. They moved aside after seeing familiar faces on the front seat. They retired to their guardroom. These guards are deputed for the Sharif Family's security round the clock. They keep details of every visitor; they let nobody in the palace without prior permission of the family members.

When I entered, I found in front of me the palace of my dreams. There were glimpses of a grand palace even from the entrance. There was a road leading to the palace from the main gate, on both sides of which were spacious lawns; decorated with date palms illuminated by a wondrous system. The road runs round the lawns and ultimately touches the main part of the palaces and ends in the parking lot where 15 to 20 vehicles were parked. Surrounded by several acres of grassy grounds, the house comprises three portions: a central portion, a lateral side portion, and annexes at the back for the servants. The central portion is the biggest, and comes first while entering from the main gate. Here reside ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif, his wife, Hussain Nawaz with his family, Mian Muhammad Sharif and his wife and daughter Mariam Nawaz Sharif with her husband and family. A few steps away from this double storied portion, is the lateral portion, also double storied, where Mian

Shahbaz Sharif, Mian Abbas Sharif with their families, and former Punjab MPA Suhail Zia Butt reside.

Enter the central portion if you want to meet Nawaz Sharif. Set in a small veranda, a grand wooden door opens into a small waiting room, next to which is a drawing room, where visitors sit for meetings. Opposite the drawing room is an office in which sits Nawaz Sharif's secretary, Abdul Wahab, an expert in Urdu and Arabic. This office is equipped with a computer and Internet facilities. A young energetic man remains on duty throughout the day while in the evening Abbas Sharif's son Aziz, with his innocent naughtiness, gives printouts of the news, reviews and columns of Pakistani newspapers. Next to this is a grand office where Nawaz Sharif spends most of his day; meets people, and sometimes discusses the future and analyzes past mistakes with his father and brother Shahbaz Sharif.

There is a marble staircase in a corner of Nawaz Sharif's office, with a lift next to it. Mian Sharif uses this to go upstairs, while other family members prefer the stairs. In front of the house's central gate, there is a drawing room, which can seat fifty people, and its red sofas and plush carpets give it the look of a royal court. The whole palace is adorned with teak furniture, crystal table lamps, colorful curtains and glowing chandeliers. Behind the main drawing room is a spacious dining hall, whose golden chairs and gold-plated crockery give evidence of the refined taste of the residents. Next to the dining room is a washroom besides a big kitchen where there are arrangements for cooking Pakistani, continental and Chinese cuisine.

The upper storey of the central portion comprises the living quarters, containing grand lounges and very fine bedrooms. The womenfolk stay exclusively in the upper storey and the men come and go. All five daily prayers are offered in congregation. Hussain Nawaz usually leads them, for he recites the Quran very melodiously. Prayer in congregation is offered in the big drawing room, the father offers his prayer sitting on a chair. After the prayer, Hussain Nawaz helps him go upstairs. After *Asr* Mian Sharif usually sits in the office and gives his counsel to Nawaz Sharif.

Male members of the Sharif Family offer their Friday prayer in Jeddah's central mosque, where they go by car. The Saudi government has given them the status of royal guests. They have been provided a bulletproof vehicle and a fleet of four Mercedes cars

along with four Saudi drivers who accompany Nawaz Sharif wherever he goes. Sometimes a police escort is also provided. Some personal servants have accompanied the family to Jeddah whereas the servants in the palace belong to Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Egypt, Thailand and Pakistan. It seemed as if I had a dream. I reached saroor Palace on Friday.

Before the Friday prayer, all the male members sat in the vehicle. The dream and the reality came together; the present emerged from the twilight of the past; I saw Nawaz Sharif after a year and found him much changed. His black hair had gone white, regular exercise had reduced his weight, but he appeared a bit weak, the after-effects of an excess of uric acid from which he had now recovered. After we met each other, the motorcade left for the Friday prayer. When we reached the mosque, the Arabic sermon was being delivered. None of the Arabians took any notice of the former Prime Minister of Pakistan but it was as if a current ran through the Pakistanis there, and they came one by one to shake hands with Nawaz Sharif. In the mosque, I met Hussain Nawaz and tried to introduce myself to him but he proved the excellence of his memory by reminding me of the minute details of our meeting some nine years ago when by chance we had shared a flight to London. Here I also met Shahbaz Sharif who talked to me about Lahore. After the prayer finished, many Pakistanis queued up to shake hands and embrace Nawaz Sharif and Mian Sharif.

Then I left for Umra and on my return held detailed meetings with Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif. With intervals I held three meetings with Nawaz Sharif. However, the beginning of the first meeting was not pleasant. Suhail Zia Butt, the ex-MPA and Captain Safdar formally introduced me to Nawaz Sharif but he remained silent and kept his eyes on the TV screen, for it was a historic day in Indo-Pak relations, with Musharraf meeting Vajpayee, the Indian prime minister. It appeared as if time had stopped, he was continuously busy watching the TV and I felt as if he was deliberately ignoring me. For a moment, he turned his eyes from the TV and I took the opportunity. I started to discuss Indo-Pak relations. Taking interest, he turned his face to me but kept quiet; time kept passing, his silence got further deep and my patience was wearing thin. Assessing my restlessness, Nawaz Sharif said, "You did not do well during our regime for you kept on writing against us." I heard his bitter complaint and replied, "Today he is before you who wrote against you, but they have left you who had been writing in your

favor in those days. Nobody amongst them has courage to even talk to you in this time of difficulty.”

Thereupon his mood lightened, the signs of anger were erased from his forehead and he started a light discussion. He revealed a historic secret about Indo-Pak talks, saying, “Prior to the Lahore Declaration Vajpayee told me that 1999 would be the year of solution of the Kashmir Issue, a solution that would be acceptable to both India and Pakistan.” I asked him that the solution should also be acceptable to the Kashmiris as well. Vajpayee agreed to my proposal and we resolved to start back-channel diplomacy. Then Kargil happened and India stopped the parleys for it alleged Pakistan had stabbed in the back, which was not incorrect.” About Pak-India talks, the former prime minister, giving his analysis, said:” On the Kashmir issue, a golden opportunity of Indo-Pak talks was lost. The Lahore Declaration was a historic opportunity but now India will never retreat from its stand; now what to speak of Indian Held Kashmir [Indian-administered Kashmir], even Azad Kashmir [Pakistani-administered Kashmir] is at stake. Do something to save it. In these circumstances, anyone talking of a breakthrough is insane. The Indians would wonder how they could trust a man who was not sincere with his prime minister.”

It was his old analysis. Musharraf addressed the nation and enumerated certain steps. Nawaz Sharif was contacted for his reaction:

“How and which thing of Musharraf can we trust? In the past he had been visiting Kashmir and raising slogans of sacred war now he terms *Jihad* terrorism and says there will be no permission to go to India. Similarly, before he was against talks with India but now he shakes hands with Vajpayee in Kathmandu for friendship. What can we trust, his past or his present?”

Our conversation had moved from Pakistan-India relations to the dismissal of Nawaz Sharif government, and so, my journalistic curiosity forced me to toss a question as to what the immediate cause of sacking army Chief General Pervez Musharraf was. Swallowing the bitter tone of the question, Mr. Sharif said: “Though Kargil had created a wedge between the government and General Musharraf, the real cause was something else.”

“You mean the tape of your talk regarding Musharraf’s dismissal,” I prompted him.

Mr. Sharif laughingly said: "All such stories are fabricated. When newspapers carried the news item of retiring Quetta Corps Commander Lt-Gen Tariq Pervez, the ISPR said he was dismissed from the army because he had called on the prime minister. It is evident the slant aimed to encroach on the government authority and so it put me out. General Tariq had met me during an official function in Quetta and not at my home. I asked Defense Secretary retired general Iftikhar Ali Khan and General Pervez Musharraf to get a rebuttal published in the newspapers but the defense secretary kept on telling me to wait for a day or two. But when several days passed without a clarification having been published, I understood that it was an effort to sully the prime minister, and so I decided to replace General Pervez Musharraf."

Talking of differences between General Musharraf and Mr. Sharif, one cannot sidestep Kargil. To my query on Kargil, Mr. Sharif said: "I was not taken into confidence on Kargil as a prime minister. And later on whatever little I was told meant the exploit wouldn't cause any problem or loss of life. I was also told the army won't take part in the attack and only the mujahideen's assault would suffice. However, when Kargil happened, whole of the Northern Light Infantry (NLI) perished; 2,700 soldiers were martyred and hundreds injured. The toll outdid that of the wars of 1965 and 1971. When I learnt about such a huge loss of lives, I censured General Musharraf saying he had been claiming that no loss would occur. He said India was dropping heavy loads of bombs, a tactic known as carpet-bombing. I asked him why he had not anticipated such bombing. He said he could not. I was told that since bunkers had no cover, Indian bombing would hit our soldiers directly. I must tell you that Indians had got half of the posts vacated and were advancing when I concluded the ceasefire pact in Washington."

I again interrupted Mr. Sharif and asked whether the pact was concluded on his desire or on that of somebody else. Without any qualms, he said, "I saved their honor; otherwise they would have lost everything."

Later on, Mian Shahbaz Sharif narrated an interesting event. He said: "I advised Nawaz Sharif to take General Musharraf along with him to Washington for the talks on ceasefire, but our father differed saying, 'if a child fights, the family's elder is bound to save the family's honor.'"

I shifted a bit from the sensitive issue of Kargil to ask Mr. Sharif why he had selected Musharraf as the army chief who were to hinder his political assent, as had [Zulfikar Ali] Bhutto who had made a blunder to pick Zia-ul-Haq as the army head. [General Zia-ul-Haq had overthrown the Bhutto government in 1977] Since the issue was sensitive, Mr. Sharif paused for some moments, pondered a bit and then said, "It was my mistake. I should have appointed the senior most general, Ali Quli Khan, the army chief. I was ill advised that he was relative of and in favor of such and such person. Later on, I learnt that the defense secretary Iftikhar Ali Khan and his brother Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan begrudged him. I learnt a lesson from this event; the most senior person must be given his due unless he had too big a flaw to ignore; General Ali Quli Khan had no such failing at all."

As things began to unfold, I put forward another question. "Did you know the army was to take over?" Mr. Sharif confidently said: "Yes I did know that. There was some movement in the army men deployed at the Prime Minister's House before the real event. A day before a band of troops equipped with wireless sets was deployed at the Prime Minister's House. I asked Javed Malik, the military secretary, to know what they were up to. He talked to the GHQ but was responded in nonsense." Then without giving any explanation, they withdrew the troops with their wireless sets. Thereafter, I received the news that some batteries of 111 Brigade had been deployed near Bara Kahu, Islamabad. So, we did have a hint what the army generals were up to."

When the events of October 12 were discussed, Mr. Sharif said, "On the night of October 12, General Mehmood [On October 12 1999, Lt. Gen. Mehmood Ahmad, then Corps Commander, Rawalpindi, had ordered his troops to take over the then prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif's house and the PTV. Gen. Mehmood himself went to arrest Mr. Sharif. He later served as the head of Inter-Services Intelligence, the principal intelligence body of Pakistan, replacing Lt-Gen Khawaja Zia-ud-Din, who was Mr. Sharif's choice to replace General Musharraf as the army chief before the coup. General Mehmood Ahmad opposed the US invasion of Afghanistan, arguing that the Taliban, for all its faults was still better for Pakistan. He was retired from his role in the ISI on 8 October 2001, just prior to the US invasion of Afghanistan. He was replaced by Lt Gen Ehsan ul Haq as the head of the ISI] and Major General Akram came to me and asked me to sign a document for dissolution of the assemblies. A hard talk followed my refusal to sign the typed order, and then they shifted me to a small cell of a few square feet with tinted window panes so I could not see the outside world."

During the discussion about the fall of Sharif regime, many questions were coming to my mind. When Mr. Sharif paused I asked whether the decision of making Rafiq Tarar the president proved correct. Mr. Sharif readily said; "Farooq Leghari had stabbed in the back of his own party [Pakistan Peoples Party by dismissing the Benazir Bhutto government in November 1996 accusing it of corruption]. I had had this in my mind while selecting presidential elections. We needed such a man who might not create problem for us, for we wanted to serve the people in stead of striking back conspiracies, and so, we chose Rafiq Tarar as the president."

While in power, Mr. Sharif had introduced Shariat Bill in the parliament [in 1998]. His critics say the Bill aimed at imposing dictatorship in the country. He promptly said, "It is entirely wrong. I did not want to change the system of government. I only wanted a piece of legislation that could help us curb sectarianism and extremism and the delay in justice. Perhaps even army cannot fight against religious extremists and terrorists with as much courage as we did."

About the steps Pakistan government took after Nine Eleven [The September 11, 2001 attacks consisting of a series coordinated suicide attacks on the US], Mr. Sharif said, "After September 11, the parliament must have been restored and the important and sensitive issues should have been discussed in the house."

A few days ago General Pervez Musharraf had announced stringent measures against extremists and militant organizations. Told that the general's speech was being discussed everywhere, Mr. Sharif said: "We have passed through such stages many a time. What matters, in fact, is the reality on the ground. Problems cannot be solved by speeches only. Please tell me whether unemployment, economic deprivation and lawlessness have been eradicated. Unless these problems are solved, destiny of the nation cannot be changed. The applause that followed our nuclear tests lasted only a month and after that we had to face a lot of economic problems, the bitter reality on the ground."

Asked whether he had conducted the nuclear tests on his own or under the army pressure, Mr. Sharif said casting an amazed glance upon me: "The then army chief (General Jehangir Karamat) had advised me against the tests, lest the US should get angry. When India tested its nuclear device I was on my visit to the Central Asian

state of Uzbekistan. I phoned the army chief and directed him to make preparations for the tests. He was not in favor of the tests. But I had made up my mind not to accept pressure from any side and so, I did whatever I had decided."

While discussing the political role of the army and the ISI I found Mr. Sharif's thoughts similar to those of Ms Bhutto's. He said: "The role of ISI has much increased; this agency does not work under the government. Benazir too had the same complaint. It has held the entire political system hostage. Chief of the Army Staff, after taking over the charge, starts thinking himself as the king or the super prime minister. He takes himself so powerful that he does not like to salute even an elected prime minister. Once I visited the GHQ. To avoid saluting me, General Asif Nawaz, the then army chief, kept his cap in his office and came out bareheaded. However, General Waheed Kakar was courteous enough; he always saluted me whenever I visited the GHQ during his term. Generally, these generals do not wish to salute the elected prime minister of Pakistan but they can salute the Indian prime minister any time. Unless the ISI's political role is abolished, political system of the country cannot stabilize."

Asked whether it was true that the military chiefs had refused to salute Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee [February 20, 1999] at the Wagah border check post, Mr. Sharif said, "It is entirely a false story. After consultation, we had called them at the Governor House [in Lahore] only. They were not supposed to come to the Wagah border at all."

Asked about the restrictions his government had imposed on freedom of the press and especially the coercive measures against Jang Group of Newspapers, which included an attempt to have 14 staff members fired, Mr. Sharif for the first time feebly said: "It was my fault. I know you too were among those 14 whom I wished to be fired. It was all but [*Senator and the Sharif government's anti-graft panel head*] Saif-ur-Rahman's doing. However, I do not even say badly of him. I pray for him. It was a wrongdoing of all of us."

Discussion on Pakistan politics ended up in the Sharif government's handling of the opposition. I said his government had suppressed the opposition to the extreme, kept Asif Zardari continuously in the jail and also wanted to arrest Benazir Bhutto. Was it up to removing the opposition at all?

Upset at my spiky tone, the former prime minister replied: “Asif Zardari was not arrested even a single time during our rule. I was not in favor of arresting Benazir Bhutto as well though Saif-ur-Rahman wanted her apprehend. However, Chaudhary Shujaat Hussain [*then the interior minister and now the head of the ruling party Pakistan Muslim League-Q*] bears witness that I had suggested that Ms Bhutto leave the country before she was punished by the court. I did not want her to go to jail. Today Benazir Bhutto calls me fascist. She knows the fact and so, she should not say such things about me.”

Was the accountability he launched proper? Mr. Sharif frankly said: “The procedure set for the accountability was wrong. We had been instigated; there was pressure from the army and the ISI. By design we were forced to take such measures against the opposition, so that politicians lose their trust among the people.” The loss of politicians’ trust perhaps resulted in people not reacting to the dismissal of the Sharif government, I said. Owning it up, Mr. Sharif said:

“True. People were unhappy with us and so they did not take to the streets on the dismissal of our government. However, I do not blame them. We had not done enough for them by then. We were to start working for their welfare when were sent packing. However, today the situation is even worse. The country is in a slump. Salaried persons have been ground down. People have no food to eat, no clothes to wear. For how long they will stay home, they will definitely agitate one day.” “Without a leader”, I quipped. “While you and Benazir are out of the country, who shall lead their movement,” I asked. Mr. Sharif replied coldly: “Many movements have run without leaders. Leaders are sent to prisons. [*Ayatollah*] Khomeini was in exile when people campaigned for him in Iran. [*Khomeini spent more than 14 years in exile, mostly in Iraq, and also in France. A religious authority and the political leader of the 1979 Iranian Revolution which saw the overthrow of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlvi, the last Shah of Iran, Khomeini remained Supreme Leader of Iran until his death*] Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif may or may not be there but whenever there is a stir, there would be change. Bhutto could survive the PNA [*Pakistan National Alliance*] movement for three months [*in 1977*] but now nobody could.”

“Your party and vote bank are shrinking. Your party failed to achieve a majority in the local elections even in Lahore,” I said. A contented Mr. Sharif said: “It was not a political election at all. All of my big opponents -- Khawaja Riaz, Mian Azhar’s brother-in-law Nasir Jabran -- lost the elections. [*After the Nawaz Sharif government was*

sacked on October 12, 1999, several Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Sharif dissidents formed a group under Mian Muhammad Azhar's leadership. They formed the Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam) in March 2001]. Whenever there are political elections, people who hate the military regime will vote for us."

You have no link with the country and there is none to look after the party. How would you make up for this? I had tried to sniff out the Sharif Family plan but Mr. Sharif craftily said: "We are well aware of the situation. We stay updated. We shall get into gear as soon as the time demands us to."

On the Taliban and Kashmir policies of the Musharraf government, Mr. Sharif said: "They used to call Taliban their essential part, but then they spent no time in turning their eyes from them. Once they raised slogans of *Jihad* [holy war] in Kashmir, but now they have changed their stance on that as well."

In the end I put the most sensitive question: Is it true you have been released through a deal, which has barred you from taking part in politics for 10 years? Mr. Sharif said: "It is entirely incorrect, I have neither made a deal nor have I been barred from taking part in politics." In saying so perhaps his sentiments failed to match his words. Then I turned to former Punjab chief minister [20 Feb 1997 - 12 Oct. 1999] Shahbaz Sharif. He tried to bridge the deep and widening gulf between the army and politics saying: "We must toe the line of South Africa's charismatic leader Nelson Mandela. Having been released after quite a long imprisonment, to a question he said the most pleasant memory he had had was that once the jailer gave him water at a time he was feeling very thirsty. We must adhere to such values of being large-hearted."

On whether the rumors about his links to the army had any substance, Shahbaz Sharif quickly said: "I do not have any link with the army. I was given a message of compromise indirectly but I said that if I walked out on my family, how I would be faithful to them."

I asked for his opinion regarding the army? Shahbaz Sharif cautiously said, "We must reckon army as a reality; if the army goes so would the country. It has ruled the country for 27, 28 years. There should be no confrontation with the army; it is a disciplined force. It's only a few generals who have political designs and who impose martial law."

What would you do now if you to return to power? I put the question keeping in view the unchangeable mind-set of politicians.

Shahbaz Sharif smilingly said: “In a democratic government both the ruling party and the opposition should resolve not to allow the army to come to power again.”

On Pakistan-India relations Shahbaz Sharif bluntly said: “The best way out is peace; poverty cannot be eradicated unless there is tension between India and Pakistan.”

Asked what his major public welfare project was, Shahbaz Sharif quickly said, “I think my best feat was plying air conditioned buses for the poor.”

Shahbaz Sharif was narrating his achievements and appearing in my mind was his public image; not of a popular leader but of a very stern manager. I translated this image of his into words for him. Shahbaz Sharif heard me attentively and said: “I accept I was not much popular among the masses for I had been doing the work of a manager most of the time. However, it was my considered view that I should concentrate on the public welfare projects instead of meeting provincial assembly members.”

On the October 12 events, Shahbaz Sharif’s views were different from those of other family members: “Had I been consulted, I would have opposed General Musharraf’s dismissal for I knew that after the Washington agreement the army had stopped looking up to the government.”

On the deal, he said: “I had refused to be released from jail and to this bear witness some generals and my fellow inmates.”

Regarding rift in the Muslim League and personality clashes, many a question was put, but Shahbaz Sharif in a very calculated manner said: “Ch. Shujaat Hussain is basically a gentleman. He should not issue controversial statements on Kargil and other affairs. According to Nawaz Sharif Ch. Shujaat Hussain had told him he was to do politics only until he was there and not after him. Now, he should decide himself whether he would quit politics.” *[Chaudhry Shujaat did not join any group after Nawaz Sharif government’s sacking but after Sharif’s exile, he also joined Mian Azhar and formed the PML (Q) in March 2001. In the general election of October 2002, Chaudhry Shujaat was elected the National Assembly member from Bhakkar and Gujrat but later vacated his Bhakkar seat and acted as the PML-Q parliamentary party leader in the National Assembly. After Mian Azhar’s resignation, Chaudhry Shujaat was elected the president of PML-Q on January 2003. He was elected as prime minister on June 30, 2004; four days after Zafarullah Khan Jamali tendered his resignation from the premiership. He has been re-elected unopposed for three years, as president of Pakistan Muslim League-Q, the ruling party of Pakistan, in 2006]*

I again advanced a question, "Mian Sharif had promised the Chaudharies the chief minister ship." Shahbaz Sharif hurriedly said: "It is entirely incorrect; Mian Sharif had never made such a promise. It is all but a lie; I feel much pain by such statements of Pervez Elahi's."

And what about Mian Azhar, I prodded him again. He said, "Initially I thought Mian Azhar had principled differences with us but now I believe he differed with us for he had developed links with the army."

Asked whether the accountability conducted by their government was transparent, Shahbaz Sharif said: "Not at all. In fact, appointing Saif-ur-Rahman as the Accountability Bureau chairman was wrong. Accountability must have been conducted impartially and transparently by Justice Sharif-ur-Rehman so that nobody could point a finger at it."

Things yet to be discussed were many but we had to wind it up because of shortage of time and legal constraints.

Daily Jang, Sunday Magazine, February 10, 2002

DAYS AND NIGHTS OF LONDON

It is a special report on the activities of Nawaz Sharif, the former prime minister of Pakistan, in London. Some parts of the report, censored when published in the newspaper, are appearing for the first time.

- During the Kargil war nuclear weapons were relocated without the prime minister's permission
- The coup was already at hand; it had to materialise if there were Kargil inquest
- I was weighing up holding a commission on Kargil
- If General Zia-ud-Din had qualified for promotion to a three-star general; he was quite eligible for elevation to the army chief
- Certain developments forced us to hold up the Shariat Bill
- Islamic clauses in the 1973 Constitution are enough to set up an Islamic democratic system
- First my mother counselled us to leave for Saudi Arabia. My father decided on the hop after a lot of pondering

- I underwent jail bravely. The military government wanted to eliminate me
- I cannot think of getting even a worker of mine to be appointed as a prime minister after the 17th amendment
- President Tarar hung about as president just to draw on any opportunity to help me
- President Tarar talked to President Bill Clinton for my acquittal during his visit to Pakistan
- Difficulties could have made me a rebel but I have become more democratic
- On the night of the takeover General Mehmood asked me whether ISI had not warned me about the cost of dismissing General Musharraf
- I had great respect for General Jehangir Karamat but his statement violated the writ of the democratic government
- After Nine Eleven Gen Musharraf should not have said yes to America just like that; he should have obtained a decision from the parliament
- I am against terrorism. After Nine Eleven our decision might not have been different from that of General Musharraf's
- The freedom movement of Kashmir must not be dubbed as terrorism
- I miss my father very much; he always bade me to take care of the poor
- My father never came to the prison to see me

INTRO

Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has set up his party office near the Selfridges on the Oxford Street. Owned and furnished by Mr. Sharif's elder son Hassan Nawaz's company and rented by the party, the three-bedroom flat-turned-office has got verve after the PML-N working committee meeting in London. Mr. Sharif usually starts dealing with political affairs in the morning. However, Hassan spends two hours in the morning with Mr. Sharif and the family. Before his father had come to London, Hassan Nawaz used to go to his office opposite the Green Park on Piccadilly Road daily at 8.00 a.m. But now he goes to his office at 10.00 am after spending two hours with his parents. One day Mr. Sharif admired his son saying he had set up his own business of real estate and investment instead of opting for the family industrial business and had made progress in a very short span of time by the grace of God. Hassan deals in shares and investments in the world stock market and he purchases landed property in Central London, develops it and sells it out. In a few years he has earned millions of pounds and gained credibility.

If he has guests, Mr. Sharif takes lunch at some restaurant; the choice of which rests with Hassan Nawaz or with Sajjad Shah, a family friend of Mr. Sharif's. During my stay in London I happened to dine at Arabian and Lebanese restaurants called 'Fawaz' and 'Nora'. Every Friday Nora offers a special dish made with fish and rice, which is very delicious. Nawaz Sharif and his family love Hassan very much and greatly look after him. His tolerance, humility and obedience are exemplary. He waits on his father standing. He drove us to an agriculture farm [owned by Dr Toosi] 100 miles from London. During the journey, he exchanged his views on Pakistani politics with his father. He has been diagnosed with MS. Some doctors from Luzon, Switzerland, too, have verified the diagnosis and endorsed the disease's treatment as proper. Hassan Nawaz is facing it all with courage and keeping his routine of going to the office intact.

Sajjad Shah, a childhood friend of Nawaz Sharif, is now a family friend of Sharifs'. He has special terms with both Hassan Nawaz and Shahbaz Sharif. Since Shah is a jolly fellow and has a good taste for food, jokes crack wherever he is. When Mr. Sharif decided to have hair transplant, he also got Shah to do so. However, Shah did not have a second session and so, the transplant is almost invisible. At

first, Mr. Sharif's thick and black hair seemed somewhat unfamiliar but now they have become a part of his look. Besides Sajjad Shah and his wife, Ch. Jaffer Iqbal and his wife Ishrat Ashraf, and Ghous Ali Shah and his wife also participate in Sharif family dinners and lunches.

Two separate workspaces have been established at the new office. Party workers from Lahore Imran Khan, Afzaal Bhatti and Aamir remain present in the office. Imran Khan is inspired by famous leftist ideologue a right-hand man of Nawaz Sharif during his regime Pervez Rashid and seeks guidance from him. Former advisor to Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) Nadir Chaudhary, too, is staying in London. He worked very zealously for arranging the party's working committee meeting, however, he, himself was not invited to it.

Mr. Sharif holds political meeting at his office only. After the meeting of the party's working committee, Raja Zafar-ul-Haq, Ch. Nisar Ali, Ahsan Iqbal and Rana Sanaullah met him here.

SHARIFS IN LONDON

This is London, the capital of erstwhile British Empire, on which the sun did not set, implying that the imperial power spanned the globe. Now the Empire has shrunk to a small island; power, authority and magnificence seem only things of the past. However, even now traces of its past opulence, awe and authority can be seen, generally across the UK and particularly in London. Be it Trafalgar Square, Big Ben, the House of Commons, the India Office Library or the area of the East India Company, history shows up everywhere. Cast a glance on any road of central London and you will see people of different nationalities and races and color freely roaming around. Most of the people from former English colonies prefer to visit or live in London. Because of the civil liberties here, government opponents, exiled citizens and the people evicted from their countries from across the world are lodged here.

London has also gained quite an importance vis-à-vis Pakistani politics. Having stayed in Saudi Arabia for a number of years, Mian Nawaz Sharif and several members of his family are here in London. There is a general ban on politics in Saudi Arabia. Because of this or may be because of certain other unseen restrictions on politics in Saudi Arabia, Mian Nawaz Sharif could neither play an effective role in Pakistan's politics for the past so many years nor did his thoughts

on the changed situation reach the people. Since his arrival in London, he has been rearranging things. On the one hand he wants to strengthen the ARD in collaboration with Benazir Bhutto and on the other he wants to hold an All Parties Conference in London to bring the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal, an alliance of religio-political parties, into the united opposition fold.

During my stay in London in March and April for my journalistic activities, I had the opportunity to watch Mr. Sharif's political activities, exchange views with him and analyze his words, feelings and sentiments. I met him 10 or 12 times; a couple being one on one and the rest cut away by long phone talks with some party worker in Pakistan or the party leaders dropping in. During these meetings, however, I did get time for some talk on politics and on-the-record interview.

Mian Nawaz Sharif and his family live in central London. Commanding superb view over London's Hyde Park, this area is known as Park Lane. Sharif family house is a few feet from the Marble Arch near Oxford Street. Walk from Marble Arch parallel to the Hyde Park on the Park Lane, turn left on the second turning and you enter Green Street. First turn on your right is Dunraven Street where Avenfield House's third floor holds Sharif family's residential flats; Mian Nawaz Sharif resides in No. 16 and Shahbaz Sharif in No. 17 but now after Mr. Sharif's arrival this flat has been reserved for political meetings. Captain Safdar and Mariam Nawaz Sharif live in No. 17-A.

Before the arrival of Mr. Sharif in London, the flats have been renovated but with simplicity. However, the color of furniture, curtains, walls and carpets has been changed. The color of cushions is dark red, as is of those at the Sharif family drawing rooms at their Jeddah and Model Town, Lahore residences, signifying Mr. Sharif's liking for red rose. Cushions in one room have the image of a lion, one-time Mr. Sharif's election symbol. It may also be his favorite animal. And hence image of lion in Mr. Sharif's flat in London.

Even in London Mr. Sharif has continued his habit of sleeping early and rising up early. He often called me at 7.30 am when he would firm up his day's schedule. According to my information, he gets up for the Fajr [dawn] prayer, and at the sunrise goes out for a morning walk with Kulsoom Nawaz. It's very cold during March and April in London and so, one cannot go out without wearing long

coat. After the walk, they go to the Marks and Spenser restaurant on the Oxford Street. The Marks and Spenser store opens at 10 am but the restaurant starts at 8 am. Layette Coffee at this restaurant is a favorite drink of Mr. Sharif's. Back home, he gets ready for a day full of meetings and telephone calls until the supper. He goes to bed around 10.00 pm.

On Fridays, Mr. Sharif, all the male members of his family and their staff together go to the Regent Park mosque, a few minutes drive from the Park Lane, for weekly prayers. Once it was drizzling when we arrived at the mosque. The management committee comprising Pakistani and Libyan people received us and opened special rooms for us to offer our prayers for the main halls had filled up.

Mr. Sharif usually wears *Shalwar Qameez*, the Pakistani dress. His favorite colors are light blue and grey. However, the cufflinks and shoes do reflect his good aesthetic sense. Hassan Nawaz and Mian Shahbaz Sharif insist Mr. Sharif to wear a suit in London and by the time I left, had started wearing pant shirt though he said he would wear a suit after reducing his weight. He also said Hassan Nawaz wanted him to drive his vehicle himself and he had promised to do so for he would drive his car himself whenever he visited the UK before.

Hussain Nawaz Sharif's family, Abbas Sharif and Suhail Zia Butt live in Jeddah. Although Hussain Nawaz and his wife do visit London, Abbas Sharif and Suhail Zia Butt have not left Saudi Arabia for any foreign country yet.

There is a marked difference between the Jeddah and London residences and the living style of their inhabitants. While in Jeddah's Suroor Palace a whole brigade of servants waited on the Sharifs, in London they only have Hamid to run errands. Also, the London house cannot serve too many visitors, and so, they are catered to at some restaurant. Given the high costs of living and congestion in London, the Sharifs' flats are very spacious but are getting short of space with the coming in of new occupants. In April, Mr. Sharif, his son Hassan Nawaz, his wife, his mother-in-law who is also Kulsoom Nawaz's sister and his father-in-law Dr. Asif lived here. By the end of March, Captain Safdar, his wife Mariam Safdar and their children, and Nawaz Sharif's mother had come here to stay. None from Mian Shahbaz Sharif's first or second family is staying here but he himself

is seen here. Mian Nawaz often seeks Shahbaz's opinion on political issues and reviews on the world affairs. Mr. Sharif keeps Shahbaz along in every meeting and gives a special importance to his opinion. He briefs his brother on every meeting he holds. Shahbaz Sharif keeps a liaison with different embassies, international organizations, and also sorts out Sharif family's travel issues. The brothers might have some differences on political issues, but Shahbaz Sharif is so respectful to Nawaz Sharif that it is hard to smell them. However, Mian Shahbaz Sharif is very candid in commenting on political issues and so Mr. Sharif does consider his viewpoint very meticulously and then comes to a conclusion.

Often it is Mian Shahbaz Sharif who schedules Mr. Sharif's meetings. His forced return is still alive in his mind. He says, "The establishment did not mind my arrival in Pakistan that much. However, the Chaudhary family of Punjab did create the real hurdle to my return for they thought it would put an end to their rule."

Mian Nawaz Sharif receives calls of Pakistanis living around the world throughout the day. He talks to them for a considerably long time. Besides giving his stance on the political situation, he always asks about the wellbeing of his children from every Muslim Leaguers and does not forget to pay regards to his parents.

During my meetings with Mr. Sharif several questions came about my mind, mostly being whether he had any alternative to dismissing General Musharraf on Oct. 12, 1999. He heard my question very carefully, and with a bit of smile said, "Yes, there was an alternative of taking no action. I would have saved my government this way but lost the authority and prestige of an elected prime minister." This answer failed to satisfy my curiosity and so, I threw another question: "Your political career evidences that you always made political decision after much consideration and deliberations. Did you ever think that the decision of General Musharraf's dismissal would be impossible to implement? Mr. Sharif took some moments to answer, perhaps reliving the run-up to his October 12 decision, and said, "Yes, it was risky for the army has been taking over the reins repeatedly, but I thought I should take a chance and I did it."

Informal talk now gave way to a proper interview:

Q. How far is it correct that even if you had not sacked General Musharraf on October 12, the army would have taken over anyway? When was the takeover feared?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, it is correct to quite an extent. The moment we decided to replace Musharraf, the army occupied the TV station and the Prime Minister's House. The army cannot move so swiftly without prior planning; all the soldiers were armed and ready. Some days ago the army deployed in the Prime Minister's House had been equipped with special wireless sets for surveillance of our visitors. My Military Secretary Javed Malik took notice of it, he talked to a brigade commander and thus the wireless sets were withdrawn from the security staff. Interestingly, the night I was detained, General Mehmood asked me whether the ISI had not warned me against removing the army chief. It shows they were primed for the coup."

Had the ISI tipped you off on the takeover?

Nawaz Sharif: No, the ISI had not given me any hint on the takeover. But since some generals bore the Kargil guilt, they had decided to take over if there were an enquiry or action on the fiasco.

Were you mulling appointing a commission on Kargil?

Nawaz Sharif: In fact, I was at a crossroads. The country's prestige was very dear to me; lest this should be blotted. Had any failing of the army come to the fore, Pakistan's image would have been badly affected. Holding inquiry would also have meant we had suffered a huge loss. This would also have exposed a lot of things. Sometimes I would think that setting up a commission would have stained the prestige of the army and the country and so, I could not make up my mind on that. On the other hand, I would consider appointing a commission on Kargil important for the war had greatly harmed Pakistan's interests; it was horrendous and worrisome for we were very close to a nuclear war.

Many people say that if you had replaced General Musharraf with a general other than Zia-ud-Din, the army might have accepted your decision.

Nawaz Sharif: Mistake, I don't know. A three-star general he was, and so fit for being the army chief. If he had been promoted to a three star general, he was eligible for his elevation to the army chief. I did a mistake, of course. I ignored the seniority of General Khalid Nawaz and General Ali Quli Khan and appointed Musharraf as army chief.

This taught me a lesson that except for certain major disqualification, whosoever was senior should have been given his due.

Have you ever felt that if you had not asked General Jehangir Karamat's resignation, it would have proved better?

Nawaz Sharif: No, though I have a good opinion about General Karamat. He had a democratic mind but his statement was an act of interference in the government affairs. [General Karamat, who was to retire within four months, in his resignation letter to Mr. Sharif said "unnecessary controversy" had been created over his October 5, 1998 remarks at a naval function in Lahore that a national security council should be set up to institutionalize decision-making to avoid any political instability in the country] He had acted beyond his jurisdiction and so, to establish and maintain writ of the government, his resignation was inevitable. However, I have great respect for General Karamat for he revered democracy.

Don't you think that for his respect for democracy he should not have been sacked?

Nawaz Sharif: No, no compromise on principles.

The audiocassettes regarding decision of the High Court against Benazir Bhutto also contain a mention about you?

[A British newspaper, the Sunday Times, rendered highly suspect a guilty verdict handed down to Benazir Bhutto and her husband by the Lahore High Court in 1999 in the SGS/Cotecna reference case as its report said Justice Malik Qayyum of the Lahore High Court had allegedly announced a pre-written judgment in the case, quoting tape-recorded conversations between the judge and Sharif's law minister Khalid Anwar, the former chief of the Accountability Bureau, Saifur Rehman and the former Chief Justice of Lahore High Court, Justice Rashid Aziz. The bugging allegedly disclosed that the former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, was intent on securing Benazir Bhutto's conviction at any cost. Bhutto's appeal against the verdict sentencing her to imprisonment for five years and nearly \$10 million fine won her acquittal by the Supreme Court.]

Nawaz Sharif: I have no knowledge about that. I played no role in it. I know nothing about it.

If you were in the saddle when the Nine Eleven happened, would you have taken a different course from that of General Musharraf's?

Nawaz Sharif: Look, fighting terrorism is a must. I am against terrorism to the last extent. However, big powers must know the difference between a freedom movement and a terrorist activity. Obviously, Nine Eleven was an act of worst type of terrorism I am against such acts. Had I been in power then, I would have taken a similar course but through the elected parliament. We should not have submitted before the US so hastily. We must have inspired the whole nation against terrorism and then have honorably decided to launch war against terror. I want to make it clear that super powers should not be allowed to dub a freedom movement of a nation as terrorism. To call the freedom movement of Kashmir terrorism is a mistake of the first rate. In Palestine Israel launches state terrorism and in there defense Palestinians throw stones on the armed personnel, then what would you call the Israeli action? It is but the worst type of state terrorism.

Under your regime the army looked down upon your efforts to befriend India. However, during the Musharraf rule many ups and downs have been witnessed on Indo-Pak relations. Do you think the army's attitude towards India has changed?

Nawaz Sharif: I think the [pro-peace] steps taken during my regime had the trust and backing of the entire nation. It was being done with honor. However, the way the issue is being tackled now is very disrespectful and dishonoring. Some people, whom you call the establishment or the army, do not like peace for it may not suite their vested interests.

The establishment is a very strong group but you call it a bunch of a few people only, why?

Nawaz Sharif: In Pakistan, the establishment is, in fact, a group of a few people only. Smashing it is the need of our time; weakening it, its obstinacy and its adventurism is but inevitable. If we are to make our country civilized and democratic, we have to enfeeble them; their extra-constitutional powers must be put to an end. It is necessary for the progress and prosperity of the country. I was sent to jail for the offence of maintaining writ of the government. I underwent the agonies of prison in the forts. I was deprived of my property, my house; my house of Model Town is under illegal occupation of General Musharraf's. I have to remain in exile (though I do not call it exile). I could not go to Pakistan even for my father's burial. It is all part of our struggle to break unlawful power and strength of the establishment.

Had the establishment been doing an act of lawlessness during your regime?

Nawaz Sharif: What to say of lawlessness, they used to break the constitution. Even today they are acting against the constitution of Pakistan.

You had an exemplary love for your father. How do you miss him after his death?

Nawaz Sharif: I miss my father very much. He helped us a lot during my prime ministership in both the terms. He would frequently advise me: "Nawaz Sharif, you should not let the flour price go higher." He told me to keep its rate cheaper even if a subsidy had to be given. He always asked me not to allow ghee, electricity; petrol and other articles of daily use go costlier for the poor. And so, I never allowed an increase in the prices of flour and ghee. In the history of Pakistan I was the first person to reduce the rates of electricity, give subsidy on the flour price and resist the price hike in the international market by bearing the additional cost to safeguard the poor, the common people. My father was very strict on this; he used to advise me very sternly regarding price control. I especially miss him very much for he never came to meet me in jail.

Why would he not come to the jail to meet you?

Nawaz Sharif: I think it was his courage, his mettle and his resolve. He thought we were into a struggle that must bring fruit one day. Whatever message he wanted to give me, he always sent it through Kulsoom.

Some people say that primarily you were not agreed to leave for Saudi Arabia, perhaps it was your father's decision.

Nawaz Sharif: In fact, my father said that if our sincere friend Prince Abdullah had invited us, we would not reject his good offer.

Were you hesitant in the beginning?

Nawaz Sharif: No, I had left the decision to my father. I was neither hesitant nor was I too excited to go. I had decided to obey my parents. My mother wanted us to leave for Saudi Arabia and so, she pitched it and my father handed us down his decision favoring the proposal. In Saudi Arabia we asked our father to go to Pakistan for there was no restriction on him, but he said we all would go together.

However, he left us before time; we could not go to our motherland together.

The situation in Balochistan is getting worsened day by day. Twice being the prime minister of the country, what do you think is the real cause of the mistrust of the small provinces?

Nawaz Sharif: Deviation from the Constitution is the real cause of mistrust among the provinces. During our regime, Balochistan and its leadership were the same as now, but there was no mistrust. At the time of tabling the thirteenth and fourteenth amendments to the Constitution, all the members from Balochistan province raised their hands in favor and so we got them passed unanimously. Even Benazir Bhutto had supported us, although we did not have good working relations with her. [Tribal chiefs and heads of their political parties] Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti of Jamhuri Watan Party, Ataullah Mengal and Hasil Bizenjo of Balochistan National Party also voted in our favor. This is what we call national harmony and cohesiveness. This is what we dub confidence and trust among the provinces. Only democracy and democratic government can provide an atmosphere for good relations among the provinces. It is not the task of the army and the generals to bring about harmony; they always aggravate even the already settled issues. Army is to be called only to scrape down a system. To improve and maintain a system you must bring in the democratic government. Distribution of water among the provinces was a difficult issue, unresolved for the last so many years. We settled it with the consensus of the provinces. How many precedents should I quote?

During your rule an attempt was made to get the Shariat Bill passed. Do you think the Islamic articles of the 1973 Constitution are insufficient?

Nawaz Sharif: We should first apply Islam on ourselves before we impose it on others. Certain objections cropped up after the assembly had passed the Shariat Bill and so, we did not emphasize too much on its approval from the Senate and the bill was adjourned.

Are you not satisfied with the Islamic articles in the 1973 Constitution?

Nawaz Sharif: The Islamic articles of 1973 Constitution do suffice if the Constitution is followed in letter and spirit. A complete

democratic and Islamic system of government can be enforced in the country through them.

Your opponents say you had given in before the US president on Kargil?

Nawaz Sharif: [Amazed] how did I submit before Bill Clinton or America?

You went to America and requested for a compromise.

Nawaz Sharif: (Angrily) Musharraf sent me.

You must have taken him with you to the US.

Nawaz Sharif: But to err is human. (Smiling) One learns from experience. The time for submission was when I was asked not to go for nuclear tests but I refused to bow before them. Then why would I submit before the US on Kargil?

You have been a very strong prime minister, what mistake do you repent on the most?

Nawaz Sharif: (Smiling) I did a mistake of appointing General Musharraf the army chief. (Seriously) In fact, I should have not extended the conflict with the opposition so far as to cause personal enmity. I have learnt a lesson. The difficulties I have faced might have turned me a traitor but I have become more democratic. I did not instigate the people to put national assets on fire or go for negative agitation. Now I want to see Pakistan, my country, a real democratic country, with parliament being its supreme body, and judiciary worthy of establishing a real system of justice.

You might have wept in the jail for the pains and agonies you had to undergo?

Nawaz Sharif: “Jo Hum Nay Dastaan Apni Sonai Aap Kion Roay” [How come the tears welled out of your eyes as we narrated our story of agony] (Smiling) No God saved me from weeping. May He keep me safe from it in future as well! Do you think I underwent jail cowardly? No, not at all, I bore it bravely?

The military government has completed seven years. Is it not a failure of the political leadership that the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy has not become an effective power as such?

Nawaz Sharif: We are analyzing the situation. Very soon we will identify the steps we need to take for the restoration of democracy.

INFORMAL TALK

After the formal interview, we spoke to each other informally. Replying to a question on any deal with the Musharraf government, Mr. Sharif said: "After the seventeenth amendment, I cannot think of becoming a prime minister like Shaukat Aziz. What to say of myself I even cannot allow a worker of mine to become such a [weak] prime minister." I said to him that on the one hand his stance was so tough but on the other, he had come to Saudi Arabia as a result of a deal. Mr. Sharif smilingly said, "My arrival in London negates the presence of any deal had there been any deal, how could I speak on politics? Where have the claims of the government gone?" In a serious tone he said, "Before the recent local elections I received certain indications from the Saudi government that now I could go to London, but the military regime told them this would hurt the government standing in the local elections. The government did not want to allow me to go London. Musharraf tried his best to impose restrictions on me so that I could not be free to write and speak. However, by the grace of God, I am free to express my views .

The discussion moved on and concentrated upon the country's future and its political system in vogue. Mr. Sharif said, "Until the assembly and the Constitution of Pakistan are not set free to work by themselves, a few generals sitting together will keep on deciding to topple the governments and that's all. Now the constitutional governments have to think upon a durable solution to coups. India is very fortunate that its generals never conquered it. Army system should be reformed to forestall such takeovers. To curb the desires of a few generals, at least civilian institutions must keep an alternative force to defend themselves.

During a meeting with Mr. Sharif in London in the presence of Mrs. Kulsoom Nawaz Sharif, I said to him that many people thought that if he had not left the jail, political scene of the country must have been very different. His wife in his stead replied, "In fact, Mian Nawaz Sharif was not ready to be released in such a way, but all of us had to accept the decision of Mian Sharif". Mr. Sharif added, "I was convinced the military government without caring a fig for law and rules, would try its best to eliminate me." Talking about his journey from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, he greatly admired the role played by President Rafiq Tarar, he said, "Rafiq Tarar had perhaps

accepted to remain the president just to take benefit of an opportunity for my acquittal; he even talked to President Bill Clinton on my acquittal during his visit to Pakistan.” Mr.Sharif seems to have planned to spend some time in London and Saudi Arabia. He has also prepared an outline of the future politics; “We want all the opposition united in the next elections. At least, seats’ adjustment must be made. Whichever party wins majority of seats may get its prime minister elected, but the government so formed must be national in structure. However, if the allied parties win the election with 40-60 ratios of seats, the prime ministership can be divided into two equal periods, one for each.” Mr.Sharif is planning his future right from today but we have to see what God has decided for him.

The Daily Jang (Sunday Magazine) April 30, 2006



ON MUSHARRAF'S BOOK

- ◆ Truth and falsehood of the book
- ◆ When was the Kargil secret disclosed?
- ◆ The Kargil aftermath
- ◆ On the brink of a nuclear war
- ◆ Did the prime minister give in?
- ◆ Does Musharraf speak the truth?
- ◆ The controversial speech of Jehangir Karamat
- ◆ I am not Jehangir Karamat
- ◆ The plane conspiracy
- ◆ Najam Sethi's court martial
- ◆ The plot against Musharraf
- ◆ The news of martial law
- ◆ Who was Musharraf's hero?
- ◆ Firing Tariq Pervez
- ◆ General Usmani had agreed

NAWAZ SHARIF'S REACTION TO GENERAL MUSHARRAF'S BOOK

After the publication of General Pervez Musharraf's book "In the Line of Fire" many new questions arose. To get answers to these new questions, I traveled to London to meet Nawaz Sharif.

- General Musharraf's book is a pack of lies. I have been portrayed negatively.
- It is incorrect to say that India had attacked Kargil
- China, US and Saudi Arabia did not back us over Kargil
- Nuclear weapons were moved over Kargil
- I knew Pakistan had the technology to launch nuclear weapons
- President Clinton had himself told me about the movement of nuclear weapons
- Kargil ceasefire was Pervez Musharraf's decision and not mine

- General Musharraf had already agreed on the ceasefire with his friend General Zinni and set up a meeting with President Clinton
- During my meeting with President Clinton I asked whether we had really lost the Tiger Hills
- What leverage did I have after the Tiger Hills retreat
- Mujahideen didn't even know where Kargil was
- General Musharraf had backed me during the judicial crisis
- I wanted to extend Jehangir Karamat's tenure for a year
- Jehangir Karamat had agreed to be the chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee
- General Mehmood used to call me Sher Shah Soori and then took over the Prime Minister's House brandishing his stick
- General Nasim Rana had himself brought Jehangir Karamat's resignation to me
- I ordered the plane's diversion after the army had barged in the Prime Minister's House
- General Musharraf had himself talked about taking Najam Sethi to task
- General Zia-ud-Din had been indicated 24 hours before about him being installed the army chief
- I used to be told that General Musharraf took me as his hero

- I did not want to sack General Tariq Pervez, I did it only grudgingly
- General Usmani had agreed to accept General Musharraf's retirement. He changed his mind later.
- I had not ordered diversion of General Musharraf's plane to India

TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD OF THE BOOK

Q. How do you feel about General Pervez Musharraf's book "In the Line of Fire"?

Nawaz Sharif: This book is not "In the Line of Fire". Rather it is "In the Line of Liar" because it contains too many lies. Or it should be titled as "In the Line of Hire" for he has confessed that he has been handing over to the US Pakistani citizens for money. The only thing in the line of fire is the truth. President Bush has rebutted the book immediately after its publication. He has denied hurling the threat of bombing Pakistan. And so has Richard Armitage. Atal Behari Vajpayee and Jaswant Singh too have refuted the book's contents.

How did you take frequent mention of yours in the book?

Nawaz Sharif: Frequent mention of mine but only negative. There are personal attacks but I won't respond to them, for, I think, his lies have been exposed.

The book clearly says you were briefed on Kargil at the ISI Headquarters and Kel. General Musharraf has given the dates you were given the briefings on and detailed whatever was told in the briefings. Doesn't it mean your case has weakened now?

Nawaz Sharif: His book is a pack of lies. As a prime minister I was not told anything about Pakistan army's attack on Kargil. In fact Pakistan army generals do not apprise the elected public representatives of many affairs. In the briefing held on Jan 29, General Ali Hamid spoke about promotion of tourism. Kargil issue was not discussed at all. The February 5, 1999 briefing at Kel was held in the open. The pictures General Musharraf issued belonged here. This briefing was made to get my permission for the

construction of Mansehra, Balakot, Kaghan, Butta Kundi and Kel road. Tourists were roaming around. How could a briefing on such a sensitive issue as Kargil be held in the open? Interestingly enough, General Mehmood in his speech called me Sher Shah Soori because of my keen interest in the construction of roads. Now you may see how the generals would behave then. Later on, the same General Mehmood barged into the Prime Minister's House brandishing his stick. However, the February 5, 1999 briefing did not contain a single word on Kargil.

General Musharraf has written in his book that on March 12, 1999 you were briefed at the ISI Headquarters on the internal situation of Jammu and Kashmir and the Line of Control. Similarly, the director-general of Military Operations gave you a briefing on May 17. What is your reaction to it?

Nawaz Sharif: In the briefing given on March 12, 1999 at the ISI Headquarters we only discussed the internal situation of Kashmir and how we should highlight the issue. In this meeting and the one held on May 17, 1999, no briefing was given about the Pakistan army attack on Kargil.

WHEN THE KARGIL SECRET WAS DISCLOSED?

When and how did you know about the presence of Pakistan army at Kargil?

Nawaz Sharif: I don't need to conceal it I learnt about it the first time when Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's protested it. He complained to me that on the one hand I was holding parley with them and on the other Pakistan army was sitting in Kargil. Right then, the audiotapes of the telephonic talk of General Musharraf from China with General Aziz in Pakistan came to the fore. The phone calls clearly show the prime minister was being kept deliberately in the dark about the presence of Pakistan army at Kargil.

I learnt about it after the generals' telephonic talk of May 26 and 29, 1999 (Annexure at the end of the book). I felt very sorry that the army was concealing from their prime minister a thing the entire world had come to know. Even India knew it all but not their elected prime minister. Interestingly, General Musharraf has not said anything about these tapes in his book. The folly they committed during the conversation earned Pakistan a bad name. As I received the tapes, I sent them to General Musharraf through Brigadier Javed Malik, the military secretary. On receiving the tapes, he was amazed

as well as thankful; amazed at having been tapped and thankful for having been handed over the tapes. The presence of Pakistan army troops at Kargil was formally discussed for the first time in the Defense Committee meeting on June 2, 1999. By then I had had it verified through my own sources. And the world had already known about it through the tapes.

What was discussed in the Defense Committee of the Cabinet meeting held on June 2, 1999?

Nawaz Sharif: In the meeting I asked General Musharraf as to what was going on at Kargil, and said, "I am very sorry that the government has been kept in the dark". The prime minister and his cabinet were unaware of the issue and the country was put on the brink of a nuclear war. You must have heard the famous maxim: 'War is too serious an affair to be left to the generals alone'. When the operation was being launched stealthily without the knowledge of the government and the elected public representatives, these few generals might not have thought as to what would be the result of this mindless war. The more I learnt the details of the war, the more I got worried. I learnt that the situation was not good at the war front either. Our soldiers were losing life for nothing. The supply line had been broken. They had nothing to eat and so, were forced to eat grass and drink snow. I am sure that on the Judgment Day the martyrs of Kargil shall get hold of General Musharraf and ask him as to why he had left them alone there?

General Musharraf did not like even to mention the number of Pakistani martyrs of Kargil. Their number was four times higher than the Indian casualties at Kargil. What sort of general this Pervez Musharraf is that he does not even remember his soldiers who gave away their lives at Kargil.

I challenge him to set up a neutral commission on Kargil, if he is truthful, and get the evidence of the survivors of the war recorded. They will tell how the generals had left their soldiers at the mercy of the adversaries all alone. The soldiers kept on fighting bravely and giving away their lives and their generals even did not like to mention their names. What else could be a greater tragedy than this?

If you had not sanctioned the Kargil war, why didn't you ask them to stop it in the Defense Committee meeting?

Nawaz Sharif: In the Defense Committee meeting, I was worried about the bad effects of the presence of the army at Kargil. The air force chief said that if they were asked to take part in the war, they would be unable to continue if the war escalated. He said either he should be given orders to join the war then or to take part in the expected war at a larger scale for they were unable to participate in both the wars. Since Pakistan Air Force was not consulted for the war, they were not prepared to take part in it. It was the case with the navy. Besides, several corps commanders were not aware of the war at Kargil. Truth cannot be concealed; it does come to the fore sometime. General Musharraf has himself admitted he used to share information with other people on “the need to know” basis. Thus he has admitted he had attacked Kargil without the civil authority’s permission.

General Musharraf has written that Kargil peaks were initially occupied in retaliation for several Indian raids?

Nawaz Sharif: It is but a lie. In none of the briefings did he say anything about the Indian attacks. It is a fabricated story put together after the incident as an excuse for the Kargil adventure. If there was any such attack or skirmish, why was the prime minister kept unaware of it?

THE KARGIL AFTERMATH

In his book General Pervez Musharraf says that Kargil internationalized the issue of Kashmir?

Nawaz Sharif: The facts stand out against this claim. Kargil has caused a great loss to the Kashmir issue. We have been isolated due to this war. The US did not help us on this issue. The Middle East and Saudi Arabia told us to mend our ways. Even our close friend China too refused to help us. The Kargil issue earned us a bad name. The progress we had made on Kashmir was halted. In my opinion Kargil has caused an irreparable damage to the Kashmir issue. The crisis of trust between Pakistan and India it yielded is dogging us even today. Despite taking part in the international war against terror we have failed to move forward over Kashmir.

ON THE BRINK OF A NUCLEAR WAR

In his book President Musharraf doesn’t buy your claim that Pakistan had reached the brink of a nuclear war, courtesy Kargil,

and that he had moved the nukes without the prime minister's permission?

Nawaz Sharif: I know very well that Pakistan had the ability to deploy and launch the atomic arsenal. General Musharraf must keep in his mind I have been the prime minister of Pakistan twice well before his appointment as the army chief. I was very well aware of our nuclear ability. In 1990 when I was elected the prime minister for the first time, I was told Pakistan had acquired the nukes' launching capacity and it was being enhanced. When I was elected prime minister the second time, I was briefed in detail how much had the capacity improved. As for the movement of the nuclear weapons in the Kargil war, US President Clinton had told me about that during the July 4, 1999 meeting. Now Bruce Reidel, too, has bared the facts. So, General Musharraf should also put this lie down.

In his book General Pervez Musharraf says Pakistan army stood in good stead at Kargil and so, the ceasefire was not beneficial for Pakistan. Why did you order it then as the prime minister?

Nawaz Sharif: It is a lie. The fact is that when Musharraf's misadventure failed miserably, this commando general came to me and requested me to get the war ceased at any cost. US General Anthony Zinni's book verifies this claim of mine. The book clearly says that it was General Pervez Musharraf who had asked Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for having the fire ceased. General Zinni is a personal friend of General Pervez Musharraf's. His testimony clearly says that it was the army chief, and not the prime minister, who wanted the ceasefire. Now he can say whatever he wants to but then he had lost his bearings and would beg the prime minister to save them. My first consideration was the martyrdom of innocent soldiers. If I were to play politics I might have sit silent and watch them go down but I decided to save the honor of the army and dignity of the country. And I was paid back in my ouster. They took over lest people held them accountable for the Kargil blunder.

Do you want to say that the decision of Kargil ceasefire had been taken before you left for Washington and you only formalized it there? Any proof?

Nawaz Sharif: Yes, General Zinni met General Musharraf and me on June 24 and 25, 1999. [See annexure. A scanned copy of General Zinni's book] On June 27, General Musharraf himself told the press that the Kargil issue would come under discussion during Clinton-

Sharif meeting in Washington. He was the first person to disclose to the press details of my July 4 meeting with President Clinton and now he claims in his book that I left for Washington in a hurry. It was all done on his insistence. Otherwise, why would he publicize my meeting with President Clinton?

DID THE PRIME MINISTER GIVE IN?

In his book General Musharraf says international pressure had demoralized you and so, you decided to withdraw the troops from Kargil. He also says that despite a strong position, you gave in and accepted the ceasefire in Washington on July 4. How would you defend yourself against these allegations?

Nawaz Sharif: It is an interesting claim. The story goes like this: the international pressure did not demoralize me; rather I saved the lives of innocent soldiers and paved the way for an honorable exit for the army. First he begged me for a ceasefire and then bade me farewell at the Chaklala Airport for Washington. After the completion of the first phase of my meeting with President Clinton, I was watching TV during the tea break when CNN reported that another peak at Kargil namely Tiger Hills had been recaptured by the Indian forces. I contacted General Musharraf on telephone and asked about the authenticity of the news. He said, "Yes Sir, we have lost Tiger Hills also". I said, "You have lost everything already, now what should I talk about. Now the pullout announcement will only be formality. Even then I had elicited an assurance from President Clinton that he would take a personal interest in the resolution of the Kashmir issue. I think in the face of such a grim situation, drawing out such an assurance was a great success.

How did the troops pull out?

Nawaz Sharif: Pullout? We had already lost everything. My military secretary Javed Malik told me that to show it to the world that it was mujahideen who had occupied the peaks and that they were being requested to withdraw from there, the ISI chief called a meeting of Kashmiri mujahideen. When the mujahideen were formally requested to pull out from the peaks, a mujahideen commander asked where this Kargil was. This triggered laughter.

DOES MUSHARRAF SPEAK THE TRUTH?

Citing General Jehangir Karamat's forced resignation, General Musharraf says in his book that General Ali Quli Khan had

proposed the imposition of martial law in the corps commanders' meeting whereas he had opposed the contention of President Leghari and Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah and supported the prime minister's standpoint just to strengthen democracy.

Nawaz Sharif: It is correct. I had learnt instantly about the speech General Musharraf had made there. I had also learnt that General Ali Quli Khan said in the meeting that if allowed he would arrest Nawaz Sharif from the airport and send him back to Lahore.

JEHANGIR KARAMAT'S CONTROVERSIAL SPEECH

Apparently you were enjoying very good relationship with General Jehangir Karamat. Then why did he make that controversial speech at the Naval College?

Nawaz Sharif: I do not know as to why he had made that speech. The way General Jehangir Karamat had sided with democracy against President Leghari and Chief Justice Sajjad Shah; I was considering giving him a year's extension as the army chief. I had talked to him about it but he was not interested in having it. He, however, seemed interested in being made the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman.

What did you say to General Jehangir Karamat after the Naval College speech?

Nawaz Sharif: I called him up and said his speech had harmed the democratic government's authority. He said he was ready to retract the idea of National Security Council. I said this was not enough a remedy. He sent in his resignation the next day.

General Musharraf says in the book he learnt about General Jehangir Karamat's resignation from Brigadier Ejaz Shah.

Nawaz Sharif: ISI DG Nasim Rana brought General Jehangir Karamat's resignation to me and he might have told Brigadier Ejaz about it. General Rana had reported against the appointment of General Musharraf as the army chief. He had reported that the general was an emotional person and did not bear good moral character. I should have considered this report.

'I AM NOT JEHANGIR KARAMAT'

General Musharraf has clearly written in this book that he had often signaled to you that he should not be taken as General Jehangir Karamat.

Nawaz Sharif: Now he can say whatever he wants to but during my rule he did not dare talk to me directly. He had no courage to send such messages then. Whenever he needed to talk to me, he would do so through Shahbaz Sharif or Chaudhary Nisar Ali. He always abided by my protocol and showed respect for me to my face. However, I would ignore backbiting.

THE PLANE CONSPIRACY

What would you say about the allegation of re-routing the aeroplane to Nawab Shah putting the lives of the people in danger?

Nawaz Sharif: They had already planned the takeover. The proof to this effect is that when I decided to sack General Pervez Musharraf he was in the aeroplane. He had no communication with General Mehmood and General Aziz. Here arises the question as to how these generals had themselves decided the coup. It is evident everything was planned before hand. By the time General Zia-ud-Din was announced to have replaced General Musharraf, no directions for diverting the plane to Nawab Shah Airport had been issued. However, the situation had changed when the army entered the Prime Minister's House and the PTV. The danger of abrogating the constitution and toppling the constitutional government had emerged and to pre-empt it, I ordered re-routing the plane to Nawab Shah. Since before the coup everything was normal, I had directed General Usmani to receive General Musharraf as a retired army chief and lead him to his house honorably. General Usmani said to my military secretary on telephone: "Javed, I will carry out the orders". After this call General Usmani left for the airport but how and why he changed his mind on the way God knows better or General Usmani himself does.

NAJAM SETHI'S COURT MARTIAL

About the arrest of a known journalist Najam Sethi in your regime, it has been said in the book that you had asked General Musharraf to court martial him but he refused to do so. Had you really said so?

Nawaz Sharif: In fact General Musharraf said to Shahbaz Sharif that Najam Sethi had talked against Pakistan in India and so, he should be punished for that. Shahbaz Sharif conveyed his feelings to me. Now you tell me he himself suggested punishing the journalist and was now vilifying me. He had asked Shahbaz Sharif to put him to task.

THE PLOT AGAINST MUSHARRAF

General Musharraf's associates say you had been planning to replace him since long?

Nawaz Sharif: In fact they conspired against my government. Why would I surrender before their conspiracies? Look, did it require some sort of scheming if I had to transfer or change an inspector-general of a province. Would I think the police could revolt? Similarly the prime minister is by law empowered to replace the army chief and so, if his decision is not accepted it is clearly a revolt.

Had you told General Zia-ud-Din before hand that you were going to appoint him as the army chief? Was he told to be ready for whatever the replacement would yield?

Nawaz Sharif: No, I had not told him anything in advance. General Zia-ud-Din might have deduced it himself. However, just 24 hours before I had indicated to him that such a decision could be made.

THE NEWS OF MARTIAL LAW

General Musharraf has written in his book that one day Attorney-General Chaudhary Farooq had told you that the army was going to impose martial law. On the same day you met General Pervez Musharraf but you did not ask him anything about it?

Nawaz Sharif: It is correct that the attorney general had told me that the army was ready to take over. On the same day I met General Musharraf in Lahore. He was there to condole with me the death of a relative of mine. But why should I have asked the general whether he would impose martial law? Is a burglar ever asked when he would burgle?

WHO WAS MUSHARRAF'S HERO

Who had asked you to appoint General Pervez Musharraf as the army chief?

Nawaz Sharif: I remember that once defense secretary General Iftikhar Ali Khan (retired) told me that Musharraf worshiped me as his hero. He advised me to appointed Musharraf as the army chief.

FIRING TARIQ PERVEZ

You had ordered General Tariq Pervez dismissed but later you tried to retain him in the army. Did you go double-minded?

Nawaz Sharif: Actually, I was not in favor of dismissing General Tariq. However, General Musharraf insisted on his dismissal saying he did not follow his discipline. Khayam Qaisar, Colonel Khawar, defense secretary Iftikhar and my principal secretary Saeed Mehdi conveyed it to me that since it was an internal disciplinary affair of the army, I should accept the proposal for his sacking. So, I grudgingly agreed to it.

GENERAL USMANI HAD AGREED

Everybody was obeying the prime minister's orders, then where did the mistake occur? Where did the planning go wrong?

Nawaz Sharif: Karachi Corps Commander General Usmani had agreed to take General Musharraf into custody as a retired army chief. He was informed that General Zia-ud-Din had been appointed as the new army chief. He was told to receive General Musharraf as a retired army chief and take him to a rest house. He was fully aware of the order and in response to it he had said the order would be acted upon. Now I do not know what happened to him after leaving the corps headquarters for the airport or why he changed his mind.

General Musharraf writes in his book that once you ordered plane's diversion to India. Was it pertinent to send your army chief to an enemy country?

Nawaz Sharif: This is altogether incorrect. I had just desired the plane landed at Nawab Shah so that in the meantime the chain of army command could change without any conspiracy, conflict, or infighting. What was wrong in me so desiring? It was the pilot himself who had said the plane could land in Ahmadabad, India also. I had not at all ordered the plane landed in India. However, I did want the plane to land at Nawab Shah.

How much did you know General Tariq Pervez? What was the reality of the news about your meeting with him?

Nawaz Sharif: Tariq Pervez had never met me directly. His cousin Raja Nadir Pervez was a minister in my government and he had been meeting me time and again. I knew that Tariq Pervez was quite worried about termination of his career and I was apprised of his worries.

General Musharraf says in his book that the PML-Q was formed under his auspices. However, here arises a question as to why your companions left you so hurriedly.

Nawaz Sharif: It is in fact a charge sheet against him, which he himself has pleaded guilty to, that despite being a government servant he has been patronizing one political party and breaking others. Is it pertinent to do so constitutionally, legally and morally? Can an army chief do such things? As for the desertion, many people have switched sides because of blackmailing and threats. It has happened in every military dictator's rule. When the dictator goes, the turncoats' party meets the same fate, as did the Convention League. And the PML-Q is no exception. The politicians who side with the violators of the constitution should be barred from politics.



BACK HOME AFTER THE SECOND DEPORTATION

Nawaz Sharif's dramatic comeback on 26th November is a new mystery in the political career of the former Prime Minister. It is quite revealing to hear his explanation about the whole episode. Earlier, I happened to be in London during the All Parties Conference (7th and 8th July 2007) and observed the proceedings of the event with keen interest. I had the opportunity to talk to Mian Nawaz Sharif during the Conference even though he had a very hectic schedule. The formation of the new opposition parties' alliance -- All Parties Democratic Movement (APDM) -- and the likely weakening of the ARD as a consequence to the formation of the APDM were also discussed in detail. Nawaz Sharif announced 10th September as his return date to Pakistan after Supreme Court of Pakistan allowed him to do so while declaring invalid his December 2000 exile agreement with the government of Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif did come to Pakistan despite Lebanese Saad Hariri's two London meetings with him and his strong worded joint press conference with Saudi intelligence chief Prince Muqrrian bin Abdul Aziz, asking him not to stage a come back. I managed to talk to him in Jeddah and then in Lahore and have updated the latest situation. Following are the

excerpts of the three short interviews (London-July 2007, Jeddah- October 2007, Lahore-December 2007)

(Interview-London)

WHY APDM?

Q: What made you to form the APDM (All Parties Democratic Movement) when you were already a part of ARD (Alliance for Restoration of Democracy) along with Pakistan Peoples Party?

Nawaz Sharif: My party and I have tried our level best to convince the PPP and its chairperson for the need of convening All Parties Conference at the earliest in order to unite all the Opposition. But PPP's response was lukewarm. We delayed the Conference for almost eight months to bring the Peoples Party on board. Then the PPP leadership violated the Charter of Democracy by holding power sharing dialog with a military dictator, against the very spirit of the Charter that was signed in London.

(Telephonic Interview-Jeddah)

DEAL FOR 10 YEARS

You have been denying having struck any deal with the Musharraf regime since you left Pakistan. What is your stance after a clear statement by Saad Hariri and Prince Muqarran bin Abdul Aziz that they were the ones who had brokered a deal with the Pakistan government that led to your release in December 2000?

Nawaz Sharif: I still insist that there was no deal whatsoever signed with the Pakistan government. There was an understanding between the government of Saudi Arabia and our family. I never disclosed this because this was also part of the understanding and even otherwise there was involvement of a friendly country. Though understanding stated that I have to stay out of Pakistan for 10 years but Prince Abdullah even at that time had agreed that I am still young and cannot be thrown out of politics for such a long time. It was verbally agreed that this time period will be less than 5 years but even during these five years we had to be allowed to go abroad. But you must know that we were not even allowed by the Musharraf regime to come to Pakistan with the dead body of our father, Mian Muhammad Sharif. I stick to my stance that I did not strike any deal

with General Musharraf and I will never do so in future as well. The Supreme Court of Pakistan has already vindicated my stance that there was no deal involved and I cannot be kept out of Pakistan.

Some people think that your return on 10th September was premature.

Nawaz Sharif: It was call of the duty and I had to go to Pakistan to prove that there was no deal whatsoever. As soon as Supreme Court of Pakistan gave its verdict that I was free to come to Pakistan, I immediately decided about my return. Had I delayed my return, I would have shrunk from my national duty to fight against the Musharraf dictatorship.

Why did you left Shahbaz Sharif behind though you had earlier announced to take him along?

Nawaz Sharif: Didn't my decision prove right? I had smelled something wrong though I was sure that after the decision of the Supreme Court no one would dare deporting me this time. However, the fact remains that the military dictators are prone to violating the Constitution so they don't care about any court decisions.

DEPORTATION

Were you expecting deportation other than arrest?

Nawaz Sharif: I was expecting my arrest but not deportation. Because I thought that after the Supreme Court of Pakistan's decision, the regime won't go to the extent of deportation. Even otherwise, the government officials lied to me and announced on the megaphone at the Islamabad airport that they were arresting me. However, it later transpired that they were actually dispatching me to Saudi Arabia. They deceived the whole nation and me. The government authorities have humiliated the apex court's decision and dishonored a twice-elected Prime minister of Pakistan. In a recent CNN survey, 80 percent of the Americans have condemned my forced deportation to Saudi Arabia.

(Interview - Lahore)

SURPRISE COMEBACK

Political observers believe that Saudi Government was angry on your effort to come to Pakistan on 10th September 2007. How were you able to woo them?

Nawaz Sharif: It is not a matter of wooing them or any body. Saudi Arabian Government was forced by General Musharraf to exert pressure on me in order to stop my return on 10th September. Shah Abdullah, king of Saudi Arabia loves Pakistan and the wishes of the people of Pakistan are very dear to him. He has always expressed extreme love for my family and me.

DEAL OR NO DEAL

Some say you were allowed to come back to Pakistan on certain conditions. What sort of deal have you struck?

Nawaz Sharif: Suhail Sahib! You know I don't believe in deals. Saudi Government and King Abdullah never put any conditions on me. Had I struck some deal, how could I have been deciding the matters myself so freely? If we boycott the polls, it will be our own decision and even if we participate in the election that will be our own decision as well.

You met Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto the other day in Islamabad but somehow ARD and APDM do not seem to be in line with each other?

Nawaz Sharif: Once again I have tried my level best. Mohtarma has left for Dubai without finalization of the Charter of Demands. We have differences with each other on the cut off date of the Charter of Demands. APDM wants this date before the election while she wants the cut off date soon after the election. Restoration of Judiciary is another issue where we don't see eye to eye with each other. She does not want this issue to be part of the Charter of Demands. It would have been much better if democratic forces had united against the dictator. But unfortunately it does not seem to materialize. We also may join the electoral race though we would have preferred to be out of this petty exercise without the Restoration of Judiciary.



DIALOG WITH
SHAHBAZ SHARIF

- Why could I not land in Pakistan?
- What was the real story?
- What was the deal?
- Big problems
- Reformation of Judiciary
- Assault on the Supreme Court
- Gap between the rich and the poor
- I am a socialist.
- Childhood fights.
- Affection of Nawaz Sharif.
- Respect for father.
- Contacts with General Musharraf.
- I was kept uninformed.
- The problem of education.
- Compromise with army.
- Personal thoughts.

Interviews and discussions conducted on different occasions in different countries with Main Shahbaz Sharif, the former chief minister of Punjab). The report consisting of the details of the meetings and discussion with him in Jeddah (September 2001), New York (July 2003), and London (June 2004, April 2006)

MEET SHAHBAZ SHARIF

- Generals had no objection to my return but Chaudharies got frightened
- No deal was made with the government of Pakistan. However, an accord was concluded between our family and the Saudi government
- From Saudi Arabia I called General Musharraf's office but got no response
- The diplomat who renewed my passport was reprimanded
- I, Nawaz Sharif, Husain Nawaz and Abbas Sharif, signed the accord with Saudi Arabia
- The contact with the government was limited only to a letter that Nawaz Sharif wrote to President Tarar
- It pains me that Nawaz Sharif did not take me into confidence on General Musharraf's dismissal
- There should be dialog with the army. On this point I differ with Nawaz Sharif

- Let past mistakes be forgotten; I am ready to apologise for the country's sake, if I have hurt somebody
- How can you win Kashmir if there is hunger and poverty in the country?
- Defense budget should be discussed in the parliament; transparency in the army's affairs would better its image
- In the childhood I would often quarrel with Nawaz Sharif but now I respect him like father
- Nawaz Sharif does not like open criticism; he has to be given a veiled counsel
- Nawaz Sharif is very kind to me; he fulfils my desires even going out of the way
- There is no harm in even opting for judicial activism to make judiciary independent

WHY I COULD NOT LAND IN PAKISTAN

Q. You came from London but you were not allowed to land in Pakistan. Had you anticipated that?

Shahbaz Sharif: The Supreme Court of Pakistan had ruled that there was no case whatsoever against me; there was no legal hurdle to my going to Pakistan. I think generals had no objection but the Chaudhary family felt threatened. They fully opposed my entry into Pakistan and made it sure I did not land in my country.

WHAT WAS THE REAL STORY?

What was the inside story? Were there any secret talks?

Shahbaz Sharif: No, no such thing. There was no legal obstacle. I was not allowed to land in Pakistan just due to political rivalry.

You went out of Saudi Arabia for treatment but some people say you had had some deal with the government or you had gone to America with the permission of the Pakistan government?

Shahbaz Sharif: No, there was no deal at all. The government of Pakistan kept trying until the last to stop me from going to London but when the Saudi government learnt that my ailment had entered a dangerous stage and that I had no time to lose, it, too, put in its bit. The Saudi government was even considering issuing me a Saudi passport if Pakistani authorities did not give me out a passport. I also met the consul general of Pakistan in Jeddah. I spent two weeks in the task.

I also thought of calling up General Musharraf to tell him the matter was serious and the dangerous disease could take my life. Well, I rang up General Musharraf's office but I received no response from there. I told them I was seriously ill. Being a Pakistani I had the right to get my passport renewed for it was neither a political issue nor was it an issue of give and take. It was an issue of my health, my life and death, and so, I might be connected to General Musharraf. But I got no reply until 1.00am. Disappointed, I again requested the consul general of Pakistan in Jeddah to issue me a new passport for the old had expired. He asked me to send it to him. I sent in the documents with urgent fees and right after half an hour I had my new passport with me. Then I phoned the Saudi authorities and got my visa stamped.

Did the gentleman issue the passport on his own or with the consent of the Pakistan government?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes, when I sent in my family's documents, he told me he had been rebuked by Islamabad as to why he had issued me the passport. I am saying this for the record. Let me say one more thing. I believe in 'forget and forgive'. Pakistan cannot afford hatred and squabbling anymore. Pakistan cannot afford settling personal scores anymore. Mistakes and excesses should not be repeated; we must move ahead with a large heart and open mind. We must keep Pakistan's future in mind. If we want to eradicate poverty and solve the problems of the country, we must set aside hatred and malice to move ahead. If we think we will avenge handcuffing or the excesses, it will be wrong. Such revenge politics has been causing irreparable loss to Pakistan for the last 56 years.

Does it mean forgetting whatever the present regime has done to you?

Shahbaz Sharif: I do not say so. I have just given you an example that even if I have done anybody any wrong I am ready to say sorry. We must forget such things for Pakistan's sake.

Your exile deal is a secret yet. The Government of Pakistan says you were sent to Saudi Arabia under a deal whereas you say no agreement was struck at all. What is the truth?

Shahbaz Sharif: You have been meeting Mian Sahib. Haven't you asked this question from him?

This question has been asked from him separately.

Shahbaz Sharif: Well, I tell you the truth. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia like his predecessors loves the people of Pakistan very much. He has brotherly relations with Mian Nawaz Sharif. He wanted to take us to Jeddah and keep us as his guests. Otherwise, you know Bhutto was hanged, Junejo was toppled, Benazir Bhutto was dismissed and Nawaz Sharif, too, was overthrown and a sentenced to 20-year jail. But courtesy the Saudi government efforts, we went there. And as a Muslim we believe that without His call nobody can visit Makkah and Madina. It was God Almighty's special blessing and favor that we went there.

So, it so happened!

Shahbaz Sharif: So says Nelson Mandela, how can somebody sitting behind the bars strike a deal.

Is it part of the deal that your family members cannot leave Saudi Arabia for anywhere and cannot return to Pakistan?

Shahbaz Sharif: No, not at all. I must finish it first. I have said it several times that we are not here forever, and to God we will return. Once I watched Brig. Rashid Qureshi [then the military spokesman and now the president's spokesman] say something incorrect on television. Although etiquettes of a guest required me not to, I could not resist rebutting his claim. I appeared on a private TV channel and said the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan was misinforming people. I said I had begged I would prefer to stay behind the bars and fight the false cases lodged against me than leaving for abroad. I asked the authorities as to why I was being sent abroad against my will. They replied that if I refused, no member of

the Sharif family would be allowed to go abroad. I challenged them to ask General Musharraf, General Ehsan and General Mehmood and then on oath say what they claimed was correct. If they say so, I am ready to face any punishment. I told them clearly whatever they had said. Now listen, the deal was struck with the Saudi government. Though I was not willing to go abroad, the deal bears my signature and those of Nawaz Sharif, Abbas Sharif and Hussain Nawaz. We four are the signatories but the deal was only between the Saudi government and us. We had not entered into any deal with the government of Pakistan as such.

So, you have not struck a deal with the government of Pakistan?

Shahbaz Sharif: No, not at all. It is not a Pakistani government; please call it a military regime.

Is it resolved that you couldn't return to Pakistan for a specific period?

Shahbaz Sharif: It's only an understanding but I don't want to go into its details. The only link with the government of Pakistan was a letter Mian Nawaz Sharif had written to President Tarar and that's all. The letter has now been published in the newspapers.

What is your opinion about this affair?

Shahbaz Sharif: Whatever I have said is enough.

BIG PROBLEMS

You have been the chief minister of the biggest province of Pakistan. You must have been thinking and dreaming about Pakistan. In your exile what is that worries you the most?

Shahbaz Sharif: Unfortunately our country is mired in problems. These problems have been stacking up for the last 56 years. If revolutionary steps are not taken against economic injustices and police highhandedness, these ills will ruin our society. Look how big is the societal gap between our rich and poor. A small minority is eating into the resources for 140 million people. Most of our people are denied their due and their fundamental rights and usurpers are squandering the resources.

So, economic injustice is a bomb ticking to explode anytime. Similarly our judicial system is getting weakened day by day. I won't go into details but I am sorry to say some of our judges have

weakened our judiciary. No doubt we have some very able and honest judges. I do not name them but some corrupt judges have blemished our judicial system. Besides, some political leaders and dictators too served their own interests, which undermined judiciary. Similarly if Thana culture [coercing opponents through police] were not changed, all such things would spread like tumor causing irreparable loss to our country and the nation. It is high time the judiciary was strengthened.

REFORMATION OF JUDICIARY

How can judiciary be reformed?

Shahbaz Sharif: First of all we will have to restore judiciary's independence. We will have to gird it up against any pressure from the government and the army. Judges should be professionally competent so nobody could point a finger at their induction. The system of their appointment should be so foolproof that no political or military interference is possible. Government and opposition can jointly frame such a mechanism if they have love in their hearts for the country and the nation. To make judiciary free and sovereign, even judicial activism could be opted for some time.

But your government could not swallow the judicial activism that started in the days of justice Sajjad Ali Shah.

Shahbaz Sharif: Today I say that even if there is a short-term political loss, it will yield long-term benefits. Today our judiciary is so unreliable that foreign investors are not ready to invest in Pakistan for they are unsure about getting compensated for any loss caused by any change.

In power you never thought about judiciary's freedom. Any hurdle?

Shahbaz Sharif: Whether we erred or did the Peoples Party, we must frankly admit it and learn from our mistakes. And it won't be impertinent if I say we too made mistakes.

Mistakes, such as?

Shahbaz Sharif: Frankly as far as I know Mian Nawaz Sharif in his second term 1997-1999 did not recommend for appointment even a single judge on the basis of his liking and friendship. He had told me personally he did not interfere in the affairs of the judiciary.

However, it is us who had to face a very venomous propaganda over judiciary in the recent past.

ASSAULT ON THE SUPREME COURT

But Chaudhary Shujaat Hussain says that you as the Punjab chief minister had planned the assault on the Supreme Court. How about this allegation?

Shahbaz Sharif: I will respond honestly to this pointed question so that the people know the reality. It's just a slur that I had planned the assault on the Supreme Court. The court was hearing our case and so, our sympathizers, workers and other people kept pouring in raising slogans. But to say that Shahbaz Sharif planned it is just incorrect. First time in the country's history, a prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, appeared before the court and this evidences how highly he regarded the judiciary. Cutting it short, the Supreme Court had conducted two inquiries into the attack; one during our government ordered by Ajmal Mian, then the chief judge, which never faulted me. I could have told them several things myself but I did not want to confuse them.

But there was no word about me in the report. Well, one may say it so happened because I was the chief minister and I might have maneuvered the enquiry to keep my name out. But the second enquiry conducted during General Musharraf's regime, when I was in Landhi jail facing a false case of plane hijack, too did not prove me guilty. So what proof should I come up with to prove my innocence? What else can I say about the allegations against me? I cannot even think of being so mean as to plan an attack [on the Supreme Court]. I profess judiciary's respect and independence, which can make Pakistan a dignified country.

Now I tell you another incident regarding judiciary's respect. Once, General [Naseerullah] Babar (retired) accused me of receiving kickbacks in a deal with France and referred the matter to the Public Account Committee of the National Assembly. I was the chief minister then. I read it in the newspapers and decided to appear before the committee. I was asked to leave it at that, for General Babar was in the habit of making such statements. But I appeared before the committee and the allegation against me proved false. Isn't it enough to prove my truth that I faced the committee as a chief minister and proved not guilty? Now Chaudhary Shujaat, who is

leveling allegations against me, should look to himself; he abducted the assembly secretary.

When did it happen?

Shahbaz Sharif: It happened in 1993. Chaudhary Shujaat and his relatives had abducted the secretary of the assembly. No more details.

Please do tell us a bit more for you are talking about it first time. Apparently this abduction had benefited your party. You have kept silent over the incident for so long?

Shahbaz Sharif: I am not weighing it as such. I am just saying that it so happened, and that Chaudhary Shujaat and his relatives did it. I have come clean on the allegations leveled against me, now he too should do so.

GAP BETWEEN THE POOR AND THE RICH

You have been brought up in an industrial family. When you grew young you were a member of a rich family. How did you feel about the society then? Did you ever feel the economic gap with the poor strata of the society?

Shahbaz Sharif: Until I had entered politics, I would also conduct myself as a rich businessman. I was not aware of the problems the country faced, the extent of economic injustice and the needs of the people. However, I must say that my father Mian Sharif raised us in such a manner that his principles guided us then and are steering us now. My parents had opened their eyes in abject poverty. But hard work made my father a big businessman through the Ittefaq Foundries in the sixties. It was special grace of God that my father got rewarded for his hard work. From the days in poverty to this day my father always told us to lead a simple life; pomposity is ignorance, and God does not like it. He also advised us to share blessings of God with those in need. By the grace of God, we have been setting up mills after mills providing employment to thousands people, and the country's industrial sector is progressing and the national treasury is getting revenue. My father used to call it worship. God has sent us with a specific objective of working hard and serving people.

Were your thoughts about using a small car or about making other economical choices different from those of your family?

Shahbaz Sharif: I started using a small car at the end of 1985 or the beginning of 1986. Before this I had been using a Japanese luxury vehicle, perhaps the only one in Pakistan. It priced 400,000 rupees whereas in those days normal vehicles were very cheap. I tell you as to how the change occurred in me. When Mian Nawaz Sharif contested the non-party elections, I would canvass for him for about two hours in the evening daily in the old city areas like Gawal Mandi and Lunda Bazaar. By the grace of God, Mian Nawaz Sharif won the elections and became the chief minister [of the Punjab province]. As he got busy, the voters would remind me of the promises we had made and ask me for solution of their problems.

Before this, I had no interest in politics at all. I disliked it very much. But I was destined to be a politician. I fixed two hours a day for the voters and then this time kept increasing. Once, after *Taraviah* [voluntary night prayers during the fasting month of Ramadan] I went to help a widow who lived on the Nisbat Road in Lahore. Khawaja Riaz Mehmood also accompanied me. When I entered the widow's house, I saw a weak and skinny young girl lying on a cot in a small room and another small girl by the woman's side. I asked the woman as to who was lying on the cot. She told me it was her young daughter, suffering from tuberculosis and the younger girl too was her daughter. I asked her as to how she was earning her livelihood. She said she sewed clothes earning about eight hundred rupees a month. Because of the Eid [Muslim festival] clientele, she would earn about one thousand rupees. I asked her as to how she was making ends meet with so meager an amount of money. She said, "I pay 150 rupees for the house rent, half the real rent which the kind-hearted landlord has discounted on pitying my poverty. Some of the money is spent on the treatment of my daughter and the rest is for running the household." Believe you me I took it with a shudder. I could not sleep the whole night. I am telling you the truth.

The next day I went to my office and sent a letter to my father that I won't use the luxury vehicle anymore. I returned it to the company for use. Since then I have not used any luxury vehicle.

You only returned the vehicle or you also brought about any other change in your life?

Shahbaz Sharif: I was very hard working. I used to monitor and look after everything. Then for three years before joining the politics, I would attend to people's problems. Tackling with these problems changed my life; I started feeling people's pain.

I AM A SOCIALIST

Do you consider yourself a socialist?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes I do; rather every good society must be socialist. Islam itself has advocated social welfare. Socialist is not a monster; we call social welfare claimant a socialist. Has any system other than Islam given a social welfare program? Islam does not say rich must go richer and poor poorer. Look at the system in China it is closer to Islam.

Socialism is not acceptable with reference to Islam?

Shahbaz Sharif: Islam and Socialism merged will yield a complete Islamic system. God's eternal message is: **"Give the people deliverance give them their due"**

Many Islamic scholars do not accept the ideology of Socialism. To them snatching wealth from people is wrong.

Shahbaz Sharif: Inequality does not mean that if A has ten rupees B must also have ten rupees.

Isn't it quite radical? If a rich man pays Zakat or gives alms, traditional scholars won't agree to the interpretation of raising any objection to his wealth.

Shahbaz Sharif: I repeat words of the Quran: And they ask you, 'what ought they to spend? Say: What is superfluous'. Here *Zakat* is not being discussed.

Perhaps not many religious scholars will agree with your interpretation.

Shahbaz Sharif: I think the authentic scholars, whom I respect most, won't differ with this interpretation. And such scholars are not small in number in Pakistan. The scholars you are talking about are fake, who are backing and protecting this hackneyed system. They are doing it for their personal interests. They have nothing to do with Islam. Nor do they know the importance of Islamic system or thought. No system in the world offers more liberal, open and progressive system of life than does Islam. Examples of the days of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and [the second caliph of Islam] Hazrat Omer (God be pleased with him) are before you. I mean to say no system other than Islam has given so many welfare programs. Respectfully, I beg to say that if some religious party's program does

not fit this welfare agenda, it is neither Islamic nor people's, then it is nothing; it is only serving interests of the west. People are waiting for the bus at a bus stop. There are doctors, patients, professors, student – all are there and the bus does not come. And a large vehicle speeds past them making fun of their helplessness. Should we promote such a system? Had the Quaid-i-Azam and his companions asked us to implement such Islam in the country? Are these things according to the principles of Islam? No, not at all.

I want to understand the point of difference between your thought and that of the religious parties of Pakistan?

Shahbaz Sharif: This you must ask from them for I cannot answer this question. This is how I think. And the scholars, well aware of the religion, cannot think differently.

CHILDHOOD FIGHTS

Was your childhood like that of common children or different from theirs?

Shahbaz Sharif: I passed my childhood like other children. I was very sporty, used to fly kites and play *Guli Danda* and *Pitho Garam*, all sorts of games. We used to fight with each other. We used to watch films stealthily from the parents, especially from our father and get drubbed. I passed my childhood like other children. I was as naughty as are other children in their childhood.

Were you more intelligent than other children?

Shahbaz Sharif: No, not really. However, parents' strictness regarding our education did result in us giving attention to our studies along with sports. I got scholarship in the matriculation examination due to which I got admission in the Government College, Lahore. I studied there up to the part one of my master's in Economics. I left studies after the Ittefaq Foundries' nationalization for I wanted to help my father rebuild ourselves. However, I regret I could not complete my education.

Have you been having cordial relations with Mian Nawaz Sharif since your childhood? How did you conduct yourself during childhood?

Shahbaz Sharif: Believe me we used to fight quite a lot. I used to be beaten and sometimes I happened to beat him as well. Parents always advised me to give respect to my elder brother. However, when I

reached the matriculation level I started behaving sanely. Since then I respect him a lot. I do express my own views on certain issues but remain within the limits of respect. Even now he sometimes snubs me, shows his anger. He has every right to do so for he is my elder brother. I respect him like a father.

AFFECTION OF NAWAZ SHARIF

How much does Mian Nawaz Sharif trust you? As you say you give him much respect, how does he behave with you?

Shahbaz Sharif: He has no rival. He is a very affectionate brother.

Any example of this behavior?

Shahbaz Sharif: He takes care of me in all respects; whenever he feels I am in need of something, he always meets it even if he has to go out of the way.

In case of a tiff, who takes the lead in squaring it off?

Shahbaz Sharif: I do it.

How do you do it?

Shahbaz Sharif: A couple of days after our argument I go to him and say sorry. Once at the dining table we exchanged hot words over some issue. He rebuked me and I felt very bad about it. For three or four days, we did not speak to each other except for the salutation on the dining table. One day my mother asked Nawaz Sharif at the meals as to why he was not on talking terms with me. At that time little Mariam Nawaz Sharif came into my lap and said to her father weeping, "Dad! You've been unfair to my uncle" thereupon we embraced each other. And so ended our tiff.

Does Mian Nawaz Sharif seek your counsel?

Shahbaz Sharif: I always seek his counsel. But he is very shy. He is a God fearing man. He always cares for the poor. He is the most affectionate and kind-hearted man in the family. His parents' blessings are always with him for he serves his parents very much. It is but the result of his parents' prayers that he became the chief minister of the Punjab province and the prime minister of the country and people give him much respect. He does not ask for advice directly. He has to be convinced into deciding something.

How do you do that?

Shahbaz Sharif: In fact, he does not like to be criticized in the open. If he is indirectly or privately told that so and so policy is not good, or that such and such thing should be done in such and such way, he does listen and accept it.

You must have mastered this art.

Shahbaz Sharif: (Laughing) No, I am just a novice; my advice does not have any weight, for 'no one is hero to his own valet'. Anyhow I used to tell him wrong from right. He took very revolutionary steps; he started a great plan like Motorway; he introduced the Yellow Cab Scheme and granted land to the landless tenants. We used to ask him to keep good people around him. The method of counsel, go and get into his discussion. Since he does not ask for opinion, bring him to the subject you want to advise on and say whatever you want to say, albeit casually. This is the method I would adopt.

RESPECT FOR FATHER

Many people criticize your family saying that even in politics you act on the advice of your father, brother and kin. How far is it true and what is the philosophy behind it? Some people say you never made a political decision without consulting your father. How does he qualify for making every decision?

Shahbaz Sharif: Everybody has a father, everyone respect his father and so do I. However, I have never seen as hardworking, compassionate, caring and philanthropic a human being as he was. Not that I am saying this out of emotions, I am telling you the truth that I have never seen a man with as much virtues as him. A human being cannot be flawless, only God possesses all qualities but He had blessed my father with so much worth.

I tell you another incident. In 1972, the Bhutto government nationalized our foundries. In the night our whole family sat together. We all were very worried. My father said we must pray to God, seek pardon for our sins and start our business afresh. We asked him as to how less than 24 hours after the nationalization we could even think of starting a new business. We had been deprived of whatever we had, the vehicles, the bank balance, the company's assets, everything. But he said we should remain patient and determined and not lose heart for God would help us. My father did not give up and this be the first incident in the history of Pakistan, rather that of the world, that within a span of only 18 months we had established six factories. My father never thought of factories in terms

of profit and loss but he wanted to serve the country and the nation through his business.

In those days my father had his first heart attack, and so, we wanted him to take rest but one day early in the morning at 7.00 he asked for the car and bade us to accompany him to the office. I said our office had been nationalized but he said we could go to the office of our ice factory in Urdu Bazaar where one man dealt with the cash. We dragged our feet [for there was no proper office there] but my father said we must change with the time. We sat in the car and I still remember that when we reached the Bank Square [on the Mall in Lahore] my father asked me as to what I was thinking about. I said, "No, nothing" He said he knew what I was thinking about. He said, "You are thinking we have been deprived of everything. Aren't you? Now you both listen to me carefully; whatever we had was God's entrustment, it was legitimate wealth. Now seek His forgiveness. He will give us double what we previously had." Tears welled up in my eyes. I thought we had not contributed much to our business for it was all but the result of hard work of our father, yet he did not lose his heart and was telling us to keep our chin up.

On June 16, 1979 when our six factories had started production, I said to my father that seven years ago he had said that God would give us double the business we had, so today it was a reality. He said it was all by the special grace of Allah Almighty. I have never seen such a hardworking and resolute person in my life, and so, shouldn't we have had his advice. He was our father. Won't he give us the right kind of advice? Today, I want to bring one thing on record. When we joined politics, he said to us, "Nawaz, Shahbaz, listen to me carefully. You are not born politicians. There are people more educated, more intelligent and wealthier than you in the world. If God has showered upon you His special blessings, you must pay Him gratitude by serving people, working for their welfare and solving their problems and not return home until they are satisfied. Keep them happy." He said, "When ten thousand workers worked in my factory, I used to thank God for His grace that I had been a medium for their employment and so earning their prayers. So Nawaz Sharif, you have been made head over 140 million people serve them and work for their welfare for our deliverance through you." This was the philosophy of my father. Now tell me whether seeking advice from such a person was wrong.

I want to know whether your father was a political wizard; people would object only to his advice on political affairs?

Shahbaz Sharif: He was a worldly-wise person. He had a very deep and mature thinking. He was a man of principles and liked principles to be followed. He tried his best not to let our terms with president Ghulam Ishaq Khan go sour. He asked Mian Nawaz Sharif not to speak about the 8th amendment if he had no power to do away with it. Then whatever had to happen did happen. When my father saw Mr. Khan at it, he asked Nawaz Sharif to put up. Likewise, when Benazir Bhutto came to Lahore as the prime minister, my father advised Nawaz Sharif to go and receive her as the chief minister. Mian Nawaz Sharif said intelligence agencies had advised him against receiving her lest he should be booed but my father said he must large-heartedly welcome her in the larger interest and honor of the country. He bade him to invite her to meal or tea and present her the shawl according to our traditions and say to her to forget bitterness of the past for by the grace of God she had become the prime minister of the country and he the chief minister, so they should work together for the prosperity of Pakistan and its people. Exactly these were the words my father had said to Nawaz Sharif.

My father was innovative in business but his life style was very simple. His lesson for simplicity echoes in our ears even today. An owner of factories worth billions of rupees and yet living a simple life, isn't it amazing. Then he set up two of Pakistan's biggest trust hospitals investing millions of rupees. So, can't a patriotic person who has been born in poverty and who has worked hard as an architect of industrial development, be consulted for the country's interests and development.

What did he advise you on General Musharraf?

Shahbaz Sharif: I had invited General Pervez Musharraf home on my father's behalf. There my father told him that he had taught his children to keep good ties with the army. A precedent should be set of good relationship between the government and the army. There must be an understanding between the army and the government in the country's interests. Not once but on several occasions, I told General Musharraf that since Nawaz Sharif was a shy man, I could play an intermediary between them. My aim was to keep contact between them alive in the larger interest of Pakistan.

CONTACTS WITH GENERAL MUSHARRAF

*What type of talks did you conduct with General Musharraf?
Would you just deliver the messages of Nawaz Sharif to him or
you had a stand of your own as well?*

Shahbaz Sharif: In fact army has been ruling the country for 28 years directly and for the rest of the period from behind the screen. It is an open secret. No two opinions about this. There should be coordination with this institution in the best interest of the nation. For this purpose I tried to play a bridge between the Nawaz Sharif government and General Musharraf. Whatever talks I would have with General Jehangir Karamat and General Musharraf, I always briefed Nawaz Sharif on them.

*Realistically speaking, you failed to bridge the gap because the
talks broke down and the military took over?*

Shahbaz Sharif: I don't think so. I tried my best but when Mian Nawaz Sharif used his constitutional right, things had gone awry. Kargil had happened. The Grand Alliance was also up to pitting the army and the civilian government against each other, so that the system would collapse and there could be a martial law. The alliance was all out to regain power. And so, it was necessary to keep contacts alive avoiding any clash so that the system could keep running.

*There was a general impression you and Nawaz Sharif held
different views regarding working relationship with the army and
it caused a conflict?*

Shahbaz Sharif: Well, two persons can have different opinions on something but their goal is the same. Through the contacts I only wished that there be no misunderstanding between the military and the civilian government and if there was any they should talk it out.

*You would meet General Musharraf quite often then; did you ever
smell the army could take over?*

Shahbaz Sharif: Ask General Musharraf whether he was to take over or not. I tell you the truth that I had been earnestly trying to mitigate the situation in the larger interest of the country. If anybody was so planning I cannot say anything about it.

But you must have assessed the whole situation.

Shahbaz Sharif: We all were trying to come out of the difficult situation. From both the sides the aim was to avert any mishap. Obviously some people would snitch Mian Sahib and General Musharraf differently. And Kargil made the situation very tense. Nawaz Sharif was being told one thing and General Musharraf the other. We tried hard to rectify the situation.

I WAS KEPT UNINFORMED

You say you had been visiting General Musharraf as a messenger of Nawaz Sharif but at the same time you say you were not in know of General Musharraf's dismissal.

Shahbaz Sharif: It is true. I had no knowledge about the prime minister's October 12 action.

This is quite serious an issue that your prime minister brother did not take you into confidence on the most important decision of his life. Wasn't it mistrust in you?

Shahbaz Sharif: It is true that I as a younger brother felt my heart heavy on not being taken into confidence while taking such a big decision. After the takeover we were kept at separate places in Rawalpindi and Murree and so, we could no meet and talk to each other. We were kept in isolation; no sunlight, no newspapers, window panes covered with paper and knew about the outside world. Then we met during the trial in Karachi. I asked Mian Nawaz Sharif as to why he kept me unaware of the decision to dismiss General Musharraf though as a younger brother I gave him respect like a father. He said he knew I respected him like a father but he hid the decision from me for he understood I would not let him do so.

Why hasn't there been a compromise with the Peoples Party? And if you get to rule the country again, what will be your first step?

Shahbaz Sharif: A democratic government should firm up that both the ruling party and the opposition shall not allow the army to take over in any case.

You were part of it or not, what was the deal?

Shahbaz Sharif: I had refused to come out of the prison; to this stand witness some generals and other inmates. I had no knowledge of the deal whatsoever; I was exiled against my will.

THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION

What is the problem of education in Pakistan? The standard of education is declining. What is its cause?

Shahbaz Sharif: I think every government has given very little attention to education. A society where crime is attempted through politics, where nepotism and amassing of wealth become culture, education is ignored there. And so, we are hovering around 40 percent literacy rate, while even our neighboring countries have a much higher literacy rate; in Sri Lanka it is 90 percent and in Bangladesh more than 60 percent. Unfortunately, in our country education has not been given the status it deserves, though society is complete without it. Most of the ills come from lack of education. Had we all been educated, how police could resort to high handedness to anybody. We have wasted our 56 years. India last year exported information technology worth eight billion dollars while our total trade amounts to 10 billion dollars only. We have not yet crossed the initial stages. Instead of getting into the blame game, we should immediately plan short, medium and long-term revolutionary programs in education using all our resources. If we can abolish the quota system, how can't we educate the entire nation in the next five years? We can do it. It's doable. Where is there is a will there is a way.

Education is the biggest issue of the nation. We need to improve our educational system on war footing. Education needs funds the most; education needs attention and energy the most. I believe that when the entire nation receives education, it will be possible to solve our problems.

You sought army's help in identifying ghost schools during your rule. Don't you think it paved the way for the army to be directly involved in the civilian affairs? To some people it was then decided that the civilian government was unable to do important tasks?

Shahbaz Sharif: It is an important and pointed question. My associates had advised me against involving the army for it would establish that the civilian government was unable to handle such affairs and the army would feel we could not work without their help and so, it would pave the way for the army to take over. But I was determined to locate the ghost schools eating up billions of rupees of the nation. Chaudhary Iqbal, an experienced and positive-minded person, was the education minister. I asked him if he was ready to do

it. He took up the challenge and promised to complete the task in two months. Having consumed even an extended time and funds, he ended up giving up the campaign for to him it had rotten to the core. Collusion among different education officials hampered the drive against ghost schools and teachers.

Thereupon I asked Chaudhary Iqbal whether I could act the way I wanted to. He replied in yes (This is on record. Chaudhary Iqbal is now a PML-Q minister he will not rebut it). I asked General Jehangir Karamat, the then army chief, for help because it was through education that we could progress and rub shoulders with Japan and the US. He invited me to a meeting. I met him and briefed him on the issue. The general was a very thoughtful and meticulous person, he said he would consider the proposal and then let me know about the decision. I pursued the matter for three months. I met him again. He told me he had referred the case to a committee for consideration. In the end he decided to launch the exercise with minimum expenditure. Thousands of army personnel were assigned this task in the Punjab and they did deliver. Thousand of schools and teachers and even students were found ghost. Buildings were there, but millions of rupees had been siphoned off. They had turned gambling dens. Now tell me what the harm was in seeking the army's help to curb such a heinous crime.

To stop an evil if a certain method fails, you must try another one. And then if the army helped us in a peaceful way, it did not mean we were unable to do the task. The army had come to help us and not gone to the borders for fighting a war. The army is called in to cope with a natural calamity or disaster. And if we were facing an emergency situation in education and we invited in the army to deal with it, what harm was in it. I did not call in the army to fight off the booti [the use of unfair means in examinations] mafia. If I called in the troops for the crackdown on ghost schools, I did not do it to please the army. Yes, we did invite them in for the construction of roads, because we wanted to take on the malpractices of contractors. In collusion with the government officials and politicians, contractor would eat up 80 percent of the money and spend only the rest on roads. Only one spell of rain would wipe of such roads. To anticipate this, we called in the army. And then army has a separate unit for roads, which works under the Frontier Works Organization and National Logistic Cell. In the army delivering, there was a how-to-do-it lesson for the contractors. And you see, the contractors then worked even better. So, there is a time when you have to make

certain decisions in the national interest. It never means army's involvement in civilian affairs. The army did its assigned task in accordance with the norms of the civilian government. And so, I am not sorry for any decision of mine. Rather I think I got a splendid work done by the army; I am proud of it.

COMPROMISE WITH ARMY

What was the real story of General Jehangir Karamat's resignation?

Shahbaz Sharif: I have already narrated the details with respect to Mian Nawaz Sharif. I need not say anything else.

While you want a compromise with the army, Mian Nawaz Sharif rules it out; isn't it an open difference of opinion between you?

Shahbaz Sharif: Well, listen to me; when I talk of compromise I mean one with the political parties.

So you don't talk of a compromise with the army?

Shahbaz Sharif: Mr. Warraich, we are not at odds with the army, and so, who would we patch up with. To defend the country's frontiers is the army and to run the government and serve the people are political parties and therefore, no chance of a clash of interests. The clash is only on the fact that the army has ruled the country for 28 years. We have to make them understand by argument that the army is not meant to run the country's administration but to defend its borders.

The political stalemate has thrown up two standpoints, one yours for negotiations with the army and the other that of Nawaz Sharif dubbing such an exercise futile.

Shahbaz Sharif: No, he has not opposed the dialog. As for the compromise, I have already said it must be concluded with other political parties and politicians in the national interest.

In Pakistan there is an impression that you want dialog with the army while Nawaz Sharif opposes it?

Shahbaz Sharif: I have already explained my position. I do honor his views. However, my standpoint is only mine that there should be dialog.

So you have opposite views?

Shahbaz Sharif: You may say we have different opinions on dialog with the army.

What were your hobbies during the college life?

Shahbaz Sharif: Nawaz Sharif and I played cricket very enthusiastically. I was a bathroom singer but Nawaz Sharif had a good voice. He has not sung anything for the last 15 years but believe you me his voice matches that of Muhammad Rafi. If he flexes his cords even today, it seems as if Rafi has come alive. Then Nawaz Sharif and his sons recite the holy Quran very beautifully. He also sings the *Naat* very melodiously.

Whose songs do you like the most?

Shahbaz Sharif: I like Muhammad Rafi's songs very much. I am also fond of the ghazals sung by Mehdi Hassan and Lata Mangeshkar.

'Tum Zid To Kar Rehay Ho, Ham Kia Tumhein Sunaayain'

This ghazal of Mehdi Hassan's is very good.

What do you do in your leisure time?

Shahbaz Sharif: I am fond of reading books.

Any book that inspired you very much?

Shahbaz Sharif: Nelson Mandela's book "A Long Walk to Freedom" inspired me the most. In fact he had saved South Africa lest streams of blood would have flowed there.

How is your family life going?

Shahbaz Sharif: When I was engaged in business, my wife would always grumble that I did not spare time for the family. When I entered politics, the complaints doubled up. It is true I could not give time to my children but it is a blessing of God that they are on the right path because of good domestic atmosphere. They are getting good education and they are well aware of their values; they give respect to their elders and obey them.

You may be having tiffs with your wife, who among you is more quarrelsome?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes it does so happen occasionally but I pick up the tussle more.

Have you divorced your second wife?

Shahbaz Sharif: It's over now. We have separated.

You are short tempered perhaps you get easily irritable?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes I am a bit short tempered. I was called a man in a hurry when I was the chief minister. Ishaq Dar was by my side when I was operated upon. I asked him that if I survived I would thank God but if I passed away he should take my body to Pakistan at all costs. Thank God I survived such a serious illness. Only then I felt that I was called a man in hurry because of my workaholic nature but life is so uncertain. Anyhow it is God's grace that I am alive today.

Mian Nawaz Sharif has concluded the Lahore Declaration with India. How do you view Pakistan-India relations?

Shahbaz Sharif: Kashmir is a major cause of tension between India and Pakistan. Their relationships cannot be normalized without resolving this issue. Kashmiris must be given their fundamental right of self-determination in accordance with the UNO resolutions. India and Pakistan have fought three wars over Kashmir causing a huge loss. But war is not a solution. By the grace of God Pakistan became a nuclear power during the rule of Nawaz Sharif, which ensured Pakistan's security. And so, we should stick to our principled stand and should not compromise on it. Now the slogan of "Kashmir will become Pakistan", may God prove it true but 56 years have passed and it has not. If we do not mend our ways, what to say of 56 years, even 500 years will pass and Kashmir will not become a part of Pakistan. Why should Kashmir become our part? Are we a model to them that they get attracted to us?

So if Pakistan does not change its policies, Kashmir will not form a part of us even in 500 years.

Shahbaz Sharif: It will not. Can a society where there is cruelty in the police stations, a victim gets no relief, people go up against each other, poverty is on the up, rich is becoming richer and poor the poorer, and where might is right, be called a model one? Would you impress Kashmiris? Would they wish to live with you? They are human beings. They are well educated. God forbid, they are not deaf and dumb. How would they become a part of Pakistan even after seeing what is happening here? Germans did not let their defeat turn into disappointment. They put their heads down, worked hard for 50

years with honesty and integrity and made their economy strong. This made East Germany fall into the West Germans lap like a ripe fruit. Millions of young peoples with zeal and zest took the Berlin Wall to pieces. It so happened because of a strong economy. Had we followed the principles of hard work, bravery, honesty and truthfulness, instead of 56 years Kashmir would have been ours in five years only. And if we do not mend our ways now, Kashmir would not form a part of Pakistan even in 500 years.

Was the army at odds with you because of such proposals of yours on Kashmir issue?

Shahbaz Sharif: The army has fixed ideas about certain issues such as the Taliban's. The civilian government had nothing to do with the decision [of patronizing them]. However, the army strategy has gone with the wind. We should sometimes be flexible and open-minded. The world does monitor your actions for honesty, lawfulness and approach. So, we should put our own house in order first. We should think about making Pakistan a strong democracy, economy and society where people get justice and prosperity. How will a pauper conquer Kashmir? Who are we cheating? The world knows what we are doing.

Did Nawaz Sharif have a conflict with the army over it and was it the reason the Kargil event took place?

Shahbaz Sharif: I don't know the details. Mian Nawaz Sharif has spoken on this issue, and so have I.

Why don't you come clean on this? A few days ago Chaudhary Shujaat issued a statement that a colonel or a brigadier would brief Nawaz Sharif but he did not give attention. Then Pervez Musharraf himself briefed him. Mian Nawaz Sharif asked him what he was saying. Then General Musharraf took out his diary and said he had told him such and such thing on such and such dates. How far is it true?

Shahbaz Sharif: Look, Mian Nawaz Sharif is a known personality of Pakistan. What he has said must have said with responsibility. I would not participate in the meetings at the GHQ or the Prime Minister's House. Nor was I ever briefed on them. Nawaz Sharif has said the same thing about Kargil as I had already told you.

Did you differ with the army over Kashmir and Pakistan-India friendship?

Shahbaz Sharif: No, it was not so. Didn't Nawaz Sharif say that if he had differed with the army the situation would have gone worse? He, however, showed acumen. Anyhow certain things regarding Kargil are in my direct knowledge, which I won't divulge now for fear of deteriorating the situation.

Now let us talk politics a bit?

Shahbaz Sharif: Is there anything left? (Laughter) You are really grilling me.

Chaudhary Shujaat and Chaudhary Pervez Elahi say they have been ignored and mistreated during your rule?

Shahbaz Sharif: Mistreated? How?

Their houses were raided.

Shahbaz Sharif: This is unfair because we and they are in different parties. It does not behoove us well to trade allegations. For the last three years we have kept quiet but since you had asked a direct question about the Supreme Court, I have to answer it. It is absolutely incorrect to say that we harassed anybody. Chaudhary Shujaat had been the prime minister's closest associate. He respected him from the core of his heart. I am also convinced of Chaudhary Shujaat's nobility. However, it pained Mr. Sharif that instead of supporting him, Chaudhary Shujaat issued statements against him when he was in jail. He would very proudly say Chaudhary Shujaat was his best and dependable friend. Once Mr. Sharif quoted Chaudhary Shujaat as saying that he had been his associate in politics and he would quit politics if he was not there. Then if our government had not been toppled, Mr. Sharif was going to assign him Defense portfolio. You can judge from it how highly he regarded Chaudhary Shujaat and how close they were to one another. In the past also there had been a practice that if two or three brothers qualified the merit, they were elevated to high positions. Ijaz-ul-Haq and Anwar-ul-Haq, both the brothers, had served as ministers. Chaudhary Shujaat and his brother had been ministers many times. But when I became the chief minister, we were decided that one brother was the prime minister and the other the chief minister. How did we cause a loss to their business? Didn't they get loans during our rule? They did get loans, as did others. No big deal if somebody gets loan on merit, he should get it. Even then what can we say if they have a complaint against us?

Why are they aggrieved then?

Shahbaz Sharif: This I don't know.

They think the Punjab chief ministership was their right and your family had promised Chaudhary Pervez Elahi the slot?

Shahbaz Sharif: After the Supreme Court restored our government dissolved by Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the same MPAs and MNAs got together at our residence in Model Town and formed a majority. Mian Nawaz Sharif nominated Pervez Elahi as the Punjab chief minister. This is on record. I worked day and night to lobby for his election and the assembly would also stand witness to it. When it came to the election of the leader of the house in the Punjab Assembly, I asked Nawaz Sharif which of seats -- the National Assembly and the Punjab Assembly ones I had won -- I should retain. Then I heard Chaudhary Shujaat asking Nawaz Sharif that please bring Shahbaz Sharif to the Punjab. The party also voted for it. I was ready to serve as an MNA.

To say that I wanted to become the chief minister and I maneuvered for the slot is just rubbish. A journalist who once told Mian Nawaz Sharif that he would do a great injustice to himself if he did not make Shahbaz Sharif the chief minister, now says that I pressured my brother into becoming the chief minister. How big a lie! I had won both the seats and had told Mr. Sharif I would obey his decision. He nominated me for the chief ministership saying the heavy mandate they had won in the Punjab required me to hold the reins. The Chaudharies and my father also attended the meeting he took the decision in. Chaudhary Pervez Elahi reminded me that I had no intention to become the chief minister and so, he might give it a try. I admit saying so to him but what could I do if the party and its leader so decided. I had to accept the party decision. How is it a violation of my pledge? They have built their animosity on this episode.

How was your working relationship with the Chaudharies?

Shahbaz Sharif: I have told you that I have a relationship of respect and honor with Chaudhary Shujaat.

And what about Chaudhary Pervez Elahi?

Shahbaz Sharif: I had a good working relationship with him as well. I never tried to harm the ties. I always gave him respect and honor

whenever he visited the Chief Minister's House. I always accompanied him up to his vehicle while departing. I visited him several times as the chief minister. I had no ill will against him. Anyhow, there are many personal things, which I don't want to make public. I would facilitate him even if I had to go out of the way. I don't want to discuss such things but Ishaq Dar can evidence that I even went along with him to Islamabad to get a favor for him.

What sort of favor did you help Chaudharies get?

Shahbaz Sharif: No, he was only facilitated under the law.

Have you been accompanying them for their work?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes, but I don't want to disclose the detail. I just want to say that personally and politically we had good ties without any ill intention.

The Chaudharies had been your political companions, how did they turn your rivals?

Shahbaz Sharif: Chaudhary Shujaat is basically a gentleman. However, he should not have issued controversial statements on Kargil.

PERSONAL THOUGHTS

What rights should women have in our society?

Shahbaz Sharif: Women should have rights equal to men.

Should they observe veil?

Shahbaz Sharif: They should be modest. They should be properly dressed. They should enjoy all the rights prescribed under the Islamic code. But they should equally take part in nation building. Women have a great status in Islam and they should get it.

Do you favor co-education?

Shahbaz Sharif: No harm in it.

Won't it affect the society adversely?

Shahbaz Sharif: Listen, who builds the society? It's people who build the society. Who improves the society? It's us. If there is liquor placed before you and you don't want to take it, nobody can force you to take it. It is up to you, which way you go. Nobody can thrust

anything upon you. In this modern age Muslim women and their daughters study in American universities properly dressed and head covered. You can neither force somebody to cover their head, nor can you compel them not to cover it. This freedom in a society is its beauty.

How do you see terrorism and the event of Nine Eleven?

Shahbaz Sharif: There should be zero tolerance for terrorism. Whatever you say against it is less; whatever step you take against it is small. This evil, which has also started spreading its tentacles in Pakistan recently for certain reasons, must be removed. Some members of our clergy too are promoting it to grind their own axe and establish their monopoly. Adding fuel to fire is our ignorance and poverty. Narrow-minded people train these persons to kill people promising them paradise. Is Islam enforced through such things? Will such things make the country stronger? The world is horrified when there is sectarian violence somewhere. How will anyone invest in Pakistan? We are causing irreparable loss to ourselves. The entire nation must unite for eradicating this menace. Only then we can become a civilized nation and make progress.

What is your definition of beauty?

Shahbaz Sharif: (Laughing) Look, I am not a philosopher. I think that one's real beauty is one's demeanor and character. You can't feel beauty if you are dejected. One's manners, attitude and approach are one's beauty.

What mistakes have you made in your life? Do you repent anything?

Shahbaz Sharif: Look, to err is human. A human being keeps on making mistakes but one should have courage to learn from mistakes.

If you regain reins, what are the mistakes you won't repeat?

Shahbaz Sharif: If we rule the country again, we will urgently make the judiciary strong and independent, give special attention to education and make accountability process transparent and effective. The army has evolved an accountability system of its own but the parliament should also have the power of accountability.

Should the defense budget be tabled before the parliament for approval?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes, the defense budget must be discussed in the parliament for transparency would improve military's image.

Should the defense budget be curtailed?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes of course, it must be curtailed. We must channel this saving to the social sector to strengthen and promote it.

Muslim countries are on decline and the West is on the up, why?

Shahbaz Sharif: Muslim countries and their rulers have left the golden principles of Islam while the West has been adhering to the principles of truth, honesty and integrity.

When did you weep the last time?

Shahbaz Sharif: Quite often I weep over the decline of Muslims. It pains me very much.

Any fear?

Shahbaz Sharif: Look; fear is present in everybody, more or less. I fear God's anger in the world hereafter. I, therefore, want to do a deed before I die that earns me my deliverance.

Do you dream?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes I do dream but I don't believe in them.

Any dream that came true?

Shahbaz Sharif: There may be one but I don't remember.

Have you ever consulted a palmist?

Shahbaz Sharif: Yes I have.

Do you believe in astrology?

Shahbaz Sharif: I don't. By nature this mortal being is neither angel nor devil.

Do you lie for any expediency?

Shahbaz Sharif: Well, he who claims he does not lie is the biggest liar himself. Sometimes you have to act in expediency, but on serious matters I would either remain silent or speak the truth.

Who is your favorite poet?

Shahbaz Sharif: I love Allama Iqbal, his person and his poetry. He has given a true interpretation of Islam through his works. Iqbal's poetry guides you towards achieving dignity and honor in the present day world.

Who was your ideal in your childhood?

Shahbaz Sharif: My father, Mian Muhammad Sharif.

Who is your ideal in politics?

Shahbaz Sharif: I am very much impressed by [Pakistan's founder] the Quaid-i-Azam [Muhammad Ali Jinnah]'s strategy and approach. His love for principles and his determination show us the way. I am also impressed by my father's simplicity.

Anything else you want to say?

Shahbaz Sharif: When I see mega buildings of New York, I come to think these have been erected by human beings, human minds, technology, civilization and dedication, and not by any supernatural beings. They are human beings like us, they have progressed but we are lagging behind even after 56 years of our independence. The only reason, we have forgotten the golden principles of Islam and the Quaid-i-Azam -- hard work, trust and integrity. I believe that if we start acting upon these principles, we can even go beyond moon and make Pakistan a model for others to follow. I wish to see this happen during my life. I wish to see Pakistan on the path we have forgotten. We can go far ahead if we tread that track. Pakistani passport will be honored at all the airports of the world. Our voice will only be heard when Pakistan is revered in the world. Respect does not come without negotiating with thorns.



MORE DISCLOSURES

General Pervez Musharraf's book 'In the Line of Fire' describes several incidents involving Shahbaz Sharif. During a recent meeting with him in London, he came out with several new and interesting things.

- All the restrictions will go in 2007
- We will be able to go to Pakistan without any hindrance in 2008
- Nawaz Sharif rejected my request but on Musharraf's call met General Zinni
- General Zinni and General Musharraf had already firmed up the ceasefire
- Most of the generals had supported my return to Pakistan
- General Musharraf had offered me to become the prime minister
- I did not tell Nawaz Sharif about the offer lest the tension should increase
- Ghulam Ishaq Khan, too, had offered the prime ministership in place of Nawaz Sharif

- I did not visit the US along with General Zia-ud-Din

NEW DISCLOSURES

Q. When will the restrictions on you end?

Shahbaz Sharif: It is a difficult question indeed. However, I am going to tell you the very first time that these restrictions are to expire in the year 2007 and then in 2008 we shall be free to go to Pakistan without any hurdle.

GENERAL ZINNI'S PAKISTAN VISIT

In his book General Musharraf says Nawaz Sharif gave in over Kargil in concluding a ceasefire. How do you see this allegation?

Shahbaz Sharif: Interestingly enough when General Anthony Zinni visited Pakistan, he desired to see the prime minister. Somebody asked me to have his meeting with Nawaz Sharif arranged. I requested the prime minister to call and meet the visiting general but he refused. However, on General Musharraf's request, the prime minister agreed to see General Zinni and it was this meeting in which the issues of Nawaz Sharif's meeting with US President Bill Clinton, Pakistan army's withdrawal from Kargil and the ceasefire were discussed. Prior to this meeting, General Musharraf and General Zinni had already decided on the troops' pullout from Kargil and the ceasefire.

GENERALS BACKED ME

Your visit to Pakistan and the forced return to Jeddah from the airport is yet a mystery. Had you acted on some signals from Pakistan?

Shahbaz Sharif: I had received no such signal from anywhere. Pakistan is my motherland, my country and stopping me from going there is constitutionally, legally and morally wrong. However, I know very well that before my arrival, most of the generals had asked General Musharraf to let me return to Pakistan. He kept silent and refrained from showing any reaction. Later, on Chaudhary Pervez Elahi's insistence, it was decided that I be sent back to Jeddah.

You have been negotiating with the government. What was the deal under discussion?

Shahbaz Sharif: I was asked to support General Musharraf but I could not leave my brother at any cost. In fact going to Pakistan is one thing and supporting Musharraf another. There is a vivid difference between both of them.

SECRETS OF MEETINGS

General Pervez Musharraf has talked about his meetings with you aimed at reducing tension between him and the prime minister. Do you think there is any secret yet to be disclosed?

Shahbaz Sharif: There is a very important thing yet to come to the fore. One day General Musharraf told me that all the corps commanders had suggested replacing Nawaz Sharif with me as the prime minister. By doing so, he said, they thought things would go smooth. I told him that such a decision would neither prove politically correct nor confirming to our family traditions. I told him I could not even think about such things. My blunt refusal took General Musharraf by surprise. I had told Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan about whatever had happened but not Nawaz Sharif lest his tension with the army should go up. In fact, such offers aim at creating differences between brothers. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, too, had tried to ensnare me with a same offer but I rejected it immediately.

WHO WAS STUPID?

General Musharraf has written in his book that immediately after the takeover you had said to defense secretary General Iftikhar Ali Khan that there were army people outside the Prime Minister's House and asked him which army they were from.

Shahbaz Sharif: Absolutely incorrect. I had not called up General Iftikhar. Was I a fool that I would ask him such a nonsense question? You can well imagine who was stupid.

WHAT HAPPENED IN USA?

It is said that during the last days of your government you took General Zia-ud-Din to the United States to introduce him there as the new army chief.

Shahbaz Sharif: It is altogether a mistaken view. In fact President Bill Clinton had asked Nawaz Sharif to dispatch his special envoy to America so that a special message would be conveyed. Nawaz Sharif

deputed me for the purpose but I said some people had already raised objections that I was functioning as a foreign minister as well as the finance minister. But Prime Minister forced me to go to America. The US president said Pakistan should stop interfering in Kashmir and Afghanistan. During my visit to the Pakistan Embassy in Washington, I learnt General Zia-ud-Din was also there. I was neither informed about his visit to America nor did I meet him there, and so, there was no question of introducing him.



KULSOOM NAWAZ'S THINKING

- WHY INDIFFERENCE TO POLITICS
- KARGIL STORY
- ASSAULT ON THE SUPREME COURT
- TARAR REPRESENTED THE MIDDLE CLASS
- ELDER AND YOUNGER BROTHERS
- WHEN I WEPT
- THE VILLAINS
- EVERY BODY WAS TO BLAME
- KARGIL DOES NOT LEAD TO KASHMIR
- HABIT OF CONSULTATION
- MUSHARRAF BE DISMISSED

The interviews of Mrs.Kulsoom Nawaz Nawaz Sharif have been conducted in Lahore in 2000, in Jeddah in September 2001 and in London in April 2006.

FROM HOME TO POLITICS

The journey of Begum Kalsoom Nawaz from home to politics and then back to home is very interesting. She came out of home in the difficult days of Sharifs and she fought in the streets like a born politician. But after the exile of Sharif family, she is at peace at home as she had never been in politics.

- Politics is not passion for me; I joined it out of compulsion
- The prime minister should also have an army to counter a takeover
- Jihad as a hobby is not justified; Kashmir issue can be resolved through talks
- I had counselled Nawaz Sharif to dismiss Pervez Musharraf
- I do not see judiciary anywhere; where is the judiciary?
- Nawaz Sharif would tick Shahbaz off even when he was chief minister
- I don't need anybody's permission except for Nawaz Sharif
- I wish I could ask Nawaz Sharif to quit politics

- My sons will take the lead in leaving for Jihad if it is formally announced
- I oppose woman being head of the state

WHY INDIFFERENCE TO POLITICS

Q. You have quit politics after coming abroad?

Mrs.Kulsoom Nawaz: I had joined politics out of compulsion. After Nawaz Sharif's release my mission is over. Now I will enter politics only if needed, otherwise I am happy being at home. Politics is not my passion; I am contented at my home, be it in Jeddah or London.

Your car was towed up during the agitation. For several hours you remained in the vehicle. What were your feelings then?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I did not get frightened. Our morale was high for we knew the tyrant would be defeated and it so happened ultimately.

Going back to your days of struggle in Pakistan, When did you come to know that talks were under way over going to Saudi Arabia?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I knew it from the beginning. Nawaz Sharif was hesitant but he had to submit to his father's wish.

How do you analyze the country's political scene?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Nawaz Sharif will have to face a lot of difficulties in building the country. God willing, he will do it.

[The following part of the interview was conducted in 2000, when Nawaz Sharif was in jail and she was leading an agitational campaign.]

You usually say the rulers are destroying the country but your party reaction does not match yours in tone.

Mrs.Kulsoom: It is their problem. Every member of our party says the country is in trouble.

But nobody talks of taking the country out of the trouble.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, in front of me they talk the same way as I do.

The party meetings give out a different feeling?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Hear their speeches. So zealous are they as should every party be.

There has been a demand from your party for change in party leadership. Some of your party members speak badly about the government while some others hold it legitimate.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No such voices now. If anybody says so he is enemy of the country. Lest any country should suffer the way as does ours.

And how about those who talk of change in the party saddle?

Mrs.Kulsoom: If somebody says so today, won't do so tomorrow. He knows that only Nawaz Sharif can handle this situation and by the will of God only he will do so.

Any chance of split or factions in the party?

Mrs.Kulsoom: God forbid. It makes no difference if a couple of people joins or leaves the party. The party is spread throughout the country and has deep roots. Such big parties are not affected by a couple of entries or defections as won't the sea if take out two glasses of water. But the water so taken out won't be the sea; just two glasses of water, divided it into drops or drain it.

You party has under-reacted to the takeover. In comparison is the Peoples Party, which had responded strongly to Zia-ul-Haq's martial law?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Hold on. How long did the Peoples Party take after the imposition of martial law to come out for agitation?

So, you need time for reaction?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, we don't need time. People are taking to the streets in every city; Lahore, Multan, Bahawalpur. And in Karachi protests are a routine. PML-N is the first party to take on the military government in so short a time.

So, you have no grudge against the liaison committee Raja Zafar-ul-Haq is heading?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No grudge against anybody. Why should I have that?

Any difference between your struggle and the way others are putting up?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Everyone reacts differently to a certain situation. I think others haven't learnt the lesson of patriotism the way I have. My father had told us to stand up to the national anthem, and so do I do now.

Quite often you say the government is taking revenge from you. Why would it do so?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes they are doing it, for this is Nawaz Sharif's country.

Nawaz Sharif appointed General Musharraf the army chief and provided funds to the army, then how come the revenge?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Nawaz Sharif made the country develop, why don't you say so?

Then why would they take revenge?

Then why are they ruining the country?

No you have already said they are taking the revenge, it seems Nawaz Sharif has caused some harm to somebody.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Since the day they have taken over they have been taking revenge. From Kargil till now, they have only caused harm to the country. No patriotism on their part.

KARGIL STORY

What did they do at Kargil?

Mrs.Kulsoom: You know everything. It's an open secret. Everybody knows whatever they have done. They themselves know the mistakes they have made. Yet they have been papering them over since Kargil.

Papered over what? Musharraf says he had done it with Mr. Sharif's approval. He told BBC Mr. Sharif had participated in at least five briefings on the Kargil attack. This he had said during the rule of Mr. Sharif's, but the prime minister had not rebutted it.

Mrs.Kulsoom: It was for this reason that people would say Mr. Sharif owned up the army's blunders. Review the whole scene, and Nawaz Sharif appears innocent. Perhaps their agenda was so.

So, Kargil was part of a big plan?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes they had started planning from there.

What sort of planning?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I don't know but it all started there but then it turned unmanageable. Nawaz Sharif's love for the country and the army -- all failed.

Did Nawaz Sharif want the assemblies dissolved and new elections held?

Mrs.Kulsoom: For now the most important issue is ouster of the present regime.

How far is the judiciary playing its role?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Where is the judiciary?

Is the judiciary gone?

Mrs.Kulsoom: At least I do not see it anywhere.

The judiciary has spared Nawaz Sharif from the gallows in the aeroplane hijacking case.

Mrs.Kulsoom: How?

The plane hijacking case?

Mrs.Kulsoom: What was that hijacking case? Do you think Nawaz Sharif can put at stake the lives of 200 people? If six people are let off, whom did Nawaz Sharif conspire with? I am talking about it now for I feel the need to do so. Did Nawaz Sharif get into the plane with pistol?

ASSAULT ON THE SUPREME COURT

You say where is the judiciary? Did the judiciary exist after the Supreme Court had been assaulted in the days of Nawaz Sharif?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Do you think Nawaz Sharif gathered a group of people and instigated them to go and attack the Supreme Court? Nawaz Sharif has read law, how could he attack the Supreme Court? How was it possible?

The attackers belonged to the Muslim league.

Mrs.Kulsoom: I admit that. But please do tell me if I ask you to go attend a certain program somewhere. How would I know that you got a seat or you went violent?

No regret on such a big incident?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Nawaz Sharif had shown remorse over the incident. And I remember very clearly he had done so in the court.

After the court decision the assemblies can't be restored I think.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Which law, which constitution? If you talk of the constitution, Nawaz Sharif is still the prime minister of Pakistan.

TARAR REPRESENTED THE MIDDLE CLASS

Rafiq Tarar had no political background. Your family made him the country's president just because he was your family friend.

Mrs.Kulsoom: He was made the president not just being our family friend. He was made the president because he was a religious person and a representative of the middle class and he enjoyed great respect in the judiciary. Am I not telling you the truth?

The prime minister, the chief minister and the president, all from Punjab?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Under the circumstances it was the correct decision to avoid difficulties in running the government.

Did President Rafiq Tarar behave properly after October 12?

Mrs.Kulsoom: What could he do?

He is the source of constitutional cover to everything.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Please let our sole representative remain seated somewhere for he stands for nobility and integrity.

Some people say that had Tarar been from a province other than the Punjab, he would have renounced the presidency?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Why do you blame Punjab? Are you not a Punjabi? Leave it now.

You have held the decision regarding Mr. Tarar as correct. But your distracters say that whenever you are in the saddle, you bring your own people ahead. Chaudhary Pervez Elahi was promised the chief minister's slot but you made Shahbaz Sharif the chief minister in his stead when the time came.

Mrs.Kulsoom: The aim, perhaps, was to get the development work done in Punjab and that he did.

And so, Pervez Elahi was ignored.

Mrs.Kulsoom: God forbid, he was not ignored due to any other reason. You will agree that the pace at which Shahbaz Sharif did his work was badly needed in the Punjab. I don't know and some promise may have been made but Nawaz Sharif wanted rapid development and Shahbaz Sharif would get reprimanded whenever he faltered. He was regularly asked about the Ring Road that was to be built.

ELDER AND YOUNGER BROTHERS

Would Nawaz Sharif really reprimand Shahbaz Sharif?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, very much but pats to Shahbaz Sharif who would never demur. Delay in the construction of the Ring Road too angered Nawaz Sharif. He wanted the country to go superb with all amenities of life for the people and no poverty.

When did you feel that the government's relations with the army had turned sour?

Mrs.Kulsoom: The biggest problem with me is that I do not like politics. I do not speak too much about politics.

You have said earlier that you had advised Mr. Sharif to dismiss General Musharraf. It means you knew it.

Mrs.Kulsoom : I do not want to indulge in politics too much. I had never participated in the election when I was in the university I never cast a vote. Rather on the Election Day, I would always have a day-off.

WHEN I WEPT

When Nawaz Sharif was taking pre-emptive steps, he might have been under great tension and he must have talked to you over the serious issue he was facing.

Mrs.Kulsoom: All these things are not in my knowledge. I have told you I did not indulge myself in such things then.

Does Nawaz Sharif give you any instructions when you meet him in the jail?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Rather this time I went weeping.

Did Mr. Sharif pep you up?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I wept as I thought how unfortunate Pakistan was that people who wanted to serve it with sincerity were being kept out, and one person serving personal grudge was unashamedly pushing it to devastation. However, Nawaz Sharif asked me to keep my chin up.

Are you brave?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I think I am and I fear nobody.

Do you fear arrest?

Mrs.Kulsoom: A God-fearing person has no other fears.

Do most of your party members have the same feelings?

Mrs.Kulsoom: After reading my statements many people fear my detention and my friends jokingly say I should shut up or else they may have to carry the tiffin for me to the jail. But it does not make any difference. Sending me behind the bars won't mean they can jail the whole of Pakistan.

Now you are in the opposition where one ponders over one's mistakes. Do you regret any mistakes your government committed, which it would not repeat?

Mrs.Kulsoom: We commit different mistakes at different times. You are grossly mistaken if you do not agree that to err is human.

But one must regret one's mistakes.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, we do that.

THE VILLAINS

Which mistakes do you regret?

Mrs.Kulsoom: As you say the people around Nawaz Sharif were not good. So we must bring in such persons as are liked by the people.

Who were these bad people around Nawaz Sharif?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I don't know. It's you who is saying this. First time in my life I have seen the faces of these MNAs and MPAs or have heard their names. Whoever was bad must not be taken again. One must correct one's mistakes.

But it is said Mr. Sharif had been encouraging Saif-ur-Rehman to act sternly against Benazir Bhutto.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Once Nawaz Sharif said to me in anger to go and ask Saif-ur-Rehman as to what he was doing. By chance I was there. I asked Saif-ur-Rehman as to why he had so infuriated Nawaz Sharif. Saif-ur-Rehman told me that he wanted to throw water on paper roles of the Daily Jang but Nawaz Sharif opposed him. I told him we would snap ties with him if he did so.

Had Saif-ur-Rehman gone so powerful that he was deciding things on his own?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He insisted on doing that but I warned him not to and he gave up. Then once he met me at the court. He said he would have done that if I had not bidden him not to.

It means it was only Saif-ur-Rehman's doing and Nawaz Sharif had no role in the campaign against the Peoples Party or the press?

Mrs.Kulsoom: How can I say that it was only Saif-ur-Rehman and nobody else? Hadn't newspapers ever done anything?

Freedom of the press is an important thing.

Mrs.Kulsoom: But I do not support whatever the newspapers are doing this day, I am sorry.

How much do you believe in the freedom of the press?

Mrs.Kulsoom: To the extent that you write the truth. You have been entrusted with a great mission of educating the people, which you are not doing.

But a tape shows Saif-ur-Rehman asking for firing certain journalists. Doesn't it violate the freedom of the press?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Do you think Nawaz Sharif had directed him to do so? We did commit mistakes. There were wrong persons around. Everybody has their own way of dealing with such people.

Perhaps this was the reason Saif-ur-Rehman was sidelined?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Obviously, when there are so many mistakes one has to make a decision.

EVERYBODY WAS TO BLAME

Did somebody complain against him?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, there were many people who had been wronged. I won't go into detail. But everybody should share the blame. If one keeps oneself from making small faults, one will save oneself from blunders.

What role the US has in Pakistan?

Mrs.Kulsoom: It should have no role to play in Pakistan.

Isn't the US a very sincere friend of ours?

Mrs.Kulsoom: All the countries of the world are our friends.

No, Mr. Sharif was very close to the US.

Mrs.Kulsoom: How was he close to the US? They gave him respect. By the grace of God wherever he visited, he got respect.

Do you think America wanted to have certain things implemented in Pakistan, which Mr. Sharif had consented to, even Shahbaz Sharif issued a statement on Taliban?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Such statements, be they Shahbaz Sharif's or those of mine, are not the last word.

It is said that some affairs were decided in Washington when General Zia-ud-Din and Shahbaz Sharif visited there.

Mrs.Kulsoom: It is said but neither has you known the fact nor do I.

I am asking you.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, how can Shahbaz Sharif tell me that? You may ask it from him.

The day Shahbaz Sharif visited the US (obviously on Mr. Sharif's errand), America warned the army against interference. Was it satisfying for you?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No such thing is in my knowledge.

But wasn't the statement issued?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes but I have told you that since politics is not my forte, I don't actually remember that. You may please talk to Shahbaz Sharif for an exact answer.

Aren't all these affairs monitored by the IMF or the US? They want their agenda followed but if a ruler fails in doing so, it turns against him, upsets him or gets him replaced.

Mrs.Kulsoom: If you think the US has had Nawaz Sharif replaced. By whom? Pervez Musharraf. Meaning he is working on its agenda.

Some people say Nawaz Sharif carries the grudge forever.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, not so. If he is angry with somebody, he doesn't show it up.

Does he clear his heart?

Mrs.Kulsoom: That's what he tells us to do. He strictly forbids his children backbiting and says one should always be forbearing.

And in national affairs?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Our children usually say that the government has persecuted the father so much but if he again happens to rule the country and the present rulers are produced before him, he would forgive them.

But people say Nawaz Sharif is vindictive.

Mrs.Kulsoom: A general impression is not that of yours but the one your opponents draw out.

There has often been talk of Shahbaz Sharif's contacts with the army men. Any compromise in the offing?

Mrs.Kulsoom: This you may ask from Shahbaz or the army for nobody has told me any such thing.

Has there been any difference of opinion between Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I don't remember any such thing or that significant an event. They might have differed on the way a certain thing should be done.

They did differ on General Pervez Musharraf's dismissal; it is said that Shahbaz Sharif did not favor the sacking.

Mrs.Kulsoom: He might have consulted Shahbaz Sharif but I do not know.

He has stated he was sleeping at that time.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Might have been so but I don't know. I have read the statement but I don't know whether Nawaz Sharif had consulted him on that.

Are you against the martial law?

Mrs.Kulsoom: You shall link the question to Zia-ul-Haq and Ijaz-ul-Haq (laughter), so leave it here.

But as a matter of principle?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Leave the martial law aside, just focus on the civilian government.

Your critics say that in your second term, your family said they won't expand their business but would freeze it.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Not me, you people had said that. I am of the opinion that if we can set up mills, we should, and in each and every city of Pakistan for it would provide employment to 10, 15 thousand people. If my father-in-law has the skill to establish and run a factory within a year, why should we tie his hands and make him sit idle instead.

Did he get angry over this?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, he wanted to do work. Thereafter he established a trust.

After you decided not to establish new factories?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Then he set up the Trust. We are so foolish we do not know what favors us and what doesn't. You may say that these business-minded people are weighing things in terms of profit and loss. But as a human being, I think, our skill should benefit all the people, all the Muslims. If my father in-law knows how to establish factories, why shouldn't he benefit Pakistan and its people? Why should we stop him from doing this just because he is the father of the prime minister of Pakistan?

By the way don't you think you lost power just for one person General Zia-ud-Din?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, not for him, not for anybody. It so happened because we had to remove one person.

No, but no army man followed General Zia-ud-Din?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I have already said we had sacked one person.

But nobody obeyed the man installed in his stead?

Mrs.Kulsoom: That's what I am saying. Whatever happened thereafter violated the constitution. The people, who defied him, if they were patriot, must have been ashamed of it. The decision was right and the man was leading the country to the right direction.

On Kargil, the Muslim League supporters also felt that Mr. Sharif had not taken a right step by going to Washington for the party is an ideological partner of the army?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I think Pervez Musharraf has also said somewhere that he had requested Nawaz Sharif for the ceasefire.

KARGIL DOES NOT LEAD TO KASHMIR

On his request? Even if you have to rile the party?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes on his request. And why should the party be angry. Did it start with the prime minister's consent? When he asked from the army whether they could reach Kashmir through Kargil they had told him in negative. Just think if you climb a hilltop, can you go to Kashmir from there?

Kashmir or Srinagar?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Kashmir or Srinagar? Okay, you occupy any place. Can you? You can't. Then why this misadventure? Ask an army man whatever happened there, whatever they did. Soldiers did not have even food to eat.

If Mr. Sharif was against the attack, why did he deliver a speech at the front?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Then what could he do? As I have entered politics, what would he say? He would only say let her do politics now.

How does Mr. Sharif spend his time in the jail?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I don't know anything. He used to feel hot very much but now he doesn't. He receives letters from the people in sacks. Much of his time is spent in reading and answering letters, which he tries to do himself.

He wasn't in the habit of writing letters, perhaps

Mrs.Kulsoom: In his entire life he wrote four or five letters to me when I was in London.

Mr. Sharif is asking traders not to pay taxes.

Mrs.Kulsoom: To the present regime, which is not people's representative but tyrant and oppressive.

I have heard Hamza Shahbaz doesn't bother to take notice of the "Majlis-i-Tahaffuz-e-Pakistan" [an anti-Musharraf regime committee] meeting. Isn't it a clear sign of differences?

Mrs. Kulsoom: Listen Hamza is not a politician. He has to earn for us 30, 32 persons and he has to work hard for this. If he doesn't earn, I cannot run politics.

So, no differences?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Do you see any in what I am saying? He is my son, he gives me much respect and it is not incorrect.

Would you now join Benazir Bhutto on a truck to run a movement?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Are movements run on trucks?

In Pakistan it has always happened so?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, I won't run such a nonchalant movement.

Perhaps your party is not prepared for this. Otherwise things are leading you this way.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, even if my party doesn't, I can do so myself.

What would you do without the party?

Mrs.Kulsoom: If I have to do something, I need nobody's permission except for that of Nawaz Sharif's.

Has he not allowed you to do the politics of agitation as yet?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I have not asked him yet for perhaps I may not be able to do so.

Or the people are not prepared yet?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, people can accompany me to Chaghi [the area where Pakistan conducted its nuclear tests during the Sharif government in 1998] even, what to say of the Mall [usual place of opposition protests].

On the one hand you have been loyal to Pakistan and on the other you sold your sugar to India.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Please ask those army people where they sent sugar of their mills.

They say that since your sugar was being sent, they sent theirs as well.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, it was otherwise; we sent ours because their sugar was going there. (Laughter)

But it's the prime minister who is responsible for the policy and nobody else.

Mrs.Kulsoom: You see we earned country so much foreign exchange.

Was it right to do trade with a country we have a dispute with over Kashmir?

Mrs.Kulsoom: India was not selling sugar but buying it. If you do not like it you will starve your country to death. Suppose we had done a mistake by selling sugar to India, but where is the sugar produced in the country, why are they importing sugar? We had earned the country millions of dollars from our enemy. Where have they stored the sugar now?

Are you in favor of peace with India?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Just Kashmir issue should be resolved.

Through war or talks?

Mrs.Kulsoom: You cannot solve a problem through war.

Then why did Mr. Sharif go for nuclear explosion?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Only because they (India) had done so. We will give them a befitting reply. If they go for war, we will fight it all out, if they fire one missile, we will fire ten, and if they go for peace, we will take 10 steps ahead.

Should the people who take extra constitutional steps be punished symbolically?

Mrs.Kulsoom: What have you achieved by punishing Bhutto?

But there must be a solution or else it will keep on happening so.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Restore power to Nawaz Sharif and you will see how problems are solved.

He had people's mandate then what happened to him?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Then he was deprived of power.

And so, my question remains about a solution to extra constitutional steps?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Oh, you mean the military takeover. Prime Minister too should have an army to pre-empt removal of the government through a few troops taking over the TV and radio stations and the Prime Minister's House.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto established the Federal Security Force and Nawaz Sharif the Elite Force but neither could serve either of them.

Mrs.Kulsoom: This force must not be equal to the army that could stop five, seven military trucks from taking over. Whatever happened had no justification. Nothing, neither law nor the constitution, could stop them. Then what sort of solution do you want me to suggest?

Well, do you think there is no judiciary in Pakistan?

Mrs. Kulsoom: Show me wherever it is.

Judges are the same as were during Nawaz Sharif's rule.

Mrs.Kulsoom: But they have taken oath under the Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO). Now you call PCOs Public Call Offices but not judges.

You say the judiciary has failed to discharge its duty.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Since the judiciary did not respect law and the Constitution, how can I call it the judiciary?

Well, do you consider the Muslim League Coordination Committee the real representative of Nawaz Sharif and his party?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Which coordination committee?

The coordination committee of Raja Zafar-ul-Haq, which is operating for Nawaz Sharif. Do you take it as the real heir of Nawaz Sharif and his party?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Please ask Nawaz Sharif who has established it.

But you are a link between Nawaz Sharif and us.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Then let me ask him about it. I cannot play Nawaz Sharif so much as to make party decisions.

Now a few personal questions please. What is the first memory of your childhood?

Mrs.Kulsoom: My mother, I miss her very much.

Your favorite book?

Mrs.Kulsoom: 'Qasr-e-Sehara' by Meerza Adeeb that my mother read out to me.

Your favorite poet in those days?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, poems of Sufi Tabbasum I liked the most.

After the childhood, who are your favorite poets?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Mirza Ghalib and Meer Taqi Meer.

Ghalib's poetry is very complicated.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, not at all. Comprehend it and you won't find such poetry anywhere else. His style is unmatched.

You must have had quarrels with brothers and sisters.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, in the childhood but not now.

Over what?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Over pranks.

Your favorite subject?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Urdu and English. I like learning languages.

Which subjects would bore you?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Physics and Chemistry, which I did my BSc in.

Have you done your BSc from the Forman Christian (FC) College?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes Agha Suhail taught us Urdu. He asked me to study Urdu when I was a student of BSc.

By chance Pervez Musharraf, too, has studied at the FC College?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Nobody knew him but I was very popular. I was studying science but arts students also knew me very well and would give me much respect. I got so much love from this institution.

People say yours' was a love marriage.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Who says so?

The whole city says so?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, it is wrong. It was totally an arranged marriage.

What is your star and zodiac sign?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Cancer.

Do you believe in astrology?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I don't believe in such things. We used to talk about horoscopes when Nawaz Sharif used to come from Islamabad, but not seriously.

What do you do in your leisure?

Mrs.Kulsoom: It depends on the way I want to be relaxed. For instance now a days I recite the holy Quran but while in a light mood I read Qurat-ul-Ain [Haider], my favorite writer.

But she professes an ideology that contrasts your personality; she advocates women emancipation.

Mrs.Kulsoom: I like her very much. Whatever she desires is a different thing. But when she paints the milieu she doesn't forget to describe even the minutest details.

Which Pakistani writers do you like the most?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I like Ahmad Nadeen Qasmi very much; his short stories, poetry and *Naatia* poetry as well. I also like Perveen Shakir's poetry.

Have you read 'Aag Ka Darya' by Qura-tul-Ain?

Mrs.Kulsoom: She is put out when one talks about 'Aag Ka Darya'.

What are the things that anger you?

Mrs.Kulsoom: It varies from time to time; sometimes I get angry on very small things and sometimes even very big things don't rile me.

Is TV watched at your home?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I have never watched it after October 12 [the date of military takeover].

And before that?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Seldom did I watch. However, Nawaz Sharif was in the habit of watching the news, sometimes on the BBC, before going to sleep.

Any regrets?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, may be some trivial things, but nothing major to regret.

Did you ever feel sense of deprivation in your life?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Life is not the name of any sense of deprivation; it is a blessing of God and His trust as well.

It is said that Mian Muhammad Sharif has a major role in politics.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Being head of the family he discharges his duties very well.

But he does not take part in politics directly.

Mrs.Kulsoom: It is his will. He does not speak to any journalist. Nor does he talk much to the politicians.

Does he advise you in your affairs?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He is a worldly-wise person; whatever advice he gives, will be beneficial for me.

Does he advise Nawaz Sharif as well?

Mrs.Kulsoom: It's modernism that has tainted relationships. Otherwise, parents don't give a poor advice to their children. If Nawaz Sharif, while sitting in a meeting, seeks his father's counsel on some complicated issue, what's so bad in it? You too seek your parents' advice and you will never be a loser.

You have said he has never been to Islamabad.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, he has never been there except once when he accompanied Mariam Nawaz Sharif for admission in a medical college.

What is the solution to the Kashmir problem?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Nawaz Sharif. (Laughter)

He could do nothing when he was in power for five years.

Mrs.Kulsoom: You waited for 52 years, fought wars but when the problem was about to be resolved, you removed him from power.

People say Kashmir was being compromised?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, it was not so.

Local government elections have been announced? Are you going to see Pervez Elahi?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I cannot stop anybody from doing anything. Do you think they will hold the local bodies' elections? For how many times will the elections be held? They have been held only recently.

Should the elections be held or not?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I doubt they will hold the elections. They will hold elections if they remain in power.

Even if it is General Zia's martial law?

Mrs.Kulsoom: At the time of Zia's martial law the circumstances were different; the nation wanted somebody to come and save them.

The word 'nation' is very ambiguous; every government says the nation is with it.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Martial law never suits the country.

Why didn't you say it then?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Had General Zia stuck to [his promise of holding elections in] 90 days, it would have been better.

Just that much?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Afterwards, he guided the nation to Islam. It was not so before.

People say Mrs.Kulsoom Nawaz is a hidden politician; she has worked behind the scene with Nawaz Sharif in every election. Now that Mr. Sharif is in jail she has come to the fore.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No not so.

You must have prodded Nawaz Sharif at certain decisions of his when he was the prime minister?

Mrs.Kulsoom: But does that make somebody a politician.

He must have been acting upon your suggestions.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, I don't remember any suggestion of mine he had acted upon.

However thickly you cover yourself, your statements do show up that you know politics.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Nothing to hide. I am telling you the truth that politics is not my forte. I would be the last person in the world to do politics.

Everybody who breathes and can talk is a politician.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Everyone sees things from one's angle. Then you will quote Shakespeare who says that the world is a stage and we all are actors; we play our role and go off.

What is politics? Talking to people and convincing them.

Mrs.Kulsoom: In true sense this is politics but we have made it something else.

We have made it a slur.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Here you are.

Do you want to start a movement?

Mrs.Kulsoom: We are set to start a movement but not a violent one. I like Nawaz Sharif who says no harm should be caused even to a single brick of the country. It pains me if somebody damages even a small thing at my home. Pakistan is our home, and we should feel pain for it as well.

When is going to contact other political parties?

Mrs.Kulsoom: We should talk to every citizen of Pakistan, whether they are from one party or the other, be it even the Peoples Party, here or abroad.

*When are you going to start contacting the political parties?
Perhaps you have got the permission.*

Mrs.Kulsoom: It's not a matter of permission. I am at a loss over what should I contact the political parties for. I think the talks should be conducted at the party level.

For the restoration of democracy.

Mrs.Kulsoom: If Raja Zafar-ul-Haq asks for my help I'll help him but if he doesn't, why should I?

So, you'll act on Raja Zafar-ul-Haq's orders.

Mrs.Kulsoom: In this matter, only in this matter.

Only for contacting the political parties?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, because only parties manage party affairs. He may drop in to meet me whenever he wants to.

The wise parties get in touch with you and not him.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Most welcome, I am ready to meet anybody, any Pakistani, from any party.

Which parties have contacted you as yet?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Members of almost every party have met me, by the way, or at the airport.

And Jamaat-e-Islami? Any message from Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Many people pray for me. I have blessings of so many people.

Hassan Nawaz has turned a bit quiet.

Mrs.Kulsoom: When people approach him he does give interviews. Now days there are no issue to talk about. The case has been decided. People may contact him after the high court gives its verdict.

You have led a life out of politics and now you are in the thick of things. What difference do you see between the two periods?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I miss those moments, now the life is too busy.

Now you have gained experience in the affairs of the party and the country. Would you be advising Nawaz Sharif in future?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Only if he asks for it, not unsolicited.

Won't you accept any office?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Have I gone nuts? Why would I court trouble?

What are the things you have felt you will ask him to desist from?

Mrs.Kulsoom: If ever he seeks my advice.

But on what? For example, he should choose his company carefully.

Mrs.Kulsoom: You know everything. I will give him advice only if he asks for it.

HABIT OF CONSULTATION

It is said that Mr. Sharif is not in the habit of seeking advice.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, this is incorrect. He consults everybody.

When he consulted everybody, he would confer with his wife as well?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He would even ask a motorcyclist by the roadside how he should deal with a certain situation.

But he would act on his own will.

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, look when he thought about conducting nuclear tests, I, being his life partner, was sure he would do it. But whenever I asked him whether he would go for the tests, he would ask me whether he should. And if I advised him deliberately against the explosion, he would ask whether he shouldn't. And I was required to back my statement with arguments. I know that he sort of interviewed so many people on the pros and cons of going for the tests.

So, on the tests he consulted almost everybody.

Mrs.Kulsoom: He would seek advice on everything.

But not on Kargil?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He didn't know about whatever happened there.

I mean not on the Washington agreement on ceasefire.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Please don't ask me any question on this sensitive issue.

But these are the issues people want you to talk about.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Then this question should be for Nawaz Sharif to answer.

MUSHARRAF BE DISMISSED

If he did not know anything about the Kargil issue and so, was being disobeyed, he should have sacked the army chief?

Mrs.Kulsoom: (Heaving a great sigh) should have done so. I kept on asking him that he should sack the army chief.

So he did not act on your advice.

Mrs.Kulsoom: But what difference does it make. Why should I say anything to him? The matter was between those two; Pervez Musharraf and Nawaz Sharif. Ask it from them. I am as much uninformed as you are.

The reasons behind Musharraf's dismissal have not come to the fore yet.

Mrs.Kulsoom: If he had already put the takeover in order, Mr. Sharif was even more justified in sacking him. What was Mr. Sharif's fault? He did it because he had the authority to do it. From then on it's a saga of violating the law and the constitution, of cover-ups.

You call the decision in the plane conspiracy case as engineered. On the other hand there is a general opinion that that due to international pressure the government has failed to have a sterner sentence against the convicts. Do you agree?

Mrs.Kulsoom: It is all from God. Man can do nothing. When God was not willing He created such circumstances. He is very kind and compassionate; the ruler could not resist saying, "The president can be appealed whatever the sentence." I caught hold of their words. As to which punishment they were talking about; as to how they could have known before what punishment was going to be awarded. My hue and cry made the ruler retreat.

Politicians of the subcontinent or the Third World often go to jail and the experience changes their mindset. Do you see any such change in Mr. Sharif's conduct?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He has turned more religious than he was before. However, we can judge him after he comes out of the jail. He has long been in the habit of reciting the Quran. Thank God my children too have been following religious injunctions without any pressure from me.

Any political change?

Mrs.Kulsoom: To serve public is our first preference. We are service incarnate whether in politics or out of it. Now that Nawaz Sharif is in the jail, he is spending his entire time in worship. He may be thinking before going to sleep what he will do and what not if he happens to rule the country again. This I do not know for sure but he is reciting the Quran very swiftly.

If he comes out of the prison what sort of counsel will you give to him?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Should I speak for my heart or my mind?

Of both?

Mrs.Kulsoom: The mind says he should face them bravely to make the country greater.

Them, who?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Whatever power that pulls the country back every time it is to takeoff. Whether they use army or the judiciary, Sajjad Ali Shah or Farooq Leghari, there is some one who does not want to see the country prosper and develop. And it is very painful that it is one person who puts the country upside down. The development process is halted, how painful it is!

Had this been happening before?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, it has been happening before your eyes.

When?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Look, when an elected government is toppled, development comes to a halt. And then huge money is spent on establishing a new government.

And what does the heart say?

Mrs.Kulsoom: That he should leave politics. Enough is enough, if our nation does not value its leader, he should quit politics.

Do you think people do not respect Nawaz Sharif?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Honor, see how he has been sentenced. Anyhow I have told you what my heart wants, (laughing), but the court does not value the heart and the heart doesn't recognize the court, so what should I do (again laughing).

CTBT [the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] is a major issue, what is your opinion about it?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Nawaz Sharif would never have ratified it. Despite being so much under pressure, he did not sign the treaty.

What are your views about the India policy of the Musharraf regime?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Whatever Nawaz Sharif had done with great diligence to solve the problem was washed out. Can war solve any problem? If it could many a country would have solved their problems. Dialog is the only solution and that was Nawaz Sharif's policy. He wanted to live peacefully with the neighboring countries. He wants to 'live and let others live'.

Doesn't it come in contrast with the Muslim League's traditional ideology; the party is thought to be anti-India?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Look, if you think the Jews and the Hindus are your friends you are at fault. They are anti-Islam powers but you will agree that if you cannot live peacefully with your neighbors, you cannot live in peace yourself. We want to live in peace, we want to let our people live in peace and we want to liberate Kashmir as well.

So the Jihad is justified?

Mrs.Kulsoom: If *Jihad* is declared, both of my sons will take lead in participating in it.

Do you think Jihad has not been declared as yet?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Where has it been declared?

And how about the Jihad in Kashmir?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Look, it is not the old age of swords, of one-on-one fight. The war of the present day is but destruction. Watch the "Day After", it is an American movie, and then ask me whether there should be war.

We favor peace. But since you are a national leader, we want to know your ideology for the people.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Do I look a leader? Just two months in politics, and that too not by choice but by fate. Gone are the days of face-to-face limited wars when armies were arrayed in rows and columns in the battlefield holding swords in their hands, attacking to kill one another. This is an age of peace. Things have changed now. Only one bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, and its after-effects are not yet gone. The government arrogantly said they had the nuclear bomb, which they could use. Can they do it?

Can't the government use the atomic bomb?

Mrs.Kulsoom: It will be a great folly. If they use the bomb, India would retaliate; even if it doesn't, we can't escape its detrimental effects even in Pakistan. Why then should we put the people to such a [destructive] test? The Truce of Hudaibia had many detractors, but it proved beneficial for the Muslims. Prophet Muhammad (peace is upon him) did ordain *Jihad*, but nothing amateur. Avoid war, if you can.

Can Kashmir be resolved through talks?

Mrs.Kulsoom: What is being done these days? Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, an enemy, recognizes you standing beneath the Pakistan Minaret. He salutes the minaret, puts his signature in the guests book. What else do you want? He, who had never recognized Pakistan, was ready for dialog over Kashmir. Both the countries had invited Clinton to mediate on Kashmir for a solution acceptable to both the countries and the Kashmiris. We were hopeful we could find a way out. This issue can never be settled through wars. Has it been yet? Had the issue been resolved through dialog, it would have been a big success but it was scuttled.

Would Mr. Sharif consult you on political affairs during his prime ministership?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Since I did not like politics, I used to avoid talking about it. However, whenever asked I would chip in my bit according to my intellect.

On the Muslim League affairs or the country's affairs?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, no, if an issue arose, we would speak on it just by the way. However, I don't think my advice could result in any revolution.

And you would write Nawaz Sharif's speeches also?

Mrs.Kulsoom: You know Nawaz Sharif had been studying in an English medium school, and so, he had to labor a bit to write an Urdu speech. I helped him in the beginning but thereafter he didn't feel the need for it.

Once Nawaz Sharif called Benazir Bhutto a traitor. Did he ever say so at home? Once he said he wanted to throw Peoples Party into the Arabian Sea. Was it just a political statement of his or did he believe so?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He might have been compelled to say such things as you are trying to make me say what I don't want to. By nature he is not so. He has a passion for an overnight change in the country. He is obsessed with the development of the country. We won't mind other countries' opposition; even our own people did not want us to build the motorway. A person wants to work for the country's welfare, is hindered quite often, and so, he becomes emotional.

Which national or international politician would he like?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He would talk about and revere every politician. Sometimes he admired one leader, and sometimes another, he always praised whoever did something good.

Which country did he feel close to?

Mrs.Kulsoom: To Saudi Arabia. [Malaysian leader] Mahatir Muhammad was a great friend. He also enjoyed friendly relations with Maldives' President Mamoan Abul Gayoom, [UAE ruler] Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan and others. He impressed everybody he met.

Now that you have joined politics formally, do you feel some mistakes have been committed before October 12?

Mrs.Kulsoom: To err is human.

And blunder?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I have not yet had a chance to review things to know where we erred.

But one does do that, like regretting mistakes.

Mrs.Kulsoom: Perhaps some people should not have been around us.

You had to pay for their wrongdoing?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes, true.

Could you please elaborate it?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Some people are assigned some tasks. They may be sincere in handling them but their follies, courtesy their low intellect, sink their patrons. Perhaps it so happened to us.

Before October 12, it was talk of the town that Nawaz Sharif was the politician but would always act on his father's advice. Should he have done so or being a sovereign ruler he should have made the decisions by himself?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Look; Nawaz Sharif lived in Islamabad while his father had never been there except for once when he went there for Mariam Nawaz Sharif's admission. He loves my children very much. Once we had to fly from Islamabad for *Umra*. We stayed in a hotel. I did not stay at the Prime Minister's House for he did not want to go there.

Why?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He used to say he had nothing to do there. Now if Nawaz Sharif is in a meeting, how could he consult his father? If he rings him up everybody would know it.

So, it's misinformation?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes. But I don't say he used to ignore his father. Our family members respect their elders. And so does Nawaz Sharif. His father is an experienced person who has worked very hard to build his industrial state, kept his six brothers along and maintained love, affection and unity among them. So, what's wrong in benefiting from the experiences of one's elders? At a debate in our college over 'marriage of choice', a girl favoring the proposition said, "it saves the parents a lot of money because otherwise marrying their daughter off would cost them too much because of price hike. Opposing the pitch, I said, "She has hiked the prices of commodities but sold the parents cheap." (Laughing) So, we shouldn't ignore our parents and as a Muslim I would say their prayers do miracles.

What does he [Mian Muhammad Sharif] say?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Stay put; don't care a fig for anybody.

Does he get worried?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I think he would be greatly worried now. Himself braving many odds with courage, he also peeps us up.

How is your relationship with your mother-in-law?

Mrs.Kulsoom: This April 2, I have completed 29 years of my marriage. People say my mother-in-law is my friend. And I have never had a quarrel with any of the family members.

Through some special skill?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I want everybody to enjoy his or her rights. No meddling, no belittling, no expectations.

Have you ever-cooked food for Mr. Sharif?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Whenever he wanted to have a special food item, he would call me 10 times to ask me to cook it myself.

Any dream that proved true?

Mrs.Kulsoom: There are so many that have proved correct.

Any such dream, which you may talk about?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Once I saw a dream thrice. Asked for interpretation, my teacher told me our family would do a great deed for the Islamic world after joining politics. I laughed it off for I was convinced we would not enter politics. He came to our house with sweets when Nawaz Sharif became the finance minister. He said it was the first step, and he might not live to see my dream come true but he remembered. He is not alive.

What is your view about women's rights?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Women may not like my views about their rights, for my views are strictly according to the Islamic teachings. Islam had elevated women's status in the society; as a mother serving her means ensuring paradise and as a sister she is a symbol of respect.

How about the campaign for women's rights in Pakistan?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Just a few centuries ago, women in Europe had a very low status. However, the status Islam has given them is very high.

So, shouldn't a woman be head of the state?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I am against it.

Are you against the employment of women as well?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No, because Islam does not prohibit it.

Are you in favor of women's observance of veil?

Mrs.Kulsoom: A woman should be well dressed. Islam does not enjoin wearing a *burqa*.

What is the history of burqa then?

Mrs.Kulsoom: My mother wore burqa the whole life. Once Mrs. Rafsanjani asked me as to why we didn't we have chador. I told her that since they wore the western dresses; they needed chadors to cover themselves. Our clothes cover us fully and gracefully and so, fulfill all the requirements of Islam.

Would you shop for your husband or he did it himself?

Mrs.Kulsoom: In the start we would shop together but later on, his servants did it for him.

Did he ever mind you wearing some particular color?

Mrs.Kulsoom: His choice of colors has always been very nice.

Has he learnt it from you?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He always liked blue color.

What is your opinion about astrology?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Occult knowledge is the sole attribute of God; nobody knows more than what He endows him with.

Has Hussain Nawaz practically joined politics?

Mrs.Kulsoom: No basically he is a religious-minded person; you may read his letter to his father published in the [Urdu-language weekly] '*Takbir*'. I am satisfied about Hussain; he has undergone a long imprisonment but he has not tripped up. The work Hussain is doing will benefit the country. We are serving the nation and the country but for no reward. We, the ones who have been declared corrupt, are doing are doing it all on our own. We are leaving these things for the people to benefit from. [Philanthropists of yore] Diyal Singh, who made an educational institution, and Ganga Ram, who built a hospital are gone but people are taking advantage of their work. Whatever we have built is for the people; tomorrow we will not be here in this world but these set-ups will keep benefiting people. No projection of these acts of ours, just corruption is the label.

Don't you think that in Pakistan politicians are held corrupt by design? First, Peoples Party was portrayed as corrupt, now the Muslim League is being dubbed so?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I don't understand this philosophy. What can I say about anybody else, I can speak only for myself? Can God-fearing people be corrupt? How can we feed our children and ourselves on illegal money?

Q. Do you support coeducation?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I have been studying in a coeducation system. My father had learnt the Quran by heart, a very stern religious people, and yet very liberal.

Did you ever differ with your husband and over what?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Differences can occur on anything; about his policy, or about the people around him, anything.

Any of his habits you dislike?

Mrs.Kulsoom: By the grace of God, all of his habits are very good. He used to ask the age from everybody he met, I would always tell him not to do that.

What infuriates you?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Telling a lie.

What was the most difficult moment of your life?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Awaiting the court's verdict [in Nawaz Sharif plane hijack case].

Does history repeat itself?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Yes it does.

Is it you who prevail in domestic affairs or is it Mr. Sharif who does?

Mrs.Kulsoom: He does not interfere in the domestic affairs.

What punishment do you suggest for those who violate the constitution?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Has the punishment already written in the constitution been implemented? What a mockery!

Should all of them be punished or only Pervez Musharraf?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Look, the desecration he has done of the constitution is unprecedented.

Don't you think General Zia had also done so?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Military takeover has always been wrong.

What is the difference between Pervez Musharraf's takeover and that of General Zia's?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Both have done wrong; Bhutto was charged with murder, I am not sure whether Bhutto was to blame or the agencies, but Nawaz Sharif is being punished for an offence he had never thought about.

Why didn't you marry off your children in the family?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Marriage is decided in the heavens. I have had my niece's hand for my younger son.

The attack on the Supreme Court has been dubbed as one on the government's own bases. Was it a mistake?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Do you think Nawaz Sharif had ordered the attack?

They were Muslim Leaguers at least?

Mrs.Kulsoom: It was a mistake, whoever did it. It seems people wanted to attend the hearing, and not attack the Supreme Court. If they were stopped at the gate, they should not have gatecrashed the court.

Many people had also objected to making Shahbaz Sharif the chief minister.

Mrs.Kulsoom: I was his biggest supporter. Even when Ghulam Haider Wyne was made the chief minister, I had advocated Shahbaz Sharif's installation instead for I knew very well that he had the potential to work vigorously.

Did the experience prove successful?

Mrs.Kulsoom: Look, in this respect it was not, but nobody acknowledged the work he did.

Hamza does not accompany you in the protests. Any differences?

Mrs.Kulsoom: God forbid, there is no such thing at all. Hussain had been supervising the hospital. Now Guria is looking after the school and Saira the law college despite being a mother of a small child. Nusrat minds the household and Hamza the business. Whenever I need money I call him up for it, so how come there would be a clash.

Do you seek guidance from Mian Sharif?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I never leave the house without touching his feet. In Nawaz Sharif's absence, I would not have come out of the house, had he not encouraged me.

Will your children join the politics?

Mrs.Kulsoom: I won't allow my children to join the politics in Pakistan. I, too, am in the politics out of compulsion.

Which films do you watch keenly?

Mrs.Kulsoom: We are very religious peoples we do not watch films. Pardon, very occasionally I watch old films or songs but not films and songs of the present day.

It is known that Nawaz Sharif is fond of eating Sri Pai?

Mrs.Kulsoom: We do not eat *Sri Pai*; for last 29 years we have never had *Sri Pai*. Nawaz Sharif's favorite dish is *Aaloo Gosht* or *daal*. He eats pulses very fondly we cook pulses daily.



THE STORY OF
HUSSAIN NAWAZ

- FROM RAIWIND TO ISLAMABAD.
- P M HOUSE SAGA.
- EARLY DAYS OF CONFINEMENT.
- DETENTION IN THE GOVERNOR HOUSE.
- FROM SAFE HOUSE TO SAUDI ARABIA.
- TRADERS OF THE UNFAITHFULNESS.

I have met Hussain Nawaz Sharif many a time in Jeddah and London. He is an eyewitness to the events of October 12, 1999. He has observed every moment of the takeover closely. He has seen many persons change. He discloses many secrets.

FROM RAIWIND TO ISLAMABAD

- Since the speech was a secret affair, my father entrusted the responsibility to me
- I've been to Islamabad only three or four times during the prime ministership of my father
- I had been told about General Musharraf's dismissal on October 10
- The central theme of the speech was the Kargil war and the issue of keeping the prime minister uninformed
- The speech was disputed; Nazir Naji and Pervez Rashid helped improve the draft speech
- The army said they had been informed through a telephone call from the aeroplane regarding dismissal of General Musharraf.

THE ISSUE OF SPEECH

Q. Prior to October 12, you were a non-political person. You had no links with politics but all of a sudden you got a name and mention in the affairs of October 12. Would you please give its details?

Hussain Nawaz: I have been and I am a non-political figure. (Pause) I don't see any role for myself to play in Pakistan politics. (Pause) The dismissal of General Musharraf was a secret affair and my father had selected me being a non-political person to correctly reduce his thoughts into his speech and keep the secrecy.

Had your father Nawaz Sharif been sharing the secret affairs with you even before the event?

Hussain Nawaz: Not much. However, whenever any issue was discussed with the family members, my views were also asked. No one-on-one consultation though.

Was it the first time your counsel was solicited?

Hussain Nawaz: No, he did not ask for my counsel, rather he had assigned me the task of preparing a draft of his speech. My suggestions were not included in it.

For how many times have you been to Islamabad during Nawaz Sharif's rule?

Hussain Nawaz: Once a year; only four or five times during his prime ministership.

Would you go there for the day only?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, I never stayed there for more than a day or two.

Why so? Won't you relish your father's prime ministership?

Hussain Nawaz: No. The prime ministership is not a thing to be enjoyed. The people who want to enjoy it, I am sorry to say, are mean. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said that if people knew the extent the rulers would be held accountable before God, nobody would like to become a ruler. By the grace of God we already had everything; and so, the Prime Minister's House won't attract us. Only a short distance from there is our own house in Murree where I feel happier. Since I am a busy man, I see no enjoyment in the Prime Minister's House.

IT STARTED FROM OCTOBER 10

But how and when did the prime minister call you?

Hussain Nawaz: It was Friday on October 10. My father dictated me all the points of the speech he wanted to make, an assignment I was given for the first time. We were at home in Raiwind when he asked me to prepare the draft speech. I completed the task that night though I had to sit up till 3 a.m. Then he asked me to accompany him

to Abu Dhabi the following day so that we might discuss the matter further. It was an ordinary speech devoid of anything special. I gave the draft to my father during the journey for his review; he made several changes and got included some new points to make it comprehensive. We came back on October 11. It was an important affair but not that secret.

Didn't the draft speech mention General Musharraf's dismissal?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, and everyone knew why he was being sacked. These causes were mentioned in the speech. I think the matter did not merit secrecy for the army chief was just an official of the government of Pakistan.

VISIT TO ABU DHABI

Who did you meet in Abu Dhabi?

Hussain Nawaz: I did not meet anybody in Abu Dhabi. Nor was I supposed to meet anybody. However, my father met Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan for formal talks. However, after that we were told to leave. Then they met one on one but for a short time since the UAE president was unwell. After the meeting we left for the hotel and then for the airport.

WHAT DID THE SPEECH CONTAIN?

At what time did you arrive in Pakistan? You disembarked in Islamabad or Lahore?

Hussain Nawaz: We arrived in Islamabad between Maghrib [evening] and Isha [night] prayers. The speech was rehearsed and revised to include many other points at night. The speech covered the Kargil misadventure, about which the prime minister was not informed. Like the prime minister, all other functionaries of the state, including the army chief, should be faithful to the state and the people. He must rightly brief the public representatives on his acts and then act upon their directions. Regrettably he kept the prime minister uninformed about the Kargil affairs. The speech broached that the army chief had breached the trust and so it was difficult to work with him. We, in the larger interest of the country and the army, tried to pull him along but he did not behave.

Did the speech propose any action against General Musharraf?

Hussain Nawaz: No. No action was proposed. It was said that General Musharraf was being replaced with General Zia-ud-Din for he was making it difficult for us to pull on. There was no mention of General Zia-ud-Din or any new chief.

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS EMPOWERED TO DISMISS HIM

So, the speech did not say who the next army chief would be? Was it a generalized speech?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes it was. It only said that General Musharraf had breached the trust and had been interfering in political affairs making it difficult for us to run the government. And so, using his powers as a prime minister he would dismiss the army chief.

You slept with the secrets for the night of October 11, and then woke up the October 12 morning.

Hussain Nawaz: Till 3.00 am I kept revising the draft, woke up the October 12 morning and accompanied my father to Multan.

TRAVELING TOGETHER

Well, you accompanied him to Multan. What happened during the journey?

Hussain Nawaz: I was surprised to see Pervez Rasheed and Nazir Naji sitting in the aeroplane. Though Nazir Naji had accompanied us to Abu Dhabi, I was told not to talk to him about the speech. Later on, Nazir Naji, some army people and I were left in the aeroplane. Pervez Rashid was directed to get the speech firmed up. The basic draft of the speech is with the army, which they had seized when they sealed the Prime Minister's House. It was written in my hand. I told the army I had written it. I might see it again sometime. Nazir Naji wrote half a page himself and dictated the rest to me. Building on the theme of my draft, Naji gave the speech excellent wording, which would come out as a controversial one though. It cited the events of East Pakistan as well, which my draft didn't, and several other things but the theme remained the same. But the policy was only to honorably send General Musharraf home. The speech was very good. It pointed out many weaknesses our political system was suffering from, besides the army interference in the political affairs. This was to be a step towards strengthening the political system.

COMPLETE SECRECY

Did you ever fear such a sensitive thing could leak out?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, I did for there were army people and the staff of my father but they had been directed not to disturb us. The task was being done in the aeroplane with its doors closed. No stranger was there when we prepared the speech. Well, if it did leak out, it might have, but we have to live with it. Allama Iqbal had said:

"The flower's fragrance took away the garden's secret."

CHANGES IN THE DRAFT

What changes were made in the draft speech? Did anybody suggest that the speech not be delivered for it could create difficulties?

Hussain Nawaz: No, not at all, rather when Nazir Naji saw my draft he asked me with a smile springing on his face whether the prime minister had passed the executive order. I did not see his articles for I was detained isolated from the world around. Naji, without wasting a moment, started dictating the speech to me. The speech was very comprehensive speech, and it reflected truth. A few generals are weakening the system and earning the military a bad name. The real army is the soldiers who fight in the battlefield and live and die for the nation.

Did Mr. Sharif dash back to Islamabad from Vehari on receiving a telephone call?

Hussain Nawaz: At least I don't know anything about any phone call. Nor did anybody else say so. Javed Hashmi was sitting beside me.

Was the draft finalized before him?

Hussain Nawaz: No, he was not in the know nor did several other people there.

Then you left for Islamabad. Had the draft been finalized by then?

Hussain Nawaz: No, we had to sit over it in the Prime Minister's House also.

And no discussion on the way back?

Hussain Nawaz: No, I don't remember actually. With so many people around, it was not possible to talk about it.

Then what happened in Islamabad?

Hussain Nawaz: Before we landed in Islamabad, Nazir Naji rang up somebody. He said he talked to his son but later on one Colonel Jamshed from the ISI did mention about it and asked whether the reality of the call. As I replied in the negative, he said nothing else.

Did he mean he had informed somebody about General Musharraf's likely dismissal?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, they tried to make me believe so, but God knows whether it was true.

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE AIRPORT

The prime minister landed at the airport and directed the secretary of defense [retired general Iftikhar Ali Khan] to issue the notification. Was he present there?

Hussain Nawaz: I have learnt it from Brigadier Javed Malik but I am not witness to it because I along with some other people sat in a separate vehicle. I cannot recognize General Iftikhar for I have never met him.



PM HOUSE SAGA

- Father had got General Musharraf's dismissal endorsed from President Tarar
- Saeed Mehdi emphasized on downplaying General Musharraf's dismissal
- The army reached later, The guards had seized the Prime Minister's House on their own
- A major disarmed General Zia-ud-Din's guards
- A major mistreated General Zia-ud-Din
- A number of our companions sneaked out quietly after the takeover
- After the army had come, my father asked me to go to Chaudhary Shujaat's house but I refused

LAST HOURS OF THE RULE

Then you went to the Prime Minister's House.

Hussain Nawaz: Yes at the Prime Minister's House, we gave the speech a final shape. Then Nazir Naji called up his Urdu typist and had the speech typed. By 4 pm it was done. My father had had the advice endorsed from the president. I can recall seeing the document. There was little secrecy then, for the announcement had been made on television. General Zia-ud-Din had been called there. I had heard it either from Saeed Medhi or Brigadier Javed Malik that the defense secretary was asked to issue the notification. After the news at 5 pm, I heard Saeed Mehdi asking Pervez Rashid to downplay the news as a routine matter of shuffling a government servant. Then I saw General Akram, the Chief of General Staff, and for the first time Mian Shahbaz Sharif. I also witnessed Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan sitting there. He knew what had happened. He sat in the office of the military secretary. He was present in the Prime Minister's House when it was taken over. At the time of the English-language news in the evening to my surprise I received a call from Yousaf Beg Mirza, the Pakistan Television head. He told me that some army men had come to the station and were directing them not to release the news.

THE TAKEOVER

Was it the first time you learnt about the army movement?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes and so, I immediately informed my father about it. He asked me to tell him to be brave and stop this illegal action, for they are Pakistanis. I delivered the message and ultimately Yousaf Beg Mirza had the news telecast. I remember Shahbaz Sharif and Chaudhary Nisar were there.

How did the army arrive at the Prime Minister's House?

Hussain Nawaz: The army arrived at the Prime Minister's House very late. In fact, the guards there had already taken over by then.

Were they army men?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, obviously they belonged to the army, prominent among them Colonel Shahid who later was appointed as ADC to the Sindh governor, perhaps to reward him. Others on duty were Major Zahid and Captain Afaq.

SEIZURE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE

What did they do?

Hussain Nawaz: After 6.00 pm in front of two witnesses, one Saif-ur-Rehman and the other whose name I will not tell you lest he might also get entangled, the Prime Minister's House guards cordoned off General Zia-ud-Din's guards. General Zia-ud-Din asked Major Zahid to be sane for he had become the army chief by the orders of the prime minister, and he had taken over the charge. But Major Zahid misbehaved with him and warned the general to surrender their arms or he could have it done only in two minutes. The guards at the Prime Minister's House were larger in number.

How many guards did General Zia-ud-Din have?

Hussain Nawaz: I don't remember. Must have been smaller in number than those at the Prime Minister's House. The major did not heed to the general's request. And so, fearing bloodshed, the general asked his guards to surrender. Thereafter, the Prime Minister's House was taken over by its own guards.

What did they do then?

Hussain Nawaz: They seized the house.

Hadn't they done that already?

Hussain Nawaz: No, I mean until then they had not taken it over.

Were you warned not to leave the place?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, we were sitting in the office of the prime minister but we shifted to its residential compound when we learnt about the takeover. We saw the armed personnel positioned even in the corridors. The army troops came to take over the main gate and the Prime Minister's Office after 9 p.m. but the guards at the Prime Minister's House had already seized it.

PTV INCIDENT

Some persons had been dispatched to PTV who had a clash with the army. What was the incident?

Hussain Nawaz: My father had directed his military secretary Brigadier Javed Malik to oversee the affairs at the PTV. I learnt that army men had barged into the PTV station. Brigadier Javed talked to a major heading them but was dealt with harshly. He told the major he was committing treason. He ordered the major to leave the place but he resisted. In response the brigadier confined him in a room. Then he got the news telecast on the PTV and came back to the Prime

Minister's House. Afterwards it was learnt that more troops were dispatched to the TV station that took it over.

WHAT HAPPENED INSIDE

What had been happening at the Prime Minister's House in the meantime? Were you informed about the takeover?

Hussain Nawaz: Look; didn't the events like the attempt to stop the sacking news on the PTV hint they were at it?

Didn't you then feel you had erred?

Hussain Nawaz: Look, why regret the things Nazir Naji had correctly included in the speech. There was no direct mention of the army but one could easily infer that the institution of the army was paying for the follies of a few general only. The soldiers who give away their lives must be respected.

What had you been doing before the army arrived?

Hussain Nawaz: We have been receiving different news. I roamed in different rooms. General Muhammad Akram and General Zia-ud-Din remained busy in making phone calls. They also called another general but by the time he arrived the Prime Minister's House guards had taken over.

Who the general was?

Hussain Nawaz: He was General Salim Haider. The army at the gate did not allow him to enter the Prime Minister's House and so, he went back. Then they restricted us to the residential compound.

SOME PEOPLE FLED AWAY

What happened there?

Hussain Nawaz: When we were sent there some people said they would not leave us alone in this hour of difficulty while others, whom I won't name, fled.

Did all the people assemble in the residential compound?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, and even Saif-ur-Rahman was sent there. Chaudhary Nisar who was sitting there till 6 p.m. disappeared.

Was he taken away from the Prime Minister's House?

Hussain Nawaz: I don't know but we did not see him afterwards.

VALOUR OF SHAHBAZ SHARIF

Did Mian Shahbaz Sharif also accompany you to the residential compound?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes. He was in high spirits and he faced the generals quite bravely. And during the cruel detention also, I did not hear anything from my father but I heard that Shahbaz Sharif withstood the difficulties valiantly.

DETENTION AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE

Did Shahbaz Sharif go irate on the arrival of the generals?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, I will tell you about that when the time comes. But for now, I want to tell you that Saif-ur-Rehman, his brother Mujeeb-ur-Rehman; some staff members of Shahbaz Sharif's, Brigadier Javed Malik and Nawaz Sharif were there in the residential compound. The foreign secretary rang up Nawaz Sharif to ask whether he could do something for him. He knew about the takeover but he took the risk of phoning Nawaz Sharif. We were also watching CNN which was covering the military takeover. I think we remained confined to the lounge for two hours; we were not allowed to go to the drawing room even. Brigadier Javed Malik was keeping us posted on the situation. In the meanwhile, somebody told us that some helicopters had arrived there for anybody who wanted to go. But my father smilingly said where we could go.

Did your father ask you to go?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes he had asked me to go from there.

When?

Hussain Nawaz: The time he sent Brigadier Javed Malik to the TV station. I obediently told my father it was improper to go then.

What did he say then?

Hussain Nawaz: He bade me to go to Murree first. Then he asked me to go to Chaudhary Shujaat's house. And then he told me to go out but I said it was not right then to leave.

Did you fear the army could kill you people? They could do anything.

Hussain Nawaz: We were not frightened for life and death is in the hands of God. True, anything could happen there. But my intuition said it would be all right.

EARLY DAYS OF CONFINEMENT

- General Mehmood and Ali Jan Orakzai came to the Prime Minister's House with armed commandos
- General Mehmood hit Brigadier Javed Malik in his belly with his stick
- General Mehmood ordered my father to finish the phone call but he carried on
- General Mehmood stomped in and asked the prime minister why he had done so
- Since General Mehmood was at odds with General Jehangir Karamat and so, he was obliged to Nawaz Sharif for he had dismissed him
- General Mehmood said he had been praying lest there be such a time
- Mehmood asked my father for withdrawal of the notification for General Musharraf's dismissal
- Somebody said the notification withdrawal could be discussed but my father said it was not possible

ARRIVAL OF THE GENERALS

Ultimately the generals arrived at the Prime Minister's House?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, the army generals came there very late. Escorted by the prime minister's security incharge Colonel Shahid, General Mehmood and Major General Ali Jan Orakzai came in with about 30 commandos holding guns pointed towards us. Saif-ur-Rahman, Mujeeb-ur-Rahman, my uncle, my father, and we all were there. Before coming to us, General Mehmood hit Brigadier Javed Malik in his belly with his stick.

MILITARY SECRETARY BEATEN

Why?

Hussain Nawaz: For the reason he did not support the generals and rather defended a civilian elected prime minister. Brigadier Javed Malik told the generals it was not India, their enemy but the Prime Minister's House an elected prime minister of Pakistan so they should behave. The commandos beat him with their guns. He was clad in the army uniform but they beat him and then took him away. Then they came to us. My father was talking to somebody on cordless phone.

It is said Mr. Sharif talked on telephone to the then Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah.

Hussain Nawaz: No, it is incorrect. Calling abroad was not possible, for the Prime Minister's House exchange had also been taken over by the engineering corps. You know our armed forces are very good at doing such things. What to say of Prince Abdullah, he did not talk to anybody. Would he say our own army had taken over the government? General Mehmood asked my father not to use the telephone anymore. But my father did not give an ear to him; he completed the call and put the receiver down. General Mehmood was in very aggressive mood. He, along with the other general, sat on a sofa, behind them positioned the armed commandos pointing their guns at us. He very rudely asked my father as to why he had done so (dismissed General Pervez Musharraf). The prime minister told him it was his constitutional right and so, who was he to ask him that. General Mehmood said he had been praying for him and that they might not witness such an occurrence. Uncle Shahbaz told me General Mehmood was at odds with Jehangir Karamat, and so, when

he was replaced with General Pervez Musharraf, he took a sigh of relief.

GEN. MEHMOOD UNDER NAWAZ SHARIF'S OBLIGATION

Was General Mehmood obliged to Nawaz Sharif?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, indirectly. He said he had been praying for him [Nawaz Sharif]. My father told him they had been interfering in the government affairs. He said the army had created problems for the government during the Kargil war. General Mehmood was a corps commander, and so, himself one of those responsible for Kargil. The dialog continued until my father said that since they had taken over, they should do whatever they wanted to. General Mehmood said, "No Sir, even now we respect you." He said he wanted me to rescind the notification for General Musharraf's dismissal. My father said he wouldn't do it. He said if he didn't do that, he would have to use the military force. My father told him to do whatever they wanted to do, pointing towards the guns. General Mehmood said he still respected him. General Mehmood also said to Shahbaz Sharif that he had promised General Musharraf wouldn't be sacked. Shahbaz Sharif said that the circumstances had changed, undue political interference was being made and they were undermining the prime minister's authority and so, Nawaz Sharif was compelled to do so. He said his promise was linked to General Musharraf's cooperation with the government. He said the government additionally appointed him the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman but he feared his replacement as the army chief after his regular promotion. However, they took them away. When I followed them, General Orakzai bade me, "Son, you stay here."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

Did they ask him to sign the assemblies' dissolution order there?

Hussain Nawaz: No, it was discussed later as my father told me. He was then taken to the headquarters mess where he was put in solitary confinement where General Mehmood, General Orakzai and General Ehsan came to him at night and asked him to sign the assemblies' dissolution order.

WHAT HAPPENED TO US?

Then what happened to you?

Hussain Nawaz: I was left at the Prime Minister's House. With me were some bureaucrats, the security staff, Nazir Naji and some of the staff of Shahbaz Sharif's. They kept us there in very poor conditions. They allowed me to go to the residential compound but other people had no place to sleep. They were given only one room, the office of the private secretary Qamar-uz-Zaman, where they slept on the floor. They had no bathroom, no clothes to change for about 12 days. There was no arrangement for food. But thank God I had some money, which I gave to the cooks to cook food for us. The army was deployed even in the corridors. When I saw that I got worried that for such a (pardon me for using this word) petty thing, they had no fear of the judgment day when they would be held accountable for their misdeeds, no worry for 160 million people of Pakistan who, despite huge resources, are compelled to lead a deplorable life, no care for the motherland or its founder's ideology, for the strategic position of Pakistan or of Islamic Ummah.

In an interview Sanam Bhutto has held Prime Minister's House a prison did you also feel so?

Hussain Nawaz: To me the Prime Minister's House has always been a prison. I have never been keen to go there. The people who know the reality of all these things, you must believe, see no glamour in them.

FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE TO THE ARMY MESS

For how many days were you kept in the Prime Minister's House?

Hussain Nawaz: I think I was shifted from the Prime Minister's House the night between 23rd and 24th October. On the coup night a Pathan major sympathized with me. I told him that by the grace of God it would be over soon. Sixteen months do mean to us much but are nothing in the history of the nations. I told him we had trusted in God, we had done no wrong. And by the grace of God I was released the way I was confined, no courts involved. On our departure, the same major accompanied us to the airport. I asked him if I was right. He said smilingly that I was. Then he led me to my father and by a special flight we arrived here. Going back to the shifting, I was asked to get ready at 2.30 a.m. I was in my night suit, kurta pyjama. I had nothing with me except two or three suits for I had come to Islamabad for a couple of days only. I don't know where my pantsuit and necktie went. I was shifted from the PM's House the way a

terrorist was done; one vehicle escorting and one following ours, two armed persons in the front seat and two colonels on my right and left sides. They blindfolded me after a while. They didn't tell me where I was being shifted. They played a torture tape. I told them I was reciting durood [a prayer for the Prophet (PBUH) and his associates] and then they stopped playing it. I was put in a solitary confinement in a small room - no TV, no newspaper, no phone, nothing. From its window you could only see a wall. I was all-alone with my God. A guard would point his gun towards me whenever I peeped out of the window. As their gestures showed, some of the guards did have sympathy for me. We could not offer our Friday prayers.



DETENTION IN THE GOVERNOR HOUSE

- I learnt my father was confined with me by his coughing
- I formally bade goodbye to my father while he was being taken to Karachi
- To weaken my nerves, torture tapes were played
- Late night in extreme cold, I would be asked about our assets abroad
- An army officer threatened me to snatch the Quran from my hands

FROM THE ARMY MESS TO THE GOVERNOR HOUSE

Q. Till when you were kept at the army mess?

Hussain Nawaz: I was kept there until November 11, and then was shifted to the Governor House at Murree.

What were you asked about?

Hussain Nawaz: They investigated me thoroughly. One evening they started grilling me at 7 pm and with a break of only 15 minutes they continued it till 1.30 am. They quizzed me on General Musharraf's dismissal. Then they fabricated a story that my father had attempted to get the Musharraf plane crashed. I would tell them the truth. Air

Martial (retired) Syed Waqar Azeem was with me in jail. In amazement he would say that if he was not allowed to land at the Karachi airport, why he didn't land at Faisal or Masroor airbases. He said that once an Air India plane had made an emergency landing at Masroor and so could General Musharraf do.

Was Mr. Sharif in the same mess then?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes he was there.

Did he have any link with you?

Hussain Nawaz: No, but I learnt it when one day I saw from the window a waiter accompanying some army officers carrying food to a room. My sixth sense told me my father was kept here and it proved correct later.

Then you were shifted to the Governor House in Murree.

Hussain Nawaz: Yes, they shifted us to Murree.

In Murree you came to know Nawaz Sharif was also with you.

Hussain Nawaz: The day they shifted us to Murree, I learnt my father was also there. Though paper had been pasted on the window-panes of my bathroom so I could not see outside world, I peeped out and saw many cars parked there. I saw my father in cordon. I also heard him cough many a time and similarly my father heard me recite the Quran. Later on, they knew about our way of communication. When my father was being shifted to Karachi, he saw me from his window and bade me goodbye from there; saying loudly "Allah Hafiz".

GLIMPSE OF FATHER

Had he seen you there?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes he saw me and bade me goodbye as well. They did not forcibly close the window afterwards. He shook hands with everyone there and then they took my father away in a blue-color Corolla with its panes tinted. I prayed to God for his safety. After a few days I learnt Mian Shahbaz Sharif was also being shifted. I gathered courage, opened the door and told him I was there. He asked me to stay put for it would be all right. He said everybody back home was doing well and so was my father. He said he was being sent to Karachi. We prayed for each other. We did it defiantly.

I DID NOT HAVE CLOTHES

How did you get clothes to wear?

Hussain Nawaz: It was November when in Murree it's too cold. The room heater was out of order. I told a colonel I was feeling cold. He brought an old and used army pullover. However, I put it on. I did keep it wearing but it didn't serve.

Wasn't there any blanket?

Hussain Nawaz: Yes there was one, but too heavy to pull over. I kept wearing my sleeping dress. One day I asked an army man to bring me a suit of my father's. He sarcastically asked me from where. However, after a day or so they provided me a dress, which I recognized as that of my father. They brought me clothes from my home after a long time.

TOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES

Please give details of investigation?

Hussain Nawaz: They would ask me about the aeroplane case and I fully cooperated with them. The day they shifted my father to Karachi, a colonel told me I had no chance of being released but there might be a way out if I cooperated with them. They would take me away for interrogation late in night. He asked me about our assets abroad. I asked him who he was to ask me that and why I was put there for more than one month. My investigator was Colonel Jamshed. He kept on insisting upon me to enlist our assets abroad. He knew nothing about the questions he asked. He didn't know the business terminology.

However, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) officials knew their job very well but they did not grill me. They kept me in solitude in a corridor with windows without panes in the cold nights of November. I would start walking to keep myself warm. They warned me to call such persons who could make me divulge everything. It is God that gives you courage. I said I won't utter a word even if they hanged me. I would offer prayers and recite to while away the solitary confinement. He threatened me saying; "There would be nothing known *wazoo* [ablution] and I will take the book away from you." I told him to do whatever he wanted to. However, I hid the small copy of the Quran for I felt he could do whatever he had threatened to.

Somehow, it did not materialize. I was allowed a 20-minute walk daily. He put a bar on it. But later on another colonel came and he accompanied me to walk. I neither asked for it nor did I protest. The day my father was shifted, an officer gave me a warm jacket. It was my father's jacket, which he had left for me while leaving. He gave it to me I spoke nothing for I knew he too was frightened that he might lose his job if anybody complained against him that he had given my father's jacket to me. Once I asked from an officer on duty whether it was alright at my home. He told me he knew nothing. At the same time he gestured that all was well. They were afraid of even speaking to us.



FROM SAFE HOUSE TO SAUDI ARABIA

- Safe House lessened my sense of loneliness
- My son Zakaria met me after three months. As he wept, army personnel also sobbed
- I slept on a dirty rug in the Civil Line police station amidst loud music
- The political opponents treated me like their children
- The police behaved very nicely, they acknowledged that uncle Shahbaz Sharif had raised their salaries
- They would check even my shoes in the jail
- Many a time scorpions came out in my cell in the Attock jail

IN THE SAFE HOUSE

Q. Where were you taken from the Governor House, Murree?

Hussain Nawaz: One day a man whom I knew as one Colonel Hamid Ullah came to me. He told me, albeit repenting, that once

during the investigation a question of his riled Shahbaz Sharif. They traded hot words over the question, which Shahbaz Sharif termed below the belt. The colonel hurled an insult at which Shahbaz Sharif got to his feet and said he would slap him. While we heard sobs around us, this act of Shahbaz Sharif's was quite courageous. I learnt later on that their boss apologized for that.

POLICE STATION AND THE CASE

What was the question?

Hussain Nawaz: I don't know really. Anyhow Colonel Hamid took me to the Safe House, my head covered with a chador. They kept me there for 21 days. During Ramadan, they provided us *Sehri* and *Aftari*. An officer who would meet me during the walk in Murree, and tell me not to worry also came there. He said, "You are not a dacoit, you are not a spy, you are not a murderer, you are not a bandit, so we have just kept you for nothing." He said I must relax here. Adjacent to my room was a lounge and a kitchen. An old man would cook for us. He treated me with affection and that lessened my loneliness. Investigators kept on coming there. Sometime it seemed as if they had come just for formality. During the period, even a general came there but he did not bother to come inside. One day the colonel who had threatened me came there and took me to another safe house. It must have been bugged but there sat a soldier throughout my meeting with the lawyer of my mother. My mother had moved a habeas corpus petition in the high court. She said she did not know where I was kept or what charge I faced. The court asked my mother's lawyer to meet me and know in what circumstances I was being kept.

The lawyer, Zahid Abbasi, was under the ISI fear. He uttered no word. They told my mother's lawyer to ask me how I was being kept. However, when I had met the lawyer, they shifted me to headquarters mess where they gave me a piece of paper with NAB logo inscribed on top, signed by the [anti-graft panel's] chairman, and said they were formally arresting me. I asked the deputy commissioner for the charge I was being arrested. He said vacillating he did not know it but he had to arrest me on the NAB orders. I asked him to do whatever he wanted to saying verily to God we belong and we are to return to him. Colonel Jamshed was my father's age. I asked him how he would feel if this had happened to his son. He said he was sorry for whatever had happened. However, he added that whatever had happened was because of the petition my

mother had filed in the high court. My mother was allowed to see me for two hours. She saw me after three months. She brought with her my two-year-old son Zakaria. When she was to leave, my son started crying. Tears welled out of his eyes when an army guard saw this. It also pained even the ISI people. However, they took me to a safe house.

One day early in the morning, they were told to send me to the Civil Lines Police Station. It was under the army control; people from the ISI and the Military Intelligence were also present there. Police were told to take orders from army men there. They were told to cause me pain as much as they could. It was Ramadan. They would play loud music to keep me awake. I asked a subedar to stop it for I was offering the *Tahajjud* prayer. He got it switched off but just after 15 minutes it was playing again. The room I was kept in was very small and so dirty that even a criminal could not bear it for more than a few hours. I was kept there for many days.

The room had a bathing facility in it where dirty water did not drain. There was no arrangement for bathing and ablution. They had put a tarpaulin on the window so that I could not see out of it. I was kept in solitude for 15 days. I was given a mat to sleep on and a smelly old quilt. The floor and the toilet were too dirty. No shaving box, shampoo or soap was available there. Anwar Saifullah, Nawaz Khokhar, Syed Naveed Qamar and Sarwar Khan Kakar were also there.

POLICE STATION INMATES

How had you been treated at the police station?

Hussain Nawaz: I tell you the truth. All the people over there were very nice. They treated me humanely. Other persons detained in the police station befriended me; the bond of their friendship proved so strong that we are good friends even now. Saif-ur-Rehman's brother Mujeeb-ur-Rahman and Chaudhary Tanveer were kept in the cell next to mine but the police had been directed not to let us meet one another. They kept me there for three months without any charge. Then they shifted me to the Adyala Jail.

Were you kept informed about the outside world?

Hussain Nawaz: No newspaper was available to me when I was kept at the police station. Once a week my mother used to come to see me. Once they kept her waiting for two hours. However, we expected

nothing good from them. Despite restrictions I had been secretly reading newspapers smuggled to me. The police treated me very well; they had not forgotten the favor Shahbaz Sharif had showed upon them by increasing their salaries. They would do messaging for the people detained there without any reward.

IN ADYALA JAIL

Where were you taken after that?

Hussain Nawaz: They would produce me before the court but use delaying tactics. The judges were afraid unable to go against the prosecution. We were then shifted to Adyala Jail where we were kept for one month without framing any charge. Then I was told I faced Hudaibia Paper Mills case. You know we had already been tried in the same case before. The court transferred my case to Attock and so, I was to be kept at Attock Jail. They had prepared a strange and nonsense reference.

AN ATTOCK JAIL INMATE

Nawaz Sharif was also confined in Attock.

Hussain Nawaz: No, he was in the Attock Fort whereas I was kept at the Attock Jail. In the case filed against me I was not even nominated. I never knew my offence. The reference was a copy of the one prepared by the Peoples Party. I was neither arrested in the Peoples Party regime nor was I tried in the case. However, I remained in the Attock Jail for about six or seven months rather until December. With me in the jail were Azam Hoti, Sardar Mehtab Abbasi, Dr. Farooq Sattar and Haroon Pasha. They were very kind to me. One night an army man came there and asked me to get ready to go.

INFORMATION REGARDING DEAL

Didn't he tell you some deal was under process or you were to be released?

Hussain Nawaz: I knew some talks were going on with Saudi Arabia but it was too vague a piece of information to build hope on. We were raided upon many times in the jail. Once the deputy commissioner himself visited the jail and even searched my shoes.

What were they looking for?

Hussain Nawaz: Mobile telephone. They acted on a tip-off that I used mobile phone.

Did they find anything?

Hussain Nawaz: Nothing. I did not have any. (Laughter) Mobile phone did not work in the Attock Jail. They even searched the tissue paper box. Many a time I found scorpions roaming in my cell. Often they dealt me harshly. But they would go mild whenever pressure from the government reduced. Ultimately we were released from the Attock Jail one day.



TRADERS OF UNFAITHFULNESS

- Many people would avoid us when we were confined at the Prime Minister's House
- Khayam Qaisar, an associate of my father's, talked foul of us sitting with the army officers
- Personal things of my father had been stolen; army men used his mouthwash
- My father's 60,000 dollars in travelers' cheques and 100,000 dollars in cash, and his personal watches had been stolen
- We do not intend to do business in Pakistan any more
- In Pakistan business and politics cannot go together
- Now we shall not tell what our sources of income are
- In 1988 we had concluded an agreement for manufacturing of motorcars but due to politics we could not materialise it

WHO IS THE VILLAIN?

Q. You came to Jeddah and started your business. The story has concluded. Who were the villains in this story? Who among your companions proved unfaithful?

Hussain Nawaz: The story is not yet over. The moment it concludes, the conspiracy will be out. The villains are in action, the story is nearing its climax and soon you will know who the villains are. God will bring them to the fore.

UNFAITHFUL FRIENDS

Some friends of yours must have allied with them. How could there be a coup without them?

Hussain Nawaz: It is correct. When we were confined at the Prime Minister's House, we were allowed Friday prayers in the mosque there. I saw that people who were once very close to us would avoid us. Khayam Qaisar, once Pakistan's ambassador to Abu Dhabi, who had come with us from Abu Dhabi. He had good relations with us because he had remained private secretary to my father. One day I was told he was sitting with the army men. I won't go wherever there were army men but I went there just to verify the information. I saw him sitting and taking the meal with Brigadier Sajid, Major Zahid and Captain Afaq. No food was cooked at the Prime Minister's House then. He was enjoying food while his companions were confined there. Qamar-uz-Zaman, despite his old age, was detained there. Khayam Qaiser was not present at the time of coup. He had hid himself somewhere when he knew about the coup. I went there and paid him salutation. He got upset. I asked him as to how he was there. He said he had come there to collect his luggage for he had not vacated his house in the Prime Minister's House. I asked him as to where would he go, he said he would go back to Abu Dhabi.

Did he know about the army chief's dismissal in advance?

Hussain Nawaz: I don't know. Khayam Qaisar kept on sitting there; he used very contemptuous words for my father whose he had been a great admirer of. He would call himself his lieutenant ready to sacrifice his life for him. He also rebuked me. Then before the army personnel he said, "Pervez Musharraf has a transparent personality, if you have failed to go along with him, you cannot go along anybody else". He spoke very highly of Musharraf and bad of my father. He asked me what we had done for the people, overlooking

that he himself had been a part of our government. He had been a private secretary to the prime minister before being made the ambassador. He was thought to be Mian Nawaz Sharif's right-hand man. He was much active politically as well. After a couple of days he visited the Prime Minister's House again. I saw him enjoying the company of the army personnel on duty. He again took food there with them. They helped him shift his luggage.

Colonel Ausaf from the Engineering Corps was deputed to scrutinize my father's belongings there. He sifted everything. He broke his cupboards for papers. He took my father's briefcase and other personal belongings of my father including some decoration pieces. He asked me as to who owned those pieces. I said they belonged to the one to whom the Prime Minister's House belonged. He asked me to show the receipts. Were we supposed to keep the receipts to show them to him? I told him the things belonged to my father. But he said they were the state property. Then he got the room vacated and took everything away with him, including many costly things. We don't know where those things had gone. It's the state property they occupy and build their houses on. These pieces, too, might have been decorating somebody's home. A day after the coup, Captain Afaq got into the residential compound and returned rinsing his mouth with my father's mouthwash. I kept quiet and gave no comment. He said he had not yet received the supply. I again said nothing and thereupon he left. He must have talked to his seniors. He came back and gave the used bottle to me but I refused saying had he taken it with my permission? Since he had no answer he put the bottle there and fled away. My father says they had taken away 100,000 dollars in cash and 60,000 dollars in travelers' cheques besides his personal watches.

Do you intend to come to politics?

Hussain Nawaz: Honestly, I am not able to do politics.

What do you mean by 'able'?

Hussain Nawaz: I do not see any role for me in politics.

Why?

Hussain Nawaz: I am leading an honorable life. And that's enough.

So, nobody will join politics from amongst your family members?

Hussain Nawaz: I cannot say anything on that but I don't like politics for glamour.

Don't you see any role for yourself even in the future politics?

Hussain Nawaz: God knows the best about future. In the given circumstances, Musharraf can say what will his role be in future politics but I cannot.

BUSINESS IN PAKISTAN

Would you do any further business in Pakistan?

Hussain Nawaz: Very difficult for us to do further business in Pakistan. Here in Jeddah, God has blessed us with a mill. This is not a political country; we can do business and trade here with complete satisfaction. Whatever the business we have in Pakistan, we think it is more than enough for us. If I could do any service to my motherland by any apolitical way, I would.

POLITICS AT HOME

Do you all discuss politics sitting together at home?

Hussain Nawaz: Well, I cannot say we never discussed the politics at home; for when my father was the prime minister we used to sit together once a week. Politics had become a part of our life but we had only a little time to discuss it. Now we have ample time. We usually sit together at the breakfast table and discuss politics and analyze different situations.

How much does Mr. Sharif allow you to differ with his viewpoint?

Hussain Nawaz: No, he never tells us not to have our independent opinion. We may say with freedom whatever we want to, but respectfully.

STEEL MILLS SET UP IN JEDDAH

Who proposed the name of the steel mills established in Jeddah?

Hussain Nawaz: Three or four names were under consideration. Sharif Steel Mills clashed with the new Saudi industrial policy, which barred naming an industry after its owner's family name. Jeddah Steel too was not approved. Then we suggested al-Hijaz Steel and al-Aziz Steel and I favored al-Aziz, one of God's names. Now we have been directed by the government to keep our letterhead with much care for its sanctity.

Why did you opt for doing business in Saudi Arabia? Are you thinking to close your business in Pakistan?

Hussain Nawaz: My father had pledged he wouldn't set up any new industry while ruling Pakistan. Business and politics cannot go together in our country and so we didn't enhance our assets there. But when we reached here we had plenty of time. One option was to take food, offer prayers and go to sleep but it this routine didn't behove us. We don't believe in living such a life. Then we decided to set up an industry in the name of Allah. Saudi Arabia is our friendly country, yet like 'brain drain' industrialists' exit will harm the country's economy.

But your detractors ask where have you got the capital from to establish a steel mill in Saudi Arabia?

Hussain Nawaz: By the grace of God our family is a well-recognized industrial family. Even now we own two huge sugar mills, a textile mill, some other units and a large agricultural farm in Pakistan. How do they ask such questions then? They had incarcerated me my father and my uncle in Pakistan. They occupied our corporate offices. They arrested our chartered accountants and managers. They tried their best to unearth any irregularities on our part but failed. Even the worst administrative accountability failed to prove anything against us. I am not an accountant to open ledgers and accounts to satisfy you from where we had got the money. It is time we set aside this issue. If we got any loans from Saudi banks, it was not done under the government pressure. We did not borrow any money from any Pakistan bank to set up the industry here. It's our hard work. It's the grace of God. If somebody doubts, he may say so. The ruling people have put us in exile. Sharif family's strength irks them and so, they spread such rumors. If they want to talk to us, they must do it on the government level. The new government has made a law to question the source of wealth. We won't divulge anything.

How far is it correct that your industrial group has progressed by virtue of politics?

Hussain Nawaz: Daewoo and Hyundai groups of Korea were established 50 years ago. And so was ours, which once stood out in Pakistan as the mother of all industries with 21 sugar mills and foundries. Had it been progressing courtesy our politics, it would have become a multinational enterprise. We had even concluded an agreement with Honda in 1988 for manufacturing cars, which could not set up a plant because we were in politics. Only a few units have survived now, thanks to politics.

A TALK WITH
HASSAN NAWAZ SHARIF

- Takeover was unexpected.
- First contact.
- Lebanese prime minister's interest.
- Crown Prince Abdullah's displeasure.
- What did President Tarar do?
- My illness
- Political aspirations
- Mistakes.

Hassan Nawaz Sharif played an important role in the Sharif family's release. He was the only member of the family who was out of the country at the time of military takeover. He also ran media campaigns and later on managed to get his family released after lobbying with the governments of America, Saudi Arabia, England, Qatar and Lebanon. Thereafter he has not been active in politics. In April 2006, I met him in London several times for details of his efforts.

SO SAID HASSAN NAWAZ SHARIF

- Saudi Arabia had had it done through Qatar and Saad Hariri of Lebanon
- I made the first contact with Prince Abdullah through Saudi ambassador in London
- I was given the royal protocol in Saudi Arabia
- Prince Abdullah was displeased when the government filed an appeal for the enhancement of Nawaz Sharif's life imprisonment to a death sentence
- Pakistan was signalled its free oil supply could be stopped
- Saudi Arabia has imposed no restriction on Sharif family's movement
- My father is the most successful politician of the country
- At the age of 30, my nervous ailment pains my parents

TAKEOVER WAS UNEXPECTED

Did you fear wrap-up of your father's rule?

Hassan Nawaz: On October 12, I was in London. My degree had been completed and my parents were to shortly come to London to attend my convocation. As a student of politics I did know how heightened the tension was after Kargil but did not fear a military coup.

How did you receive the October 12 news?

Hassan Nawaz: I was taken aback when somebody told me about the coup. To verify it, I rang up the Prime Minister's House, our Model Town home where my mother lived and our Raiwind home where my grandfather resided, but the phones had gone dead there. In the meantime, international media started playing the news of the military takeover in Pakistan.

After they were sent to jail, how did you get in touch with them?

Hassan Nawaz: My mother made the first contact. She told me they were under house arrest and that my father and Hussain Nawaz were put at some rest house. I could speak to my father the first time he was produced before the court. We also had a glimpse of him on the international media getting out of the vehicle. My mother got me connected with him on mobile telephone. He was in high spirits and by the grace of God he rather consoled me and told me not to worry for God would help us. He had learnt through newspapers that I had launched a campaign for him.

Had some family member of yours told you to launch the drive or it was your own initiative?

Hassan Nawaz: The reaction to the military takeover on the international media, especially the US and the UK media, made me feel how serious an affair it was which could defame Pakistan. The enigma was that no information had been coming out about the prime minister's family as to how they had been kept. When I, as an immediate family member, told the media I was the prime minister's son staying in London, a flood gate opened. I received an exquisite response, people as well as officials started coming to me and the contacts turned into a campaign, not a disciplined one though, because nobody knew it could so happen.

Your interviews did help greatly for nobody else was as important as a family member could be.

Hassan Nawaz: I had full cooperation of my family. My grandfather was alive then. I talked to him and to my mother on telephone. They both bade me to tell the world as to what was going on and how they were treating an elected prime minister. It all started here. And then the world knew as to what they had been doing to us. Then during his rule, my father had developed very friendly relations with other countries, especially with the Muslim ones. In the US was President Bill Clinton, he had good ties with him. Similarly I too had good relations with the ambassadors of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar and Kuwait. When they learnt Mr. Sharif's son was in London, they offered me their unconditional support.

FIRST CONTACT

Which ambassador contacted you first?

Hassan Nawaz: I had made the first contact myself. I talked to the Saudi ambassador in London on telephone. He very kindly called me to his office. He bade me to continue my efforts the way I was putting in apolitically and keep him updated. He told me that Prince Abdullah had a great respect for my father. I said I knew that and so, wanted to meet him and brief him on whatever was in my knowledge.

Then I contacted his office in Riyadh. They sought my details and said they would contact me later. After an hour I received a call from Saudi Arabia and was told that Prince Abdullah had consented to seeing me in Saudi Arabia. Our meeting was set up for the week that followed. I had two associates with me. I was given the royal guest protocol. King Fahd's protocol officer received me at the airport who took me to the palace where my father would stay as the prime minister. A day later I was to meet the crown prince. I was a bit nervous for I had never met such a high-level official before. I was told Prince Abdullah was unwell, and so, would give only 10 to 15 minutes for the meeting. I said I would finish in time.

At his private office, the crown prince himself received me. As I introduced myself, he crossed my words and said Musharraf had visited him. (Rather he had forgotten his name and he had to ask his interpreter whether he recalled the name of the person whose picture was published in the newspapers carrying his dogs) Prompted by the interpreter, he said he had straightforwardly asked Musharraf as to when he would release Nawaz Sharif. He quoted Musharraf as

saying that he faced several cases and so, it was up to the court to decide.

The prince said if Mr. Sharif owed any money, the Saudi government would pay it back. He said Musharraf had promised him to do whatever he could. The prince said he had ended the meeting before time. As soon as the Musharraf delegation left his office, the prince said, he rang up Sheikh Zayed, then UAE president in Abu Dhabi, the Qatari president and all others who Musharraf was to visit. He said he told them he had asked Musharraf to release Nawaz Sharif before we could talk to him and they should follow his suit. He said they would have Nawaz Sharif and his family out of the jail. It encouraged me very much. We didn't discuss the exile to Saudi Arabia or anywhere else then. I told the prince I had come to him for he had called Nawaz Sharif his brother. He said he was like his blood brother. I said I felt as if I was sitting with my father. He rounded his hand on my head and gave me solace saying they were with us and they would do whatever they could. He asked me whether I needed any money or any other help in London. They would manage it through the embassy in London. I said I had a residence in London and by the grace of God we were well off. He told me to visit Qatar. I said I would go to Qatar for sure but before that I wanted to perform Umrah. He ordered my Umrah and stay in the royal guest house at Makkah and Madina arranged. He sent me to Qatar by a special flight.

I met the crown prince of Qatar there. He said they were after the case. The foreign minister of Qatar, Sheikh Hamid, was the first official to go to Pakistan to see Nawaz Sharif in the jail. The other person who met him in the jail was Muhammad Sarwar, the British parliamentarian who met him during the early days of his imprisonment. When I learnt Sheikh Hamid had already met my father, I understood Prince Abdullah had been supervising the affair by himself. I felt consoled, and now we wanted to maintain the pressure. You know the Saudis keep a low profile and do not hold press conferences. They also told me to contact the Clinton administration for my father had very good ties with them.

Then I went to the US. I knew my father had good relationship with Secretary Bill Richardson and I met him there. I called on senators, among them Bruce Reidel, and the officials of the Pakistan Desk in the State Department. These people were very close to Clinton and they must have kept him informed. When I told them I

had talked to Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and that they were very serious in having it done, they said since Saudi Arabia had great political influence on Pakistan, they would encourage me to use that channel. They also promised to help us in this context. They said Clinton was on a visit to South Asia. He would visit India but had to decide whether he would go to Pakistan. They said they could also use this visit to get Nawaz Sharif a relief. They promised to keep in touch with me. Bill Richardson told me he had briefed Bill Clinton on the entire situation and he had instructed his administration to do whatever they could formally or informally for the prime minister. I did have meetings after that. I visited Washington, Riyadh and Doha and newspapers covered it all. I have kept all the clippings. I remember a newspaper in Qatar splashed a headline on the front page; "On a mission to save father." They published all the details of my efforts the world over.

LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER'S INTEREST

Was your mother also in touch with you?

Hassan Nawaz: To some extent. She was not allowed to travel and would meet only a few people. However, Mariam was also involved as the talks progressed. One day Prince Abdullah's office called me up and asked whether I knew the family of the Lebanese prime minister. I said I didn't for I hadn't met them. They told me they had deputed Rafiq Hariri's son Saad Hariri for talks with General Musharraf's government for my father's release. I was surprised to know that things had moved so far. As a follow-up to my meeting, some Lebanese and Saudi people met my grandfather to know if he had any reservations or suggestions. He confirmed that he was ready to entertain if our benefactor Prince Abdullah so desired.

However, they were told that since we had not done any wrong, we wouldn't ask for pardon or sign any agreement with the Musharraf government, which we did not recognize as legitimate. They agreed and said Prince Abdullah knew Nawaz Sharif was a young politician, having a long political career ahead. Then they met my father in the jail twice or thrice. He also confirmed the proposal and said he would neither conclude an agreement with the government nor would he seek pardon. If we had to resign and seek pardon from them, we would have been allowed to go anywhere. They said Prince Abdullah wanted him to come to Saudi Arabia, live for about two years in low profile without taking part in politics and

then would he decide whether to allow him travel or not. So, this is the background to whatever happened.

PRINCE ABDULLAH'S DISPLEASURE

How were the talks concluded?

Hassan Nawaz: Musharraf had given the word to Prince Abdullah that he would release Nawaz Sharif. When the court sentenced Nawaz Sharif to life in jail, acquitting the co-accused and the Musharraf government filed an appeal in the high court for death sentence and charging the acquitted five persons afresh, Prince Abdullah lost his temper over Musharraf not keeping his promise. Qatari foreign minister quoted him as saying he won't speak to Pakistan anymore. He said he would stop the free supply of oil to Pakistan, which had continued since the nuclear tests to cushion the impact of economic sanctions. I think a country like Pakistan couldn't afford to harm its relations with Saudi Arabia.

Then how was the issue of loans settled?

Hassan Nawaz: When the situation deteriorated, it turned into a 'take it' or 'leave it' affair. Now it appeared they would have to release Nawaz Sharif. It was for this reason that Pervez Musharraf in his speech on TV said certain things could not be disclosed. In fact, Saudi Arabia had warned Pakistan in strong terms over the issue. We did have liabilities but they were long-term. Our family was told it could but after returning the bank loans overnight, though such liabilities usually ran for 20 or 25 years. How could we do it? Even if General Motors returns its loans to the government of America overnight, it will go bankrupt in a day. They asked us to return the loans overnight. Otherwise they would confiscate our assets. My father, however, agreed to surrender some of our assets. He also agreed to return the loans by selling the industrial assets but he did not agree to give up our homes at Raiwind and Model Town. We still own our Model Town house. How can we leave our ancestral house, we have been brought up there.

Who held the final talks?

Hassan Nawaz: It was clear from the day one that all the immediate family members were to leave Pakistan including the non-political persons like Abbas Sharif and Hussain who had been kept in jail without any case against them.

Who firmed up the details?

Hassan Nawaz: At that time my involvement was limited; I was in London and the talks were being held in Pakistan with Mariam and my grandfather. My mother was also active. So the final talks were held there.

Do you know the details of agreement between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia?

Hassan Nawaz: There was no such document, no such agreement with the Musharraf regime, as hindered Sharif family's return to Pakistan for 10 years. The Sharif family did seek permission from President Tarar to be released from the jail on medical grounds. But there was no document bearing the signatures of Mian Nawaz Sharif or Mian Shahbaz Sharif.

WHAT DID PRESIDENT TARAR DO?

It is said that President Tarar gave President Clinton some message when he met him?

Hassan Nawaz: I have heard about that but I do not know whether he had done so.

People say that if there was no deal, why did they stay in Saudi Arabia for so long? What hampered them coming to London?

Hassan Nawaz: The understanding arrived at was only that my father and his family would stay in Saudi Arabia for a couple of years and when things went normal they could go wherever they wanted to. But you know how for the last three years have their passports' renewal been delayed. The day they received their passports, they got out. Saudi Arabia had no objection to their movement.

It means Mr. Sharif can go to Pakistan even, there is no obstacle.

Hassan Nawaz: I think there is no obstacle. There is no question of any hindrance.

Do you intend to take part in politics?

Hassan Nawaz: I have no intention for taking part in politics yet. I have never thought about it. I had not thought six or seven years back I would run an international campaign for my family and would meet the kings for that.

Were you in Jeddah when these people arrived in Saudi Arabia?

Hassan Nawaz: I was in London. I went there three days later when they had settled there. I think my father and uncle are still young in politics. They may live long. They strengthened their party and were elected as the prime minister and the chief minister. They have a long political career ahead. They will again rule the country. So, I don't intend to take part in politics or I have not thought about it yet.

You have been very successful in business. Do you intend to establish your business in Pakistan?

Hassan Nawaz: I am thankful to God who has given me business sense. I have been running my business in London for the last eleven, twelve years. After the coup I had to live here, and so, I started real estate business here. I also run a financial fund through which we do trading in the UK and the US. God has gifted us with abundant financial resources. I wish I could go back to Pakistan after winding up my business in London. There I can help poor families by providing employment to them, by establishing industries and making investments. If Pakistan needed me I would not have a second thought and would settle there for I want to serve the country through my thought and actions.

MY ILLNESS

Is your illness quite serious?

Hassan Nawaz: Everyone takes illness very seriously. Health is wealth, a blessing of God. I am a young man of 30 and I am suffering from an illness of nerves, my nervous system does not work properly. It was diagnosed about six months back. At first it was a great setback for my family and me it was very depressing. However, slowly I understood one should not live one's life as a patient. I know difficulties come from God but they also end; this illness can be managed for it fluctuates. It is evident this disease is incurable but medical science can control it with medicines, which also have some side effects.

What is it called?

Hassan Nawaz: Multiple Sclerosis. It has different kinds, some easily manageable while others difficult to handle. Thank God, it has been diagnosed early.

How was it diagnosed? What were the symptoms?

Hassan Nawaz: I was in Saudi Arabia with my family for Ramadan when I felt some weakness in my body and legs. I could not understand what was happening to me but the symptoms were disabling. We immediately went to a hospital and after different tests they diagnosed it as Multiple Sclerosis. They advised further tests. However, even they believed it was MS.

How can we change Pakistan's fate?

Hassan Nawaz: I think if the next 10 or 20 elections were held without the military interference, there would be no coups.

WHY YOU JOIN POLITICS

Hassan Nawaz: My father and uncle are very young and I can't think to bypass them. Actually, so far, I have not thought about joining politics yet.

MISTAKES

What are the one or two major mistakes Nawaz Sharif should not have committed?

Hassan Nawaz: I don't know what will happen in the future but to me his major mistake was his sincerity towards Islam and the country because of which he acted in a way political powers did not like. If his aim had been only to do politics and remain in power, he would not have done so but his conscience did not allow him to limit himself to the liking and disliking of the political powers. If you call it a political mistake, let it be so.

Any reforms that you think could streamline things immediately?

Hassan Nawaz: There is always room for improvement. You may talk of good governance or policy making. Pakistanis say the people around my father were not good. They were not faithful. They have shifted their loyalties are sitting in other parties today. You need a team selected on merit. Merit should not be compromised.

How do you evaluate you father as a politician?

Hassan Nawaz: I think he is a very successful politician. Who was young; Benazir Bhutto or my father, when they joined politics? Becoming the prime minister of Pakistan twice at so young an age is the best proof of his success. Now he is out of Pakistan for about five

or six years but people still remember him. The projects like Motorway, Gwadar Port, Coastal Highway, Dry Ports in Karachi and Lahore and many other things evidence this. Seen from this angle, he is the most successful politician in the history of Pakistan.



AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
WITH GENERAL ZIA-UD-DIN

SO SAYS GENERAL ZIA-UD-DIN

- Politicians themselves make several mistakes but even then they should be given a chance
- A separate general should be installed as the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman
- Initially General Musharraf was ready that I be made the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman
- Even a large-hearted person like General Jehangir Karamat did not want anybody else to be made the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman
- General Aslam Beg was a true democrat; he was ready to become the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman
- General Asif Nawaz's appointment before time was General Beg's proposal
- I am not 'Butt' we prefix 'Khawaja' to our names.
- My father was an army captain and my grandfather the chief justice of Jaipur state
- I was kept in solitary confinement for 660 days
- General Aziz and General Mehmood did not record their statements in my enquiry

- I did not get pension and other benefits. I am into construction business
- I had verbally sought retirement on October 9, 1999
- I had never gone to see 'Abba Jee'. General Musharraf would go to Raiwind
- Shahbaz Sharif asked me not to be annoyed for they were going to appoint an Urdu-speaking person as the army chief
- General Musharraf got angry when Benazir Bhutto dubbed me better than him
- I had good personal relationship with General Musharraf
- I stopped the spying of politicians as the ISI chief
- The army was fully prepared to impose martial law on September 17, 1999
- Mullah Omar told me Usama was stuck in their throat; they could neither swallow him nor throw him up
- Usama bin Laden's personal assistant had been caught and we were about to catch him when the government was toppled
- We were preparing for the Afghan grand jirga
- I did go to Dubai with Nawaz Sharif but did not conspire against anybody
- On the one side the coup was underway and on the other some people of 111 brigade were arranging my reception

- All corps commanders had accepted the change; I had spoken to all of them
- General Usmani put the flag off General Musharraf's car six times saying he was legally no more an army chief
- How could my wife distribute sweets when she did not know I had been made the army chief?
- I did not even know General Musharraf was coming home by a PIA plane
- Wives of all the generals gathered at our home when they learnt I had become the army chief

Several mysteries enwrap the October 12, 1999 night takeover by General Musharraf. The most inexplicable character was that of General Zia-ud-Din. He was appointed the army chief but could remain so only for a few hours. Within the four walls of the Prime Minister's House, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif elevated him to a four-star general and the news of his appointment was also aired on the state-owned Pakistan Television. But the heavens had thought otherwise. Unexpected events tossed him behind the bars where he was to stay for about two years. Even after his release from the detention, he remained shrouded in inscrutability. Neither anybody from the media met him nor did he like to plead himself not guilty to the charges he had been leveled against. I knew he had read the Urdu version of this book containing exhaustive interviews of Mr. Nawaz Sharif's with great interest but I could never call on him.

General Pervez Musharraf's book "In the Line of Fire" published in 2006 reignited several controversies, reopened several questions and called for new explanations to several affairs. In the meanwhile, a young friend of mine promised me to arrange my meeting with General Zia-ud-Din. I was unsure whether this promise could be fulfilled but to my amazement one day the young man put me in a car as scheduled and drove me to a relatively simple and old house amid a row of grand and spacious villas in the Defense Housing Society, Lahore. It was the only house that had no guard or any sort

of security arrangement. Its gate was open. A Suzuki Baleno of 1999 model was parked in the porch.

The moment our car stopped, a tall man with a French beard came out and received us warmly. While shaking hands his face seemed quite familiar. I contemplated a bit and it opened to me he was none else but General Zia-ud-Din, whose photographs I had seen in newspapers and magazines. Through the main door, he led us to his drawing room. It was silence. Perhaps his son and daughter were away. His wife was somewhere inside the house. There was only one servant to serve tea.

Often uttering the introductory phrases proves the most difficult task. But the initiation fortunately came from the general in his appreciation for my book handing me an opportunity to start the interview. It should have been a soft talking initially but facing the holder of several national secrets in front of me, I could not resist asking him the causes of the October 12 takeover. General Zia-ud-Din might have pondered over the reasons for several years, and so, his analysis was calculated, no bitterness in tone, no jitters in emotions. In a soft but realistic tenor, he said: "Well, politicians too have been committing mistakes. In fact, there should have been two separate generals as the chief of the army staff and the chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee so that the prime minister could have two advisors to facilitate his handling of the military affairs. But despite this, politicians should be given chances to improve things."

General Zia-ud-Din said that when General Musharraf was appointed army chief, he was ready to appoint him as the chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee but later on, he changed his mind. "In fact, in our country everybody likes to keep the maximum powers with him. General Jehangir Karamat was a large-hearted person but even he wanted to keep the post of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman with him. He impeded the appointment of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman saying the slot only required four-hour work, which he himself could do."

General Zia-ud-Din got immersed in the past and said he, having served as private secretary to General Mirza Aslam Beg when he was the army chief, knew the general was a true democrat. "He was offered to become the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman on completion of his term as the army chief. He was ready to accept the offer if more powers would be vested with the post of the

chairman. A list of these powers had been prepared but the circumstances changed and so, the proposal could not be carried out."

About General Aslam Beg's rumored desire in 1990 to take over and General Asif Nawaz's nomination before time as the army chief in 1990 by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, General Zia-ud-Din said it was incorrect that General Beg was power hungry. "It was rather he on whose recommendation General Asif Nawaz was nominated as the army chief before time to forestall instability in the country. It was also he who had proposed the appointment of two separate generals as chief of the army staff and Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman. On his proposal, General Asif Nawaz and General Shamim Alam were promoted to the posts."

Asked about a solution to the problems relating to civil and military relationship that arise every two or three years, General Zia-ud-Din said there was a need for changing the basic structure of the army. "Otherwise takeovers would keep on taking place. The post of army chief is too powerful. This concentration of powers is a colonial legacy, which has to be abandoned."

The discussion was going too general. I changed the topic and for more intimacy I asked about his familial background. He said, "I have never liked to be called 'Butt'. 'Butt' was added to my name by design. We prefix 'Khawaja' to our names. Mine is a military background; my father was a captain in the army and my father-in-law was colonel in the army. My grandfather was the chief justice of the Indian state of Jaipur."

After having touched the family background, I asked him as to what had happened to him after October 1999. He said, "I was kept in solitary confinement for 666 days (about two years). An inquiry was initiated but was left incomplete for want of evidential statements. I guess General Mehmood and General Aziz had refused to record their statements. Leaving the inquest incomplete, I was dismissed from the army without pension and other benefits. However, we've been managing it. My wife owned a house in Defense and we are living in it now. Since I am an engineer by profession, I am into construction business and earning the livelihood. My conscience is fully satisfied."

Citing "In the Line of Fire" where General Pervez Musharraf has accused Zia-ud-Din of playing a role in having him dismissed from

the post of the army chief by inciting Mr. Sharif against him, I sought his reaction to the allegation.

General Zia-ud-Din said, "I am not an ambitious person. Now the events can be colored whichever way one wants to, but it is a fact that about two or three days before October 12, I had talked to Mian Nawaz Sharif and sought retirement. I said that since my children were young, I was in need of some stint in the Fuji Fertilizers after my retirement. Mr. Sharif told me that for the job he would have to talk to General Musharraf. I said I had already talked to him. After having spoken to Mr. Sharif I started preparing for my retirement. I placed an order for a Suzuki Baleno, the car now parked in the porch."

This incomplete answer did not satisfy my curiosity. I said he must have had very deep relations with Mr. Sharif because he appeared to be the closest advisor regarding military affairs at that time.

General Zia-ud-Din did feel the sarcasm of my pointed question and so, reacted sharply, "I never went to Raiwind to see *Abbaji* (Muhammad Sharif) whereas General Musharraf had been visiting him quite often. I was a professional army man and had never seen him even. I met Nawaz Sharif the first time he was interviewing the candidates for the ISI DG. I had never approached him for my appointment. Rather one day after General Pervez Musharraf had been appointed as the army chief, Mian Shahbaz Sharif and Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan came to me and asked whether I was angry. They said it were they who had played a role in having Musharraf installed as the army chief. They said that: "this time we wanted to give this post to an Urdu-speaking general."

As the time passed, General Zia-ud-Din became open and informal and I felt I could ask questions from him a bit more freely. How was his personal relationship with General Musharraf?

"Initially our relationship was very cordial. After Musharraf had taken over the charge as the army chief, he called on General Jehangir Karamat on my suggestion. But beneath every good personal relationship there always lies professional rivalry somewhere. In fact, he always felt I was a better general than him. Once, General Musharraf and I briefed Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on certain military matters. After the briefing, she appreciated me and said she liked my style of briefing; me establishing eye contact, which she said

Musharraf lacked. These remarks riled General Musharraf greatly and he kept on talking against Benazir Bhutto for several days. Such professional rivalries do create distance between people.”

To fill in certain blanks in the story, I asked him as to how he had managed to become the ISI Chief. General Zia-ud-Din felt surprised by my sudden turn and he replied, “I was appointed as the ISI head after the mutual understanding of General Pervez Musharraf and Nawaz Sharif. On the instructions of the prime minister, I ended the ISI role in the national politics, stopped politicians’ surveillance and turned its focus to the international affairs. During my tenure, the ISI focused more on counterintelligence.”

Here General Zia-ud-Din made a disclosure. “Since ISI is a sensitive intelligence agency. It has information on national affairs as well. We got information that General Pervez Musharraf had planned to enforce martial law on the night between September 17 and 18, 1999. Even soldiers were sitting in their vehicles prepared to act. However, Shahbaz Sharif and Nisar Ali Khan approached General Musharraf and had it held off.”

I asked him by the way as to what had been happened during his US visit. He said, “I was invited to visit the US as the ISI chief. Usually such visits are limited to meeting your counterparts but during my stay General Anthony Zinni especially came from Tampa, Florida, to see me. Suddenly, he said he feared a military takeover in Pakistan, but America would not support it. I proposed him to invite General Pervez Musharraf to the US but General Zinni said that in the US system it was the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and not the chief of army staff who mattered most. Since he had been made the chairman as well, he would be invited in that capacity. Between me and General Musharraf was but no dispute. However, he did nurse some grudge I don’t know the reason for. Must there be jealousy.”

The most important issue under discussion must have been Usama bin Laden and Afghanistan, I asked. General Zia-ud-Din said, “I was in USA for three weeks. We held discussion on a solution to the Afghan issue. There was an agreement on our proposal for a grand Afghan jirga. In fact, Afghanistan issue was quite complex. We were of the view that Usama bin Laden was creating problems for all the Muslims and handing him over to his country Saudi Arabia could lessen the problems of Muslims, in general, and Pakistanis, in

particular. I also met Afghanistan's ruler Mullah Muhammad Omar in Afghanistan. Mullah Omar told me Usama was stuck in their throat; they could neither swallow him nor throw him up. In our days, very concentrated efforts were being made to apprehend Usama bin Laden; we had arrested his personal assistant and were close to capturing him as well when the elected government in Pakistan was toppled."

What else was decided in Washington for resolution of the Afghan issue?

General Zia-ud-Din said, "Preparations for Afghan Grand Jirga [tribal assembly] were being made. In October on my way back home from Washington, I phoned Nawaz Sharif from London and sought his instructions regarding the jirga. He bade me to leave for Rome immediately and meet Zahir Shah, the ex-king of Afghanistan. I did accordingly."

He kept on talking about his October activities in Washington, London and Rome and I thought those were the crucial days when the tension between General Musharraf and Nawaz Sharif had reached its apex and things were turning towards a bitter end. I told him that General Musharraf had said in his book that General Zia-ud-Din had accompanied Nawaz Sharif to Dubai and it was during this journey that the decision to replace General Musharraf was firmed up.

General Zia-ud-Din said, "No conspiracy was being hatched. I was not in Pakistan. I had returned to Rawalpindi from London and Rome on the night between October 8 and 9. I went to my office on October 9, 1999 after about three weeks and saw the files the whole day. The same evening I met the prime minister to brief him on my Washington, London and Rome visit and request him for my retirement. As the briefing had not concluded on October 9, the prime minister asked me to accompany him to the UAE for the rest. During the journey, the prime minister expressed his reservations about General Musharraf's conduct over General Tariq Pervez's dismissal. He also talked about the profile of some other generals. At this point he also hinted at the possible change in the military command. In fact, hatching of any conspiracy was but a figment of General Musharraf's imagination whereas I was making preparations for my retirement."

Our discussion had reached closer to the D-day of October 12. Following the common perception, I asked him whether the prime minister's decision to appoint him as the army chief was wrong and whether he had felt at that time that this decision could create problems.

General Zia-ud-Din paused for a moment and then said, "The way I was appointed as the army chief was similar to the one General Musharraf was made the army head. Even the wording of the notification was the same, save the change of names."

In his book, General Pervez Musharraf says his retirement and General Zia-ud-Din's appointment had not been notified. Hadn't it weakened his legal position?

General Zia-ud-Din replied, "When the prime minister and the president sign an order, it immediately comes into force and notifications have no importance. And if a notification is that important, please keep in mind General Pervez Musharraf's appointment was notified two or three months after he had been installed. The real importance rests with the appointment and the decision, and the notification is only a formality."

As the conversation continued, I could not resist putting a hard but pertinent question, "Your preparations for the change in the army saddle were not proper. You could not control the situation and the ensuing events proved that most of the generals did not accept your command." General Zia-ud-Din did not lose his temper and rather smilingly said, "True that I had not prepared well for the change. But it was so because whatever happened had happened suddenly. However, you cannot say that the situation was not under our control. I was in full contact with the army. After the change had been announced, I rang up 111 Brigade Commander Salahuddin Satti and asked him there should be no bloodshed at all. He said there was great confusion."

Here General Zia-ud-Din paused a bit and then said: "Everything had not gone worse on October 12. On the one hand the 111 Brigade was initiating the coup and on the other a military parade in my honor was being arranged."

Some people say you did not stand in good position within army because you were from the engineering corps and so, had not

commanded any corps; I put forth the question everybody wanted to ask from the general.

He said, "I don't want to indulge in self-praise. But I must say my record was the best among all. I had achieved Grade A in the war course. I had also commanded a corps. Earlier I had commanded a division as well as a brigade of the army as well. I had been a staff officer of the chief of army staff. Usually the best brigadier among the military is picked for this pivoted post. Please do see my CV. My associates and subordinates would love me. [See annex for biodata of General Zia-ud-Din]

I once again changed the wording and the tone and repeated the key question, "Where did you go wrong then" I asked him. General Zia-ud-Din said, "All corps commanders had accepted the change; I had spoken to all of them. General Usmani put the flag off General Musharraf's car six times saying he was legally no more an army chief. The most important role was that of General Usmani, the Karachi Corps Commander. He was asked to receive General Pervez Musharraf as a retired chief of army staff. He had accepted the command and acting upon it put the flag off his car six times for he was no more a legal army chief. Whatever happened after that and who played what role is but a part of the history. What can I say about it?"

General Musharraf's book says your wife had distributed sweets on your appointment as the army chief. What do you say about it? General Zia-ud-Din said, "It is incorrect. No such event had taken place. When I left home for the PM's House I was unaware as to why the prime minister had called me. When I reached there I was declared as the army chief but I did not have time to speak to my wife. My wife had no knowledge about my new appointment. In fact, when my appointment was announced on the PTV, generals' wives thronged our home. But as soon as they knew about the coup they disappeared as do seasonal birds."

I said: "You were in the Prime Minister's House. You should have advised the prime minister against the plane diversion."

General Zia-ud-Din smiled and said, "Would you believe I did not even know General Pervez Musharraf was on his way back to Karachi from Colombo by a PIA aero plane. I was so told by General Aziz and I thought later during my detention that if the prime minister had so desired he would have stopped the PIA aero plane

from taking off from Colombo. It proves that there was no conspiracy.”

I said that he was deprived of the pension and other benefits whereas his colleague General Akram who had supported him was given full benefits. Why so, I asked.

General Zia-ud-Din said, “In fact the entire army had assured me on October 12 of their cooperation. So how could they sack all of them?”

Fearing that General Zia-ud-Din might cut short the meeting on such bitter questions, I started talking about international issues. It occurred to me General Zia-ud-Din was taking much interest in the developments taking place in Russia. He was of the opinion that Russia would become a super power again because the division of Russia into independent states was exclusively its own decision just to regain energy and strengthen itself economically. “It was a strategy to re-emerge as a strong financial power before the world.”

The wedge October 12 events had created between General Musharraf and General Zia-ud-Din did show up often. He narrated an event of an iftar party where General Musharraf picked up a date and smilingly said, “This is the nearest I can go to religion”.

He so narrated another event: We were together at the National Defense College, Rawalpindi where General Javed Nasir [known for his religious inclination] was the commander. General Pervez Musharraf would offer prayer behind him to please him.

My last question was about the decay in the Pakistani society. General Zia-ud-Din said: “We have become a herd of weak sheep and goats. If someone raises voice for the truth, nobody sides with him. Javed Hashmi remained behind the bars for years but nobody spoke for him. When one sheep is taken away, other sheep close their eyes.”

As General Zia-ud-Din cast a glance on his watch, I sought his permission to leave. He came out to see me off and stood there until I had left.



THE MILITARY SECRETARY'S REVELATIONS

- The Military Secretary Raises the Curtain
- Differences with the Army
- The last day
- Personal reflections

Brigadier Javed Malik, the military secretary to the prime minister, was dismissed from service for supporting Nawaz Sharif during the military takeover. He also underwent a long imprisonment and later on left for Jeddah to stay with Nawaz Muhammad Sharif. He brought Mian Muhammad Sharif's body to Pakistan but was barred from leaving the country for he was put on the Exit Control List. However in April 2006, he was smuggled to London via Afghanistan. Presently he is residing in Jeddah once again.

As an eyewitness to the events of October 12, he was interviewed in Jeddah and London on different occasions.

THE MILITARY SECRETARY RAISES THE CURTAIN

- During the conflict with the judiciary and the president, Gen. Jehangir Karamat supported the democratic government
- I had proposed Nawaz Sharif not to accept General Jehangir Karamat's resignation
- Jehangir Karamat wrote in his resignation that he was setting a precedent for the future generations
- Gen.Ali Quli Khan was a friend of Gen.Waheed Kakar; he had played a role in the sacking of the first Nawaz Sharif government
- General Khalid Nawaz was weak in decision-making. General Musharraf was selected for he belonged to the Urdu speaking minority
- It was thought General Musharraf would strengthen the democratic system remaining impartial
- When General Musharraf was called, he reached the Prime Minister's House without informing anybody

- General Musharraf was decorated with ranks of the army chief at the Prime Minister's House

JEHANGIR KARAMAT'S RESIGNATION

Q. Since when have you been working with Nawaz Sharif? Were you there at the time of General Jehangir Karamat's resignation?

Brig. Javed Malik: In July 1998 I was posted his military secretary. I had never worked with him before. However, it was quite good and interesting experience. General Jehangir Karamat was the army chief then. He was disciplined, mature-minded and handsome. I personally respect him because of his knowledge in military and strategic affairs and as an army chief strengthening of the democratic government of Nawaz Sharif. He supported the democratic government during the conflict with the judiciary and the president. He delivered a speech at the Naval War College, Lahore, where he suggested the establishment of National Security Council. It meant to allow the army to interfere in the government affairs without the constitutional mandate. Consequences of his speech might prove very fatal.

When Mr. Sharif learnt about it, he talked to the general one on one and resultantly General Jehangir Karamat tendered his resignation. I received an envelope from his deputy military secretary bearing the words on its top "only for the prime minister" and handed it over to the prime minister. He read it and gave it to me to read. He asked me what to do. I suggested that the resignation not be acceded to for he had apologized. It was an excellent letter saying he wanted to set a precedent for the generations to come by seeking his premature retirement. I proposed talking the issue out and asking General Karamat to continue until his term ended a couple of months later. Anyhow, Saeed Mehdi, the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, was with him and perhaps the prime minister had already made up his mind. He disagreed with me and said since the general had himself tendered the resignation, he had to have a new army chief. I didn't insist because the decision rested with Mr. Sharif.

Is it true that several generals had asked General Jehangir Karamat to take over instead of resigning?

Brig. Javed Malik: I tell you.

It is known that General Ali Quli Khan had proposed that.

Brig. Javed Malik: I have also heard people quoting Ali Quli Khan as saying the army should topple the government. I don't want to say anything, which I don't have any proof of. Anyhow Mr. Sharif said he would pick one from amongst the most senior five generals. After consultation, he decided to appoint Pervez Musharraf as the new army chief.

GEN ALI QULI KHAN OR GEN MUSHARRAF

On what basis was General Musharraf appointed as the army chief despite not being the most senior?

Brig. Javed Malik: General Ali Quli Khan was the most senior general but he had certain charges against him. As I have told you, perhaps he was the one who wanted to take over the government. In my opinion, the important thing was that he was saying so because he was going to be the next army chief. I had great regard for him when he was the director-general of the Military Intelligence. He was a great man who belonged to a very noble family. He had played a major role in having the first Nawaz Sharif government dissolved as the DG of MI in the days of General Kakar.

In those days, the MI had taken over the political maneuvering role of the ISI. I don't think he could be appointed as the army chief and so, he was against the Nawaz Sharif government. Second on the seniority list was General Khalid Nawaz, a man and soldier of an average caliber and weak in decision making. During his tenure as military secretary in the GHQ, he kept the files pending for a long time. He did not stand out during his tenure as instructor at the Staff College either, and so, he was dropped. Next on the seniority list were General Tirmazi and General Pervez Musharraf. Both of them were professionally sound officers having good understanding of important affairs and so, the choice was between them. Perhaps General Musharraf was better than the other one for he had no political affiliation.

Since he belonged to the Urdu speaking class of Pakistan, he was appointed as the army chief to deservedly alleviate their sense of deprivation. It was thought that as a neutral person he would help strengthen the democratic system. The last one on the list was General Zia-ud-Din, but his name was not considered for General

Musharraf had been chosen. After the decision had been made about the new army chief, the resignation of General Jehangir Karamat was accepted. I rang General Musharraf up between 8.00 and 9.00 p.m.

After a few calls I could talk to him. I told him the prime minister had called him to the PM's House. He said did he need to inform the army chief. I said it was up to him for I was supposed only to deliver the message. He asked whether he should come in uniform. I told him he should. He got ready and immediately left for the PM's House. I don't think he had told anybody. In the meantime, Nawaz Sharif told his close associates that General Jehangir Karamat was being retired honorably. An announcement was also made on television. In the meanwhile, Musharraf had come there. He was pleased to learn he had been chosen as the army chief. He was then decorated by affixing ranks on his shoulders.



DIFFERENCES WITH THE ARMY

- Telephones of 200 close associates of the prime minister were tapped
- Even ISI chief General Zia-ud-Din was bugged
- Pak-India talks were started after taking the ISI and the army into confidence
- Attack on Kargil was a misadventure; it was stupid to break the Siachen supply line
- Nawaz Sharif was only told that the mujahideen would continue their activities
- Kargil had no sanction from the prime minister
- Nawaz Sharif said that if permanent occupation of Kargil was not possible, the army must scale down immediately
- The army generals were adamant that a retreat would harm the army morale
- The food supply was very poor. Post mortems found grass in soldiers' stomach

- Nawaz Sharif went to Washington just to save the army honor
- General Tariq Pervez said in the meeting they had not been taken into confidence over Kargil
- Generals feared accountability after an inquest on Kargil
- Fearing accountability, they blamed the prime minister for the Kargil defeat

THE PRIME MINISTER UNDER SURVEILLANCE

Q. Is it true the army keeps the prime minister under surveillance?

Brig. Javed Malik: I give you an example that will answer your question. After General Musharraf had become the army chief, Intelligence Bureau head General Niazi provided the prime minister with a list of his 200 close associates whose telephones the army was tapping. Interestingly, ISI chief General Zia-ud-Din's phone was also being tapped. The ISI probed it and found the information correct.

INDO-PAK RELATIONS AND THE ARMY

Was the army taken into confidence about Indo-Pak talks and Indian prime minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to Pakistan?

Brig. Javed Malik: Of course, the army and the ISI were taken into confidence over the resolution of Kashmir issue for it would benefit the people of both India and Pakistan.

Vajpayee visited Lahore and signed the Lahore Declaration and thus the friendly relations between both the prime ministers had taken roots for the betterment of both the countries. The rumors of the three services chiefs boycotting the welcome ceremony at the Governor House are unfounded. The army, navy and air force chiefs were all there. Nawaz Sharif introduced them to the Indian prime minister. I was there. They did not hesitate in giving him and his team the protocol.

Did the three chiefs of armed forces salute the Indian prime minister?

Brig. Javed Malik: Yes they did. After the reception, the political meeting started and so, they returned to their headquarters.

KARGIL PLAN

How did the Kargil issue start?

Brig. Javed Malik: The day Nawaz Sharif signed the Lahore Declaration with Vajpayee, I think our army had either occupied the Indian-held cities Daras and Kargil or they were preparing to do so. It was an important supply road for Indian troops in Siachen. This area had already been occupied by General Ali Jan Orakzai of FCNA. He had worked hard in shifting 130 mm guns and heavy arms and ammunition through difficult routes. Since the road was already under their gun fire, they could easily interrupt the movement between Daras and Kargil. We had done so in retaliation to the Indians breaking off our supply lines in the other parts of Kashmir, especially in the valley of Muzzafarabad. The strategy was to equalize Indian pressure on our supply line.

I don't think Kargil operation aimed at anything else. I do not think that a person with a military acumen would ever say that by breaking off the Daras-Kargil road, we could force India to come to the table for talks. This is only a stupid argument. But I learnt later that Kargil, which was a misadventure of Musharraf, Mehmood and of Aziz, aimed to cut off Indian supply line to Siachen. I, too, am an army man like them. I am sure they had misconception that they would get a decision on Kashmir by cutting off the communication and logistic lines. It was foolish to think on these lines.

Suppose if Pakistan had succeeded in doing whatever they had planned in Kargil and Daras, would India, with so big a population and a military and so strong an economy, have stopped there. Won't they have repeated the 1965 war? Then too it was argued that since we were doing operation in Kashmir alone, India would not attack the international border. But what happened? The war of 65 should not have happened. But we, like stupid people, always repeat our mistakes. And war on an international border would have led to an atomic war.

WHEN WAS THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD ABOUT KARGIL?

When did the army formally inform the prime minister about Kargil?

Brig. Javed Malik: Mr. Sharif, the ISI, DG and the army chief met twice or thrice at the ISI headquarters. I did not attend these meetings but I learnt they had had Mr. Sharif's approval to working for the resolution of Kashmir issue. Kargil operation as such was never discussed in the meetings. The talks did mention that the mujahideen would continue their activities so that we would have leverage on the talk's table. Anyhow, in April or May Vajpayee made a phone call to Nawaz Sharif. After the call Mr. Sharif asked me what was happening in Kargil, whether our army was there, whether they had occupied the peaks. I told him I would get back to him. I checked with the Military Operations Directorate and was told that our army had occupied the peaks and now Kargil was ours. I passed the information on to the prime minister who called a meeting of the Defense Committee of Cabinet (DCC). It was here Nawaz Sharif was informed the first time that our army was there in Kargil to break off the Daras-Kargil supply line. I was also present in the meeting. Nawaz Sharif very clearly asked as to what our army was doing in Kargil. Then he asked from Pervez Musharraf whether our army was strong enough to militarily counter India.

In Musharraf's stead General Mehmood said they were sitting on India's neck, the peaks that lead to Daras-Kargil, if we only threw a stone, they won't be able to climb up. Nawaz Sharif asked them what would happen if Indians prepared to pay a heavy cost for breaking into the defense. He was told Indians could not do so. Then Nawaz Sharif said if they could defend the territory, which they said was theirs, they would find him wholeheartedly on their back, but if thought there was no use holding the territory anymore, it was time they retreated. He said Indians took the soldiers there as mujahideen, they too should borrow that phrase letting the misadventure be over.

The army kept on insisting that a retreat would affect the troops' morale. After this Nawaz Sharif, General Musharraf and the ISI DG had a separate meeting about which I know nothing. Anyhow the operation started. Initially, I would represent Mr. Sharif at the Military Operations Directorate briefings at the 10 Corps Headquarters or elsewhere and would brief him later. Gradually, it transpired that the Indians doing the unexpected. Indians had brought in 33 Bofors firing units for heavy fire besides a lot of infantry troops. They launched several fierce attacks, for which I should appreciate them. And I should also laud our own troops who fought very gallantly without any military assistance and arms and ammunition. I believe they had nothing to eat but grass and snow.

And the post mortem reports found grass in their stomach. So bad was the situation. I don't think any army can fight without arms and ammunition; faith alone can't serve.

FALSE PICTURE OF KARGIL

What happened then?

Brig. Javed Malik: This operation and the Indian attacks continued until June end when our army started losing the ground. However, Nawaz Sharif was told they were doing well. Though I was not present in the meeting, I learnt it from him and other people that General Musharraf told him in Lahore that it was over and the peaks had been occupied. Though our people tried their best, without arms and ammunition nobody could stay and fight on these peaks. So, now it was Nawaz Sharif's reverence for the army that he agreed to save its honor. On Pervez Musharraf's request, he went to the US and managed by his personal relations a meeting with Bill Clinton on Sunday, July 4, the national day of America, when there is no official business.

THE TAPES

You say Nawaz Sharif was not shown the true Kargil picture. Was the military taken into confidence?

Brig. Javed Malik: I know and I believe my information is correct that neither the naval and air chiefs nor any corps commander knew about the operation. You see it's not the army alone that fights a war, it's the whole nation that does so. An attack required our embassies, our media, our foreign office, our finance ministry and our defense ministry to do a lot of homework, and a consensus built on our regional issues. Nothing of the sort happened and so, if India had launched a naval or an air attack, our naval or air chiefs would have been caught unawares. Both the chiefs told the DCC meeting in my presence they had been kept uninformed. Corps commanders, too, said they had not been informed about it.

You know General Tariq Pervez said the same thing in Quetta while addressing the officers of his corps. I'll not name the officers who would ask me at the POF Club, Islamabad and the Islamabad Club as to why Nawaz Sharif was not taking action against Musharraf over Kargil. All the senior army officers at the GHQ were annoyed at not being taken into confidence on Kargil. You have heard of a tape of the phone talk between General Aziz and General

Musharraf when he was on a visit to China, in which he had admitted nobody was informed about the Kargil operation and that General Saeed Al-Zafar, the then acting chief, had been handling the issue well. I personally handed over a copy of the tape to Musharraf and told him his secret had been disclosed. Nawaz Sharif had directed me I would not say anything else to Musharraf. It was his kindness that he sent a copy of the tape to Musharraf to let him know the entire world knew his secrets.

The allegation is otherwise. It was Vajpayee, the Indian prime minister, who had sent a copy of the tape to the prime minister of Pakistan.

Brig. Javed Malik: I do not know who had sent the copy. But I know it had come from some other sources, and not from our agencies. It was a sort of warning to Musharraf that the matter had gone out of control for the information had been disclosed. To me, it was an act of kindness of Nawaz Sharif's for Pervez Musharraf.

Did it rile General Musharraf?

Brig. Javed Malik: No, he was very grateful then. He was surprised. He was taken aback.

Did he say it was faked?

Brig. Javed Malik: No, nobody said it was tampered. It was his voice and that of General Aziz's. I had heard the tape myself, it sounded just as they spoke.

WASHINGTON VISIT AND THE INCREASING TENSION

How was the decision of General Musharraf's dismissal arrived at?

Brig. Javed Malik: I accompanied Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to Washington and so, I know how hard it was for him to maneuver things as Clinton had Vajpayee on the line. He had to work hard to ensure that the US intervene and effect a ceasefire between India and Pakistan and the inclusion of Kashmir in the July 4, 1999 Declaration as an important issue besides the US mediation. The Sharif-Clinton talks spanned three to four hours. When we returned home, Nawaz Sharif said whatever happened was very bad but let the bygone be bygone. He wanted to forget it as a bitter thing of the past. And he did forget it. On the other hand, the Kargil culprits Musharraf,

Mehmood and Aziz, who were to blame for about 2700 deaths and serious injuries to many [and these are official figures], feared establishment of a fact finding commission, which could unearth the truth after the statements of the air and naval chiefs, corps commanders and the government. They feared they would be charge-sheeted. Then they propagated that the army was doing well in Kargil but Nawaz Sharif spoiled the whole thing in retreat. Now would any ruler stop an army winning its war? Won't he like to add another feather to his cap? Isn't it illogical? Perhaps General Musharraf and his party must have planned putting the blame on Mr. Sharif and started belittling him then.

When did you know General Musharraf had started vilifying the prime minister?

Brig. Javed Malik: I think it was all over, in the newspapers and among the people. Musharraf was trying to put himself up as a hero of the Kargil but in reality he was responsible for the defeat.



THE LAST DAY

- Two weeks before October 12, the army guards had been equipped with headsets
- 111 Brigade commander's transfer rang as if something was happening around
- The best time to remove General Musharraf was immediately after the Sharif-Clinton meeting
- Nawaz Sharif said to Saeed Mehdi that as per his advice General Musharraf had been dismissed
- As had General Musharraf done, General Zia-ud-Din, too, came to the PM's House without telling anybody
- Badges for General Zia-ud-Din were not purchased from the market, Rather my badges were affixed on his uniform
- General Zia-ud-Din was arrested from the PM's House. He had not gone to the GHQ by then

- After General Zia-ud-Din had talked to all the corps commanders, I thought the change had been accepted
- The team that was sent to the TV station was ordered to kill but I only disarmed them
- I said to General Mehmood: "It is not New Delhi but your own Prime Minister's House
- I was tortured in front of General Mehmood
- I was kept in solitary confinement; I saw daylight after 18 months

WHEN THE NOOSE WAS TIGHTENED

Q. When did you smell that the Sharif government could be toppled?

Brig. Javed Malik: Now it is an open secret. I was faithful both to the army and the country. I kept my mouth shut until two weeks before October 12. Then I told Nawaz Sharif the security guards had been equipped with an intelligence system to transmit information. They were also monitoring the prime minister's visitors though they were there on protocol duty. At that time 111 Brigade commanders were replaced and so were some other commanders and that hinted something was happening around us. Then just before October 12, some personnel of the SSG were seen at the Dharmyal Base. It was all abnormal. In the meantime, on General Musharraf's recommendation General Tariq Pervez was retired for disobedience and misconduct. Since Nawaz Sharif was inclined to compromise, he had already appointed General Musharraf as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee as a goodwill gesture to relieve him of the fear of being charge-sheeted. Now General Musharraf was wearing two hats.

As the military secretary, were you not supposed to inform Nawaz Sharif about the risk involved in sacking General Musharraf?

Brig. Javed Malik: In fact the best time for Mr. Sharif to remove General Musharraf was immediately after his meeting with Bill Clinton or even before that. However, Nawaz Sharif wanted to forget

everything for the sacking could start a new debate. He wanted everything to take place at its time. He wanted General Musharraf to complete his term. For survival of the country he wanted no conflict with the army. He wanted democracy to continue.

Was Mr. Sharif aware of the risk of sacking General Musharraf?

Brig. Javed Malik: We never discussed this issue.

DECISIVE MOMENTS

When was the dismissal decided?

Brig. Javed Malik: I am unable to say anything on that. However, I share with you whatever I know. We landed at Islamabad airport at 2.00 p.m. after our visit to Multan. The prime minister had directed General Iftikhar, the defense secretary, to meet him at the airport. I thought he had called him to discuss General Tariq Pervez's retirement for his cousin Nadir Pervez had visited the PM's House early in the morning. When the prime minister sought my advice I told him not to embroil himself and ask the defense secretary to pursue the case with the army chief. The prime minister agreed to my proposal. And so, I thought he might have called up the defense secretary to hand him over the case. Saeed Mehdi had also been called to the airport. The defense secretary was there but Saeed Mehdi was not. He had not received the message. Mr. Sharif waited for a while and then bade us to move. He told me to sit in the front seat and that he should be informed whenever I saw Saeed Mehdi's car. We tried to locate his car but failed. In the meantime, we reached the PM's House. On our way to the PM's House, Mr. Sharif said to General Iftikhar the army was trying to bring a change that might result in havoc and so for the survival of democracy he had decided to replace General Musharraf so the military remained in its limits and the democratic system could keep on running.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE ATMOSPHERE

What happened when you reached the Prime Minister's House?

Brig. Javed Malik: Saeed Mehdi received the prime minister in the family porch. We four, Mr. Sharif, General Iftikhar, Mr. Mehdi and I retired to the lobby of the private chambers. Since Mr. Sharif had already apprised General Iftikhar of his decision and I too had heard that, the prime minister told Mr. Mehdi to draft a notification regarding the retirement of General Pervez Musharraf and the

appointment of General Zia-ud-Din as army chief in his stead. Then he directed me to call General Zia-ud-Din to the PM's House for 4.00 p.m. It was 3.00 p.m then. I rang him up but he was not home. Then I contacted him at his office and told him to come to the PM's House to meet the prime minister. I told him nothing else. In the meantime, General Iftikhar and Mr. Mehdi had prepared the notification; by chance it was a copy of the notification that had installed General Musharraf as the army chief and retired General Karamat. It was the same document with only change of names. The interesting similarity of the event was that both General Zia-ud-Din and General Musharraf had come to the PM's House without seeking permission from their army chiefs. If General Zia-ud-Din is held guilty of misconduct, General Musharraf too should be charged with the same offence. However, in my opinion none of them is at fault.

RUMOR AND REALITY

At the time a rumor had spread the PM's House did not even have the military badges and they were hurriedly brought from the market or somewhere else?

Brig. Javed Malik: No, no, when General Zia-ud-Din came to the PM's House, we were not prepared for the protocol. When Musharraf was made the army chief we had the rank badges with us. However, this time we did not have the badges and the situation hampered us getting the stars from the GHQ. So, I put my badges off for General Zia-ud-Din. Mr. Mehdi had prepared the notification. General Zia-ud-Din came to meet Nawaz Sharif at 4.00 p.m. They met one on one first and then I, General Iftikhar and Saeed Mehdi were called in. Nawaz Sharif read and signed the notification and congratulated General Zia-ud-Din on becoming the army chief. We, General Iftikhar, Saeed Mehdi and I, too, greeted him. Then Mr. Sharif went to the President's House and had the notification endorsed by President Tarar. The military secretary usually accompanies the prime minister to the presidency but this time I was told to look after General Zia-ud-Din.

I led the general to my office from where he called the corps commanders. He rang up 10 Corps commander General Mehmood, the chief of general staff and Brigadier [now major general] Imtiaz. He also phoned General Akram and told him that he was the new chief of general staff and he was to immediately take the charge from General Aziz. Then he asked me to get General Salim Haider, the former commander of 10 Corps, on line for him. He was working in

the GHQ as a staff officer. He was informed while he was at the Golf Club that he had been appointed as the commander of 10 Corps and so, he should reach the PM's House immediately.

General Zia-ud-Din himself told them he was now the new army chief. Then he called General Tauqir Zia at Mangla but he was out, playing golf. His wife was on line but she was told nothing. Then he talked to General Yousaf in Multan and in the end, he talked to General Usmani in Karachi whom he gave Nawaz Sharif's message, which the prime minister had asked me to give, that General Musharraf had been retired and General Zia-ud-Din had become the new army chief. He was also directed to receive Musharraf at the Karachi Airport giving him the protocol of a retired army chief and keep him at the rest house. This was the whole message and no such instruction was given as to delay the aircraft landing. So, this is all about October 12, minor and major all the details.

IT'S WRAPPED UP

But when did you learn the army had advanced for the takeover?

Brig. Javed Malik: Well, when Nawaz Sharif came back from the presidency he called me to his office. Saeed Mehdi and General Zia-ud-Din were already there. New chief of general staff General Akram was sitting in my office and General Salim Haider was about to reach the PM's House. Initially I did have certain fears for I knew General Musharraf would not accept the decision with ease for he, General Mehmood and General Aziz were involved in Kargil. They knew very well that the moment they were ousted, they would have to face the inquest. So, I did have certain fears and reservations. However, when General Zia-ud-Din had talked to the corps commanders and taken the new CGS, sitting in my office, into confidence and the new commander was about to arrive at the PM's House and there was no army movement, I thought the change had been accepted. And the change was for the better. The king is dead long live the king. And so, for me Pervez Musharraf had become part of the past, a retired person and General Zia-ud-Din, the new army chief. And my loyalties automatically had to be with the constitution, the government of Pakistan and the new army chief. Whatever I was doing was the call of my duty.

The prime minister asked me to arrange a photo session where General Zia-ud-Din was to be installed as the new army chief. The president had endorsed the notification and now he was to be

decorated with ranks. Since we did not have the badges of a full general with us, I put my badges off and made holes in General Zia-ud-Din's uniform with scissors. Nawaz Sharif pinned the badge on his right shoulder and I on the left. By doing so, I had become a colonel. (Laughing) Then I brought in my badges from my home and wore them accordingly. It all happened before the TV camera at the Prime Minister's House. After the session, I was back in my office where General Akram was sitting. He asked me what the delay was for and why hadn't the commander of 10 Corps come. I told him he was on his way to the PM's House as he told me on telephone at about 4:30 p.m. After a short while, around 5 p.m., the prime minister called me and told me that the TV station had been taken over by some army personnel. He, in the presence of the new army chief, directed me to go there and ask their in-charge to surrender and let the TV do its job for it was a state institution. Army had no right to interfere in its affairs. The new army chief also commanded me to go there. I came out but did not go straight to the TV station. The commander of 111 Brigade should have been assigned the task. So I went to my office and in the presence of the new CGS, I tried to connect the 111-commander Brigadier Satti, now major general and heading the Rangers in Sindh, but I failed to get connected with him.

Then I told the new CGS that I had been entrusted with the task but I had not been able to get in touch with them. He said if it was so, I should go and comply with the orders. But you know no army officer keeps arms with him during peacetime and especially the military secretary to the prime minister is not allowed to keep arms with him. So without arms I came out of the office. I did not have the transport with me for it had happened all of a sudden without planning. I found a police squad car there and I boarded it along with an SSG guard, a policeman and a driver and left for the TV station that you know was two-minute drive away. I also asked the Elite Force of the government of the Punjab on duty with Shahbaz Sharif, present at the gate, to accompany me if they had no duty to perform.

At the TV station we saw a military vehicle, with two soldiers seated, stationed in the porch. There was no army man at the gate. We went upstairs to the first floor but found nobody there. Then we went to the second floor. I asked a soldier who their in-charge was. He pointed towards a major standing there. I went up to the major. He was from the 111 Brigade, under Satti's command. I asked him whether he recognized me. He said he knew me and I was the MS to the prime minister. I said, "Listen, the prime minister has ordered

you to immediately stop interfering in the functioning of TV and tell your troops to surrender.” However, they seemed all out to kill me. When I learnt this I drew the pistol I had got from the police, pointed it to the major and within seconds I had taken hold of his weapon. The moment I snatched his weapon, the soldiers on his right and left put their weapons down. Then I told the major he was interfering in the affairs of the government and I was there to obey the commands of the prime minister and the new army chief. I ordered the other soldiers to put down their arms. They were 12 in number. The operation took two to three minutes. Then I came down and told the Elite Force not to kill anybody but if they were fired at, they were free to defend themselves. I came back to the PM’s House and told the prime minister the whole incident. The TV had restarted its transmission after a short break.

Perhaps at the time of Maghrib [evening prayer] I was informed that some army troops were scaling the PM House boundary walls. I received this information from the main gate. I asked somebody to go and report what was happening at the main gate. He immediately came back and told me that the army was everywhere. The TV transmission stopped again and it was a clear indication the table had been turned. Sensing the situation, I ordered the security guards of the PM’s House to surrender to avoid any loss of life as I had done at the TV station. Since the army had taken over, there was no need to resist. I went out and met the colonel in charge, the battalion commander. He was a nice man. I said to him, “Listen! We have surrendered our arms. There is no resistance, so, do not cause damage to anything. Stop the trucks roaming in the lawns. He said, “OK, whatever had to happen, had happened. It is now beyond our control. It is somebody else’s decision for somebody else.” He was an intelligent person, he understood the matter and did not do anything nonsense.

I went to Nawaz Sharif. With him were General Zia-ud-Din, Saif-ur-Rahman and Shahbaz Sharif. General Zia-ud-Din had not gone to the GHQ. He was arrested from the PM’s House. I told Mr. Sharif the army had taken over. He said, “Ok”. When I told him the news he was sitting in the TV lounge. I was ordered to remain in my office and so, I knew nothing about what happened later. Two hours had passed. I offered my *Maghrib* prayer. At about 8.00 or 9.00 p.m., I learnt General Mehmood had arrived at the PM’s House and was going to the prime minister. I left my office and walked towards the corridor.

Accompanied by General Ali Jan Orakzi and some other people whom I did not know, General Mehmood was leading about 20 SSG people. I saluted General Mehmood and said I would guard the prime minister and wanted nobody to be killed. I was to counter them only as much as I could but General Mehmood was too furious. He rounded his stick to my belly, used abusive language and very arrogantly said, "Go back to your office." I didn't like whatever was happening for I knew the army had put the country at stake to save their skin over Kargil. Irate, I said to them, "Look! This is not New Delhi but your own Prime Minister's House. And look at these SSG personnel, how arrogantly are they walking as if they have conquered an enemy area." I said this and started walking towards my office.

Some SSG people were stationed there, I don't know why, or perhaps after receiving signal from somewhere, one of them hit me in the ribs with twice or thrice with his rifle and pushed me aside. It infuriated me again. I abused these people including General Mehmood, if I don't forget I said to them, "Let these bastards be told, who even do not know how to talk." I don't remember exactly what I had said to them for I was in a fury. I don't know what happened afterwards I went back to my office. The next day, on October 13, at 1.00 p.m., I was shifted to a safe house in Rawalpindi. I was confined there and could see the daylight after a year and a half on the day I was taken to Karachi for recording evidence in the aircraft's case. I had been kept in solitary imprisonment most of the time.



PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

- Like every army man I would take every politician as corrupt but Nawaz Sharif is different
- Nawaz Sharif is so kind-hearted that he is against killing boars even
- Nawaz Sharif would himself change his parents' bedcovers

HOW DID YOU FIND NAWAZ SHARIF?

Q. You are an army officer. You've been with Nawaz Sharif as his military secretary, how have you found him?

Brig. Javed Malik: I met Mian Nawaz Sharif for the first time at my wedding, the second time at Hussain Nawaz's marriage and the third time in 1997 as the parade commander on the Golden Jubilee Parade in Islamabad. Anyhow I had had three meetings with him before I was called for the interview. I was chosen from among seven brigadiers interviewed for the post. This point I am trying to explain to you is that I did not know how he was until I had worked with him. I did know, however, that during his chief ministership and prime ministership in his first term, he had proved very energetic. He had done a lot for Pakistan. His thoughts were very pure. In his second term before taking me as his military secretary, he had tested the nukes and so, I knew him only this much. I was selected as his MS and it was but his kindness. I was neutral and like other army men I did have certain reservations about politicians. I was of the opinion that all the politicians were corrupt with no integrity. We

had been hearing such remarks since the Ayub Khan days. However, while working with Nawaz Sharif, I was surprised to see that wherever he went he spent the money from his own pocket. He never used illegal means to make money or help his kin. However, he was a kind-hearted man. He used to help the poor from his own pocket and so, he sometimes crossed the limits of generosity.

To me he was large-hearted and forgiving. He forgave General Pervez Musharraf despite the Kargil misadventure. He wanted rapprochement. He always took lead in helping the poor. He introduced schemes like Mera Ghar, Yellow Cab Scheme, and Green Channel Scheme for the benefit of common people.

He loved life. He greatly valued it. There were some wild boars at the Prime Minister's House. Mr. Sharif loved animals and birds very much. When I joined the PM's House, he asked me to bring some black deer from upper Sindh and southern Punjab. We brought 20 black deer. Slowly their number increased to 25. We also had many peacocks at the PM's House besides many other birds. Mr. Sharif would bring birds, feed them and then let them fly away. He never confined them. He had provided the animals a spacious environment. A great care was taken when the black deer were fed. Once, wild boars injured a servant. I ordered some wild boars shot. Mr. Sharif heard the gunshots and asked me about them. I told him whatever had happened. He told me not to do it again. I told him the wild boars were feasting on the black deer's food. He ordered the food for the black deer increased. "Increase it 10 times for if the wild boars are staying here with their families, they must not be killed, they too have a right to live like others," he said. It was a very wonderful experience for me. We set up five, six such facilities where we would put food sufficient for the black deer as well as the wild boars.

Then a stage came when every animal had learned to drink water and take food from a specific place. They learned where to go and what to do. Now it was very peaceful; no bloodshed, no fight. The wild boars were so pleased that we did not see them wandering around on the roads as before.

One day Nawaz Sharif asked me as to why I had not talked to him about the wild boars again. He then asked me to show him the boars in the evening. One evening I led the prime minister to the animals. He drove his Mercedes himself. I sat beside him. He switched off the engine so that no noise was created. It was evening, the dining time for the animals. He saw

by a binocular the black deer, the wild boars and the birds taking their food peacefully. He stayed there for one hour, pleased and delighted. He said, "Look how satisfied and pleased they are, I want my nation happy like them." It is one of the facets of his personality.

Once we were in Murree. You know he always stayed in his own house and never used official residence or money on his person. He was staying at his residence and we were lodged at the Governor House in Murree. I had to go to him for his signatures on some files. His servant told me he might have gone somewhere downstairs. I went there and saw him barefooted changing the bedcovers. He signaled me to sit. He completed the task and came out with me. I could not dare ask him why he was doing it himself. When the file work was over, I asked his servant Shakil whether Mr. Sharif made up his room himself. He said no, not his own but that of his parents. He would not allow anybody else to do it. As a husband, as a father and as a brother he is wonderful. How kind-hearted he is! How would a person, who did not allow killing of wild boars, like to kill 200 innocent passengers of the aeroplane? Is it possible for him to order, as alleged by Musharraf, a plane crash?



THUS SPOKE
CAPTAIN SAFDAR

NAWAZ SHARIF AS A HUMAN BEING

- Uncle Nawaz Sharif gets angry if I come home late at night
- I returned Benazir Bhutto her costly jewellery found in a cupboard
- I jumped out of the moving car when motorcyclists came in front of the prime minister
- Aunty Kulsoom played an active role in my marriage
- The prime minister and the aunty did not look for a person from a rich family; they wanted him to be from a noble family instead
- Mariam had adjusted in our small house; she even rubbed cream on my mother's feet

TREATS LIKE CHILDREN

Q. Mian Nawaz Sharif is your father-in-law. How affectionate is he to you? Can you judge him as a human being by his manners?

Captain Safdar: If I go somewhere and do not join the family on the dining table, he will hold food for me. He always keeps a portion of his favorite dishes for me. Whenever I find boiled items and steamed

chicken on the table, Mariam tells me her father had kept them for me especially. He is much worried about my parents since we have been living in exile. He always tries to have them here for four, five months. He does not let them to go back early. Before the arrival of Nawabzada Nasarullah Khan in Saudi Arabia, he asked me to call my father to Jeddah. I talked to my father and he said he would visit us in the month of Ramadan. Nawaz Uncle told me he wanted to see my father with Nawabzadah Nasrullah Khan so they could talk to each other and share their experiences. He often rings them up and talks to them. He treats me like his children Hussain and Hassan, with love and affection. He always knows my program and my pockets. I am always given a priority in choosing clothes for me whenever they are purchased for the family members for Eids. I am always the first one to get the Eid money. Similar is the grandfather's attitude. He treats me like his sons, Nawaz, Shahbaz and Abbas, while giving pocket money. The uncle also reprimands me like other children.

How does he rebuke you?

Captain Safdar: He doesn't like me to come home late or pass the night away from home. He has asked me not to travel in the evening. Whenever I receive or see off a guest at the airport, I get late or go to the beach, (Laughing vigorously) he gets the information that I returned home late at night. He does not like it and says it is not a good habit. When I was Model Town assistant commissioner, he was worried over my late sittings in the office and late arrival at home.

Your wife Mariam might have complained to her father against you.

Captain Safdar: No, she does not do so. She always tries to hide such things.

What else does he get angry at?

Captain Safdar: He doesn't like getting late either. And he doesn't want his children to be away after the evening prayers. In Pakistan he used to ask me to get early flights of 5.00 p.m. instead of 7.00 or 9.00 p.m. from Islamabad while coming back from Mansehra. Nothing else does he get angry at.

LOVE FOR THE GRANDCHILDREN

How does he treat his daughter's children?

Captain Safdar: With great love. I am telling you an incident of the Prime Minister's House. It was 1998 or 99, when my son Junaid would sleep with his maternal grandfather. One night our door knocked. I asked as to who was there. I heard the uncle saying, "Safdar, here is Junaid, he has wetted his bed, please take him." He loved cleanliness but he was not annoyed. Mariam offered him to change his bedcover but he said he would do it himself. I think he changed the bedcover and then took a bath and changed his dress. However, the following night I saw the boy sleeping on his chest like the night before. He did not allow nappies.

How much does Mr. Sharif talk politics at home?

Captain Safdar: Even at home he is always busy thinking about the betterment of the nation and the country. It was December 1991. We were going to Murree. It had snowed and so, we reached there with great difficulty. We were watching BBC or CNN. When there appeared a very pleasant scene of some country, he said he wished Pakistan could also make as much progress and the people of Pakistan could be as much prosperous. He added, "Look, it is snow there as we have here but there it creates no trouble."

WAS IT A LOVE MARRIAGE?

How were your chosen to be a son-in-law? Apparently there is an economic gap between the two families, hers a big industrial family of the country and yours a middleclass one; a major class difference. Your father-in-law was the prime minister and you his ADC; people are at loss to understand as to how did this marriage become possible?

Captain Safdar: As Muslim we believe marriages are decided in heavens. A couple of days after my betrothal, Maulana Abdul Sattar Niazi met me and in front of Nawaz Sharif said he knew my family for 50 years for he had worked with my uncle during the Pakistan Movement. One of my uncles (husband of my paternal aunt) was a graduate from Aligarh University. He was an advocate. He was the president of the college union when the Quaid-i-Azam visited Islamia College. Niazi had once visited us. He told Nawaz Sharif it was his good luck he had chosen me as his son-in-law a member of a very noble and scholarly family. I had worked as ADC with [caretaker prime minister] Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi in 1990. He recommended my name for the District Management Group Service, as every outgoing prime minister does. Mr. Junejo had recommended

his ADC for DMG even after his assembly had been dissolved. He wrote to General Zia-ul-Haq who accepted his recommendation. Since Mr. Jatoi had recommended me, I told Mr. Sharif I was available to him only for four months for I was to attend the DMG academy thereafter. Four or five months later, the prime minister called his military secretary and asked him to depute me to accompany him during his political visits to different cities. According to him I could handle political as well security affairs.

Once we were going to Peshawar. [Finance Minister] Sartaj Aziz was sitting with us in the vehicle. We saw two motorcyclists coming to us. The police tried to stop them but they didn't. They turned towards the fields. I jumped out of the running vehicle. I chased them, jumped over them and caught them from back. They fell down on earth and were then apprehended by the police. I tore my uniform during the scuffle. Back in Lahore after attending the public gathering in Peshawar, the prime minister asked me as to why I had done so for they could have fired shots. I said I wanted to see who they were for even the police had failed to stop them. He appreciated me very much. Such small incidents would often happen.

Once in Multan our helicopter hit a building. It carried 22 or 23 passengers whom I evacuated one by one. The prime minister and [the chief minister] Mr. Ghulam Haider Wyne witnessed the event from their helicopter. The other day newspapers held me hero of the day. The prime minister appreciated me very much. When Benazir Bhutto left the Prime Minister's House in haste after the sacking of her government, she left behind her costly jewellery, pictures and vanity case. I found these things in a cupboard, which I was allotted for keeping my clothes in. I packaged them in a piece of cloth and handed it over to the military secretary telling him all the details. The next morning, having been informed by the military secretary about the whole affair, the prime minister called me in. He sent it all to Ms. Bhutto in Sindh along with a letter. The prime minister was very much pleased with me. He said, 'Safdar, you were alone in the room and you could have done anything with the jewellery.'

How did you tie up?

Captain Safdar: It was my mother-in-law's initiative. I was unaware of it. In 1991, once the prime minister was going to Naraan. His wife was accompanying him. When we reached near Mansehra, they suddenly said they would visit our house. Weaving through the streets, they arrived there. My mother was away and my father was

sitting in a room reading a book. I told him the prime minister had come to see him. Holding the book in his hand, he came out to receive him. They stayed there for about five or ten minutes took water from the well in our home and then left for Naraan. Mr. Qamar had been told to keep an eye on me as to where I would go or whom I met. He had given me a room to live. So, my mother-in-law did have something in her mind.

And no liking of yours and that of Mariam Nawaz Sharif? It's purely a personal question, but many people are curious to know that?

Captain Safdar: Yes I am coming to that. Once in 1991 I told Mr. Qamar I was to join the DMG course but the prime minister asked me to stay with them and got the course put off for six months. As the six months expired, he again did not allow me to join the course. I said to him my course mates would become deputy commissioners and I would be left behind. However, he did not heed. Once I had gone home on leave for my mother was ill. When the prime minister learnt about my mother's illness, he rang us up and asked my mother to come to Islamabad for treatment. My mother said she was unable to travel, and then Mr. Sharif's wife would enquire after her quite often.

One day she said to my mother that Safdar was their son. My mother could not understand what she was saying. Then she spoke to my father. My father talked to me. I said there must have been some misunderstanding. I asked him to leave the matter at that. By the grace of God, ours is a spiritual and scholarly family. But even then I knew how oddly could the families of a prime minister and a poor army captain match up. My father said to her he could not understand her on the telephone. Mr. Qamar had visited my village two years ago as he told me after my marriage. He said he asked a villager whether he knew me, he said he didn't but they greatly revered the shrine of his great grandfather. He said he would go barefooted to our home in respect. Mr. Qamar had also memorized the epitaphs on the graves of my forefathers. He knew how much land we held. Mr. Qamar said he once told Sharifs Safdar had qualified for the tie-up but the only demerit was his limited resources. The prime minister said, "Leave it Mr. Qamar, you, too, have such thinking? Financially a person can become strong anytime but nobility is hard to find. This is my standard."

Then Mr. Qamar asked Mariam for her consent. She said she had no objection to her parents' decision. This was about a year before

our engagement. Now for your question, can somebody think about falling in love with the prime minister's daughter?

Mariam was asked about her will a year before the engagement. Did any feelings sprout in you during the period?

Captain Safdar: No, I was unaware about it.

Was it an arranged marriage altogether or did it have a tinge of liking as well?

Captain Safdar: Yes, it was an arranged marriage. The prime minister's wife was more interested in having me as their son-in-law. Several people ask me whether it was a love marriage. I say when millions of people do love marriages in this world, why does everybody put this question to me.

People think so because there is a major economic gap between the two families. They say your wife must have compelled her family to accept her decision?

Captain Safdar: Well, Ayub Khan's ADC married his daughter and I wedded Nawaz Sharif's daughter. In the army there are many generals whose ADCs have married their daughters. Parents look for nobility and not money. Money is no issue, elevating me to their level was not a difficult task for them. They would surely have a problem if they had to correct something bad in me.

How did you adjust yourself with their family after the marriage?

Captain Safdar: Adjustment was not my problem but that of Mariam's. She adjusted herself very easily. She sacrificed many things. Our house in Mansehra was very small. Despite being the daughter of the prime minister, she worked in a very small kitchen of our house. It is easy saying something than doing. She used to rub cream on my mother's feet at night when we stayed at Mansehra. She used to cleanse her feet with towel and comb her hair early in the morning. She took great care of my ailing old mother. She would change the bedcovers and do the household chores herself. For me it was no problem for I had moved up. For her it surely was. She traveled with me in a small car from Mansehra to the airport. She traveled with me in the economy class instead of the first class and club class. I thought of renting a house near the Ittefaq Hospital for our stay in Lahore. However, the Sharifs told me to stay with them

citing security reasons. I consulted my father. He bade me to obey the elders. So I lived with the Sharif family. A vehicle would pick and drop me to and from the academy. We ate whatever was cooked there. So, 5000 rupees that I got from the Services Academy were enough for us. I have never boasted of or misused my relationship with the family. I have not forgotten my family traditions. It is correct the prime minister's helicopter had been landing in Mansehra but it had been landing in front of the same small and old house that my father built in 1969. So adjusting to the new situation was not a difficult task for me. I remained whatever I was. I would roam in its streets; sit with my friends at the same places as before.

NAWAZ SHARIF AT HOME

How do you evaluate Nawaz Sharif as a human being? Normally politicians behave differently at home and away.

Captain Safdar: He has a passion for serving people. I was told that once when he had not become even the finance minister yet, a thief sneaked in but was caught. It was decided that he be handed over to the police. However, Mian Nawaz Sharif said that he be given food first. (Laughing) He was given food and asked as to what had brought him there. He said he was poor and he thought he would get something here for his children. Mr. Sharif did not hand him over to the police, gave him some money, asked him not to do such an act again and was let off. He sanctioned 3,000 rupees as his monthly stipend. After October 12 things have changed. Most of the sons-in-law keep themselves to themselves. I, however, remember my father's words. He said, "On the Judgment Day, you will be asked the same questions about three types of people; they who gave you birth, they who gave you their daughter and they who educated you. Mr. Sharif's wife is on the streets for agitation, she is your mother you must accompany her and take care of her. You will be to blame if a police stick hits her. Go with her sincerely, bravely. By the grace of God, I have always acted upon my father's advice with persistence.



ANNEXTURES

- 1 - Transcription of telephonic call between Gen. Aziz and Gen. Musharraf on 26th May 1999 regarding Kargil.
- 2 - Transcription of call between Gen. Aziz and Gen. Musharraf on 29th May 1999 regarding Kargil.
- 3 - Transcription of Telephonic call between President Clinton and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.
- 4 - Three pages of Gen Tony Zinni's book on Pakistan
- 5 - General Zia-ud-Din's bio data
- 6 - Prime Minister's order dismissing Pervez Musharraf as COAS duly signed by President Rafiq Tarar

ANNEXTURE 1

Top Secret

TRANSCRIPTION OF CALL OF TAPE NO.2064 DATED 26.05.99.LINK PAK
CHINA LANGUAGE URDU/ENGLISH

PAK PARTY - GEN AZIZ KHAN

CHINA PARTY - GEN PERVEZ MUSHARRAF

- Pak** - Pakistan se Gen Pervez Musharraf Sir.
- China** - Han ji.
- Pak** - Gen Aziz Khan Sahib bat karna chahte hain Sir
- China** - Han karaeye.
- Pak** - Sir wo ap ke (music start) Sir, alahan de kalam
- China** - Han Sir yeh bat karaiya.
- Pak** - Hallo, Salam welcome.
- China** - Han aziz kya hal hai.
- Pak** - Sir very fine. Sir, how is unit going?
- China** - Bahut achha. Thik thak. Aur kya khabar hai udher
Ki al hamid ul ullah
- Pak** - No change on ground situation.
- China** - Han Han.
- Pak** - Unhone jo rocketing Aur straffing shuru ki thi
- China** - Han.
- Pak** - Usko thora se upgrade kiya hai. Kal bhi aur aaj
bombing ki hai. From high altitude bombing.
- China** - Udher hi un position.
- Pak** - Udher un posns main but aj jo unhone jo bombing ki
hai Usmen 3 bomb landed our own side LOC.
- China** - Damage.
- Pak** - No damage Sir.
- China** - To kitni kafi jayada ki hai.
- Pak** - Sir yah kuch 12-13 bomb fenke hain unhone
- China** - Han.

- Pak** - So usman se 3-hamari taraf gire hain which did, net result any thing in accuracy. Meri interpretation yeh hai ken also giving a sort or message keh zarurat pare to ham uudher bhi kar sakte hain.
- China** - Han han han.
- Pak** - Because its quite distance. Apni jagah bomb kiya hai who actually achhi jagah per karne ki koshis ke hai. Jahan se unko taklif hai.
- China** - Han han
- Pak** - Aur ye gira hain hamari line of control ke pichee
- China** - Achha
- Pak** - To usko main foreign Secy. se bat ki hai han ki press me khap shap dalan
- China** - Han unko bhi kaho unko bhi kahna chahiya.
- Pak** - To usko ham ne kaha hai Foreign Secy. bhi kahega aur Rashid bhi kahega.
- China** - Waise to woh nahin woh us se yeh galti ho jayega iska matlab ham yeh kahenge ki woh dusre woh jo hain who bahar gir rahe hain to.
- Pak** - Nahin woh hain uske bat sun hi nahin rahe.
- China** - Hamari taraf gir rahe hain na, hamen to yeh stand hona chahiya.
- Pak** - Nahin Sir, hame bich men us taraf ki figure man ayenge nahin
- China** - Han han.
- Pak** - who fir guideline jo unhone hamen di hai woh yeh hai keh yeh kaha jaye ki yeh jo build up hai.
- China** - Han han.
- Pak** - And employment of Air hai.
- China** - Han han.
- Pak** - Yeh under the garb of infiltration lekin yeh jehri hum ko Hamari position par attack kar rahe hain, yeh hamara stand hona chahiya.
- Pak** - Yeh under the garb of saying jehri hamko yeh infiltrator hain actually they are targetting our positions on the Line Of Control and logistics.

- China** - Hun hun.
- Pak** - Or build up this possibly they are taking it under the garb having intension for operation across Line of Control.
- China** - Han han.
- Pak** - To baki we who need to be taken a note of and we would retaliate in kind if that happens.
- China** - Theek.
- Pak** - Toh puri build up ko ham yeh colour dena chahte hain.
- China** - Bilkul theek hai, han that's better, un say bat to nahin hui kuchh. Kal mulakat wagara hui kuchh.
- Pak** - Kal Sir hui sham ko.
- China** - Achaa kaun kaun tha.
- Pak** - Actually they insisted keh mulakat honi chahioye warna who jo hamarey dost hain puraney meri kursi (chair) wale, main ne kaha ke who kiya patti padhaye ga Lihaza hamain khud karna chahey ja ke.
- China** - Who fir nahi ghabraya hua tha wahan Sialkot main suna hai koi garbar hui hai yar.
- Pak** - Wahan ji han wahan ek Daskana main hua tha ek Badshah gaon main.
- China** - Han uthe who ghabraya hua tha.
- Pak** - Ji han.
- China** - Lekin fir main ne bataya mere se bat hui unki.
- Pak** - Achha.
- China** - Toh main yahi kah raha tha keh aisi chizen to thori buhat hongy, pareseni to sahani chahiyen aur inka jawab to ham aur behtar dhang se de sakte hain unhe.
- Pak** - Bilkul.
- China** - Maine kaha aisi koi bat nahi ghabrane ki.
- Pak** - To who briefing hamne ki jo Mian Sahab ke sath hui thi jo full form tha jo pahle hamne briefing ki thi.
- China** - Udher hi wehi jo jamshed ke pas.
- Pak** - Nahin Main Sahab ke daftar main.
- China** - Achha Achha udher. To kya kaisa tha.

- Pak** - Idher se ham gaye the, Muzaffar sahab the Mehmood, my self and Taukeer.
- China** - Han thik.
- Pak** - Wahan jane se pahle Taykeer ki kiyon ke bat chit ho gai thi counter part ke sath.
- China** - Han han.
- Pak** - Toh uski tape bhi hum le gaye the.
- China** - Woh kya kahia tha.
- Pak** - Woh bari interested hai to ap ayenge toh sunayege.uska focus yeh tha.
- China** - Han han
- Pak** - Keh yeh infiltration yahan aa ke baithi huye hain aur yeh apki madad aur Arty sport ke bagair Jammu main aa hi nahin sakte the.
- China** - Hun
- Pak** - And this is not a friendly act.
- China** - Hun hun.
- Pak** - And its against spirit of Lahore declaration.
- China** - Hun hun.
- Pak** - Toh woh Toukeer ne use kaha ki woh ap ke bande physically attempted to attack the LOC and go beyond it, and woh Turtok bridge ke upper woh they were blanted and body refuse in the process with return us with military honors.
- China** - Han.
- Pak** - And said I thought, keh that is good enough indication, keh ap is tarah ki misadventure main na ayen.
- China** - Han.
- Pak** - And all that build up you are going is 6-7 brigades ukthe kiya huye, hain 50–60 jahaj ik the kiye huye hain.
- China** - Han.
- Pak** - Yeh to bahana bana rahe ho for undertaking some operation against various spaces, to dusra usko defensive par dala hua tha.

- China** - Hun.
- Pak** - Toh usne kaha fir kahani woh wapas, usne 3 point galibhan likh ke rakhe huye the, har bar usi taraf aata tha inki sport na karain aap without your sport. They were not there they have sophisticated weapon hain and we will flush them out, will not stay there and this is not the friendly act.
- China** - Hun.
- Pak** - Toh.
- China** - Aur fire ane ki batt to nahin ki.
- Pak** - Nahin, nahin koi nahin ki.
- China** - Aur Koi esa dabane dubane ki baat to nahin ki.
- Pak** - Nahin nahin usne kahan ki they will be given suitable reception ek dafa usne yeh istemal ki ek dafa usne kaha ki they will be flush out.
- China** - Hun.
- Pak** - Aur fir har dafa hi, fir Taukeer ne kaha ki unki hamen detail setail batayen keh kitne kya hain hamn to pata nahin ap ke ilake main kya ho raha hai. Toh then I will ask the concerned people and we will get back to you.
- China** - Hun.
- Pak** - Toh woh yeh detail jab puchhta hai toh kahta hai achha jab woh milenge to main tafseel bataunga.
- China** - Hun hun.
- Pak** - Achha thik he said for 3 times.
- China** - Hun hun.
- Pak** - Which means they possibly either looking fwd ke jab next round of talks main usmen kahin mulakat hogi.
- China** - Milenge toh tafseel bataunga.
- China** - Hun hun.
- Pak** - Toh ya to yeh next round of talks main they are visulaising keh usmain bat ki jayegi.
- China** - Han.
- Pak** - Aur chunke dono PMs ki bat hui hai. Sindh ki bat hui hai toh they are expecting ke some.

- China** - Han han. Ok very good. Thik hai no problem.
- Pak** - Crux.... Ap se discuss ki thi, ap se blessing ki thi. Keh kal bhi hamne unko yahi kaha.
- Pak** - Door of discuss dialog must remain open.
- China** - Hun hun.
- Pak** - Aur baki no change on ground situation.
- China** - To ghabraya hua toh nahin tha koi.
- Pak** - nahin
- China** - Aur yeh tumahari seat wala admi toh nahin ghabraya hua tha.
- Pak** - Woh ghabraya hua tha aur Malik sahab ghabrya huye the jo pahle bhi ghabraye huye the.
- China** - Han.
- Pak** - Woh dono ke views yeh the keh ji. Iske, khair woh jo status ko jo present position hain usmain change koi bhi recommend nahin kar raha tha.
- China** - Han.
- Pak** - Lekin yeh kah rahe the ki uski age, escalation regulate karni chahiye kiyon ke all out war hone ka khatra hai.
- China** - Hun hun.
- Pak** - Toh woh off course woh logic sogic hamne di keh iski to reason banti nahin and plus chunke wah jo tutti hai who uski hai apke hath main hai usko jab chahen usko regulate Karden.
- China** - Sahi bat hai sahi kahi.
- Pak** - To Sekhu Zaffar Sahab usko puri weel.
- China** - Achha.
- Pak** - Han ji bahut achha present kiya unhone yeh point
- China** - Achha very good.
- Pak** - So that was interested.
- China** - Achha.
- Pak** - baki Mehmood, my self
- China** - Strongly bola
- Pak** - Ji who unhone kaha ek toh hamne tumahen pahle briefing kiya hua tha. Subah unko pahle toh unhone

assessment di keh kuchh huya, tape sunai fir unhone kaha ji ham ye kinare merge hote dekhte hain aur who wahi assessment thi jo hamari hai esclation in thos various stages.

China - Hun hun.

Pak - Toh unone kaha ki yeh iske liye military situation main hamen koi problem nahin hai inhen handle karna.

China - Hun hun.

Pak - Baki iske political aspect jo hain, diplomatic woh ap log baithe huye hain and we weak your guidance and keep seeking your guidance as a things move and there is no reason for Law and Panic?

China - Thek hai.

Pak - Toh who apne is main late inform hone ko bhi bare positively unhone represent kiya.

China - Achha.

Pak - Kaha raha ji main toh 7-8 din huye jab mujhe pata chata jab hamne Comdr. Ko bataya.

China - Hun.

Pak - Aur is sari operation ki kamyabi ki bunyadi wajah yahi hai ki inhone logon ko nahin bataya.

China - Han.

Pak - Agar yeh bata jate toh hamara Tajarba yeh kahta hai ki pahle yeh sari kosisen nakam jati rahi yeh bhi nakam ho jati.

China - Hun.

Pak - To priority jo isko accord ki gai confidentially man usman iski sari kamyabi ki bat bani hai and isko hamen respect karna chahiye aur age isse jo advantages niklte hain usko handle karna chahiya.

China - Bolte chalo bahut achha.

Pak - Sir isman bara achha bala.

China - Han han chalo yeh very good.

Pak - To.

China - Thik hai. Baki mian sahab thik thak.

- Pak** - Thik thak ji confident usi tarah but yeh 2 bande karte rahe Shamshad as usual supported.
- China** - Achha.
- Pak** - Unhone kaha ke ji koi khatra nahin hai usko.
- China** - Hun.
- Pak** - To baki yeh aj se koi 2-1 ghante se BBC is continuously giving coverage for this.
- China** - Air jo unhone kiya hai.
- Pak** - Han Air istemal kiya hai jo unhone kiya hai bata rahe hain yeh dono.
- China** - Hun.
- Pak** - Toh.
- China** - Toh udher istemal karte rahain bomb apen girate rahen udher.
- Pak** - Jahan tak who internationalisation aspect hai Sir, this is the fastest that happen.
- China** - Hun.
- Pak** - Pata naihin apne wahan Press mein likha hoga Secy. Gen United Nation Kofi Annan Sahab ne aj appeal ki hai dono mulkon se ki ji band Karen aur Kashmir par baat Karen.
- China** - Han. Nahi nahi bahut achha hai yahi toh ham keh rahe the.
- Pak** - Positive fall out hain iske.
- China** - Han bilkul thik hai chalo that is very good.
- Pak** - Will you keep inform Sir.
- China** - Ok
- Pak** - Ok Sir.



ANNEXTURE - 2

Top Secret

GENERAL AZIZ IS TALKING TO GENERAL MUSHARRAF- THE DATE OF INTERSESSION IS 29TH MAY 1999 AND TIME IS 5:55

Aziz is speaking from Pakistan (P.end) to general sahib in china (C.end). Both ends are audible. Important portion or the call is as under...

P.end: This is Pakistan. //Give me room no. 83315//
Hello// Sir, Salama lakum//

C.end: Hello, aziz

P.end: The situation of ground is ok, no change. // Yesterday's activity is that air craft ... comes in this area, but its not comes down to attack. // One of there MI - 17 arms was brought down. // AAGE JOH POSITION HAY WE HAD APPROACHED TO.... USKO NICHE LAYA GAYA. // Rest is OK; nothing else except, there is a development. // Have you listened the yesterday's news regarding Mian Sahib spoke to his counterpart. // He told him that the spirit of Lahore declaration and escalation has done by your people. // Especially wants to spoken to me, thereafter, is awaited for its part instead of regarding to opting the ATTI (?) by using the air force and all other means. // He told him that he suggest; Sartaj Aziz can go to Delhi to explore the possibility of accusing (defusing) the tension.//

C.end: ok. //

P.end: Which likes to take place most probably tomorrow. //

C.end: ok. //

P.end: Other point might have also put pressure on. // For that, today they will having a discussion at foreign office about 930 and Muzzaffar Sahib is suppose to attend. //

C.end: ok. //

P.end: Aziz Sahib has discussed with me and my suggestion is that dialog's option is always open. // But in there first meeting, they must give no understanding or no commitment on ground situation. //

C.end: you or Mehmood, must have to go with Zafar // because they don't know about ground situation. //

- P.end:** This week we are getting together at 8 o'clock because meeting will be at 9.30. So Zafar sahib will deliberate it. // We want to suggest to Zafar that they have to maintain that they will not be talking about ground situation. // So far as the ground situation is concerned, subsequently DGMO can discuss with each other and work out the modev (?) //
- C.end:** Idea on LOC. //
- P.end:** yes. // Hint is that, LOC has many areas where the interpretation of either side is not but the other side believes. // So comprehensive deliberation is required. // so, that can be worked out by DGMO. //
- P.end:** Like in the beginning, the matter is same, no post is? , No post captured or that's the situation we are along with our defensive Line of Control. // If, it is not in his knowledge, then discussed altogether. //
- C.end:** Yes this point should be raised. // We are sitting on the same LOC since a long period. //
- P.end:** This is their weakness // they are not agreed on the demarcation under United Nation's verification, whenever we are agreed. //
- C.end:** This is in Simla Agreement. //
- P.end:** Our neighbour is not accepting presence or DIPS? Of United Nation's or armogase? // So, we can pressure on this weakness and if it is required, the Army can work out under Armogase? Arrangement for survey of the area. // So we can start from the top from 9842. // On this line we can give them logic but in short the recommendation for Sartaj Aziz Sahib that he should make no commitment in first meeting on military situation. // And should not even accept cease fire because if there is cease fire, take place then vehicles will be moving. // In this regard, they have to use their own argument that whatever is interfering with you. // That we don't know but there is no justification about tension on LOC. // We want to give them this type of brief. // So that, he does not get into any specific. //
- C.end:** All right. //
- P.end:** In this connection, we want your approval and what is your program. // Evening we will be in Hong Kong. //

There will be a flight tomorrow from Hong Kong. // So we will be there at Lahore in the evening via Bangkok flight. //

P.end: Sunday evening, you will be at Lahore. // We will also indicate that, if there is more critical situation then it should be deferred for another day or two. // It will discuss on Monday and then do. //

C.end: Is this MI - 17 have not fallen in our area. //

P.end: No sir this has fallen in his area. // We have not planned. // We have planned through Muzzahuddin. //

C.end: well done. //

P.end: But top wise side, crashing state before the eyes? //

C.end: Very good. //

P.end: ABHI INKO URANE MAIN KOI, YEH BHI NOTE KARO JARA, REPORT TEST AATI, ENKE URANE OR KUCHCH ENKE AATI HAIN SCARE VAGARAHE YA KAMI HUI HO YA KARIB NA AA RAHE HO. //

C.end: Six, KAFI PRESSURE HAI UNKE UPPAR. //

P.end: USKE BAAD BAHUT KAAM HAI AND they are even talking that air defense arrangement that we were expecting will be much more and that we can't afford to loose more. //

C.end: Very good. // First class // is there any built -up on ground. //

P.end: ULAESA? // But the movement is very sluggish and slow.

C.end: SIX NUMBER KE PASS EK OR DO AA RAHE HAIN. //

P.end: Till now , only one call signed, in wich one is moving by road and till now not reached at valley .// Now air people and ground people will be back and then the situation will be OK.//

C.end: See you in the evening. // OK//

P.end: OK. //



ANNEXTURE -3

Top Secret

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE TELEPHONE CONVERSATION OF
PRIME MINISTER NAWAZ SHARIF WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON FRIDAY
22 MAY, 1998: 2200 HOURS**

Prime Minister:

Greetings

President Clinton:

How are you Mr. Prime Minister? Thank you for taking my call.

Prime Minister:

Very well, thank you. And thank you for calling me exactly after three days, as you promised.

President Clinton:

I have been busy, since I talked to you on Monday.

Prime Minister:

I appreciate your gesture in calling me again. It is Saturday in Washington. I hope it will not spoil your golf outing.

President Clinton :

It might a little. But actually it's still Friday here. We were waiting for some results of the Irish election on the peace process. Any way, I wanted to talk with you about a package consisting of five positive elements. It could be useful to you in responding to those urging you to a nuclear test. If I could just run them by you we could come back to them in case you have any questions.

First you have emphasized your security concerns especially with regards to Kashmir. I read your letter regarding the strategic balance very carefully. I have already initiated an effort to get the Indians to restrain their activity.

I called President Yeltsin [of Russian Federation] and he has already weighed in with Prime Minister Vajpayee .He understands how serious I think the situation is and he has promised to help .He does not want to be drawn in .He thinks it very bad for Russia's interests on what they are doing. We are also working with other leaders to get them to use their influence with New Delhi. We are looking at what the UN Security Council can do as well. We have also spoken directly to the Indians about Minister Adjani's provocative remarks and have told them that this kind of talk is dangerous and should stop.

Our Ambassador to India Dick Celeste is a good friend of mine. He was in India 30 years ago and so he has a lot of ties there. When I send him back to New Delhi it will be with a very strong message for the Indians not to cross any new thresholds. I am doing everything I can on this but I want to stress that restraint have to be mutual. We would work on the Indians but I would urge you not to give any additional causes to them for taking any new action. For right now all the pressure and heat and criticism are on India. And that where we want to leave it.

The second point is your concerns about your conventional military capability. I would like to provide some credible and tangible support quickly. The quickest thing I can do in this area is to resolve the F-16s problem and the International Military Education Training (IMET); which is something of particular importance to the Commander of your Armed Forces. Now, under our law, I have special authority to waive sanctions at times when it is in the national interest to do so. Until this nuclear test by India, it would have been unthinkable for Congress to allow this on F16 issue. But if you feel the delivery of F-16s would be helpful to you in your decision-making, Prime Minster I am prepared to consult with Congress about using this authority, and I believe that I can get enough support in Congress for them not to overturn my action. And if I could, we could have a couple of those planes ready for delivery. Then we could have the rest of them ready in a matter of a few months after that. This authority is only rarely used but I believe the outrage in our Congress in both parties against what

India has done is such that I believe in about two months the deliveries could start. If you want me to do that.

In addition, we are reviewing our commercial arms sales policy, which has not been supportive of Pakistan. But we can change that to make it more supportive in line with your priority needs. It would be useful if your military people could talk directly to mine. If you agree, I would ask Gen. Shelton, the Commander of our Joint Chiefs, to get in touch with the Commander of your Armed Forces.

The third thing I would like to talk to you about is the Pressler Amendment. I told you that I would support the efforts of Senator Brownback to repeal the Amendment and obtain a waiver from the Symington Amendment. I had a long talk yesterday with our Senate Majority Leader, Mr. Trent Lott, who said that he would strongly support the repeal of the Pressler Amendment and help on the other sanctions. Normally though not always, we usually win in the Senate, when he and I are on the same side.

And since this Amendment came out of the Senate, if we manage to pass its repeal in the Senate. We should also succeed in the Congress (House). I cannot guarantee the Congress. Yesterday, Senator Lott and I were on the same side and we lost an Amendment in the Senate. But that is extremely rare and had nothing to do with Pakistan.

So while I can give no guarantees, there is a better than 50-50 chance. I will do everything I can to succeed and Senator Lott has made a similar commitment. So I believe we can prevail there.

Fourth, I want to talk about economic assistance. I believe that Pakistan's greatest security in the long run could come from a stronger economy. I have asked the Treasury Department here to lead an effort to increase your access to resources from the International Financial Institutions, especially the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, in support of a credible economic reform program. We expect the additional flow of resources to support reform could range from between US\$ 3 to 5 billion over the next three years. And a substantial part of

the program could be made available this year. If you were interested in this, we would send an economic team to Pakistan. If you like to discuss any additional bilateral assistance / support, we could discuss assistance from the "Trade and Development Agency" or "Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)". These Agencies would intensify their efforts for Pakistan. For example, we could shift immediately US\$2. Million from the trade and Development Agency to help finance prospective funding for new projects. It might be a nice thing for you to do as it goes with the Suspension of trade and development activities in India. So what has been suspended for them could be diverted to you and this could be a nice political touch. It could also help to get you some more investment. I am also looking into the possibility of forgiving some of your debt. I think we should do it. Under our laws, I have to get approval from Congress. I have not had time over the last 72 hours to check whether Congress would be amenable to such a step. So I cannot promise that I can do it. What I can promise is that I will recommend it and try to achieve this.

If we could do all these things, it would allow you to address some important needs of your people. It would also substantially increase the attractiveness of Pakistan for private investment.

The fifth thing that I wanted to mention is that it would send a very strong signal to the region and the rest of the world, and it would not hurt you at home, if I could invite you to Washington for a formal state visit this summer. This would give us an opportunity to unveil the package formally even though it would all have been worked out earlier. It would also enable us to share our views on this situation.

Now, if you can find it possible to avoid a nuclear test, I will carry out these steps to the utmost of my ability and just **the** way I have said. And, of course, I would have to ask you to continue your present policy of not transferring nuclear missile technology to other countries. This main thing is that we have a chance here to keep the heat on India, to behave responsibly, as well as to elevate

the status of Pakistan and the support it receives from the world community.

Let me say I think this is also in the best interests of the Indian people. This political Party, (BJP) containing as it does people more radical than Prime Minister, will put the Muslim and Sikhs and other minorities in danger if it keeps India on the road. It's not just a prospect of a nuclear build- up or a conflict over the differences you have on Kashmir. I think they are going to have some real problems in India. So I think that it is very important for me to keep the door of dialog open with them and to send them a clear message that we don't approve of this. It's a much starker message if Pakistan stays in perfect contrast to them.

So this, Mr. Prime Minister, is best I could do in these 72 hours. But I think that all on these things we can make real progress on. I will keep working to restrain the Indians and go forward on the F -16s and IMET.

I will also do my best to repeal the Pressler Amendment and Symington Amendment sanctions, and I think we will prevail unless some one pulls some sort of parliamentary trick in the Senate. I cannot guarantee the bill until we actually pass it. We can go forward with the economic assistance package. We have already talked to the World Bank and the IMF and we know what we can do within our own Government. We could also do the state visit. I wanted to tell you all this as I had promised to report back to you. You may not be able to respond right now on any of this. But if you want to take it on board and then talk about it in a day or so, that's fine too. You might want to discuss it with you advisers and get back to me.

Prime Minister:

Thank you very much Mr. President. I am extremely gratified at this expression of support, and I think Mr. President, you are a very decent man with a global vision. We really want to work with you. I must also appreciate the concerns expressed by you over the last ten days, including in your two telephone calls to me. I have told

this to my colleagues in Government that you are the one man to have expressed genuine concern over this issue. I am very impressed with the views expressed by you in both conversations.

I will certainly examine this and will consult my colleagues on this subject. As I mentioned in my letter of yesterday, the stakes for us are very high and literally involve the survival of Pakistan. And we now have reports that there is a likelihood of a preemptive strike by India against our installations. I hope you will understand what such an action means. I also hope that you understand the magnitude of the crisis that Pakistan faces today.

After conducting five nuclear tests, India claims to have become a nuclear weapon power. Furthermore, the Indian Prime Minister himself has stated that India would, if necessary, use nuclear weapons in case of a war with any of its neighbors. No Prime Minister on the earth has even given such a statement. The Indians have gone even further in threatening some adventurist action in Azad Kashmir.

Because of its nuclear capability, India feels that it is in a position to deal with us with far greater recklessness and it has now threatened Pakistan with use of force, especially in the context of Kashmir, as I just mentioned.

We, thus, face the threat of nuclear blackmail and naked aggression from India. Mr. President, we have to be prepared for this nightmare scenario.

I would be grateful if a clear, firm and unambiguous message is sent to India that it must refrain from taking any further escalatory step, especially in Kashmir.

Thank you for talking to Mr. Yeltsin and other leaders. I hope it will have some effect on India.

President Clinton:

You may be sure I will keep working on it. You know, there seems to be some significant differences within the

actors inside the Government of India on what to do next and we need to keep them off balance and keep them in some doubt as to what is going to happen, if they misbehave. That is what I am trying to do. I hear your message loud and clear. I would ask you to evaluate the situation.

If you have any further questions, you could then get back to me, or have your people call my NSC Chief Sandy Berger, who worked with me on the package. And then you just need to let me know what you want and when.

Just one more point regarding the F-16's. If you decide you don't want the planes but prefer the cash, I could perhaps do this also. But I think the actual delivery of plane would be more symbolic of the purpose what we are trying to achieve here. It would be a show of strength, without a nuclear test. But it's your choice. And if I feel I cannot deliver on something, I will let you know.

Prime Minister:

Thank you, Mr. President. May I have your personal fax number in case I need to contact you directly?

US Staff Officer:

Mr. Prime Minister. This is the Situation Room in the White House. You can reach us at 202-757-1330. This is the fax number.

President Clinton:

After you go over these things, you may have further questions. If you do well be working on this during the weekend. And if you want to talk me any time during this current crisis- just call me. There is no more important priority for me right now, than to try to stop the reintroduction of the nuclear race and protect you and prevent a conflict from occurring there. I understand how terribly difficult it has been for you to set an example to the entire world and be a genuine statesman. I want to minimize the cost to you at home and maximize your security, within my ability to do so. Don't worry about getting back to me. We shall get you answers on any

technical matters that you may need. You just get back to me on what you want to do on these five things and we will go forward from there.

Prime Minister:

Thank you Mr. President. In order to be able to get back to you, I have to stay on as Prime Minister. The Opposition Leader here in Pakistan, Ms. Benazir Bhutto is already calling for my resignation and I hope I am able to sustain these pressures. I must also tell you, Mr. President, that you are a person who is very much liked in Pakistan. Kindly convey my regards to Hillary. We retain very fond memories of her visit to Pakistan two years ago.

President Clinton:

Will do so. Shall be very pleased as she too admires you very much for the restraint you have shown. Some of the things we talked about today will help you with the Opposition Leader as well.

Prime Minister:

Thank you, Mr. President. I will get back to you.

Recorded by:

(Tariq Fatemi)

Additional Secretary (AE&CIS)

May 23, 1998



ANNEXTURE - 4

TOM



CLANCY

**with General Tony Zinni (Ret.)
and Tony Koltz**

BATTLE

READY

[This is Story of Kargil as narrated by General Tony Zinni (a friend of General Musharraf) He clearly says that General Musharraf encouraged him in his efforts for ceasefire in Kargil]

On the twenty-first of April, I traveled to Pakistan for several days of meetings with the new chief of staff, General Pervez Musharraf. The two of us connected quickly and easily. He was bright, sincere, and personable. A fervent nationalist who nevertheless leaned toward the West, he was as appalled as General Karamat over the ever-worsening corruption within the civilian government. He also understood the various, powerful Islamist currents running through his country, and saw them as the threats they were to bringing his country into the twenty-first century; yet he also understood that his country would never modernize and solve its myriad ills without the emergence of some kind of religious accommodation, and hopefully religious consensus.

It was a great meeting, despite the chill cast by our sanctions. As I was leaving, we both agreed to stay in close touch (we exchanged our home telephone numbers). Our friendship would later prove to be enormously valuable to both our countries.

In May, Pakistani forces made a deep incursion into an area called Kargil, on the Indian side of the Line of Control.

Though there was normally "fighting" near the Line of Control, the area for a long time had been quite stable.

There'd be probes and shooting during the good months of the year, but nothing ever changed much; and in wintertime, everybody would pull back down into the valleys, and the two sides would create a "no-man's-land." As spring came, they'd go back up into their positions.

Every so often, somebody on one side would be a little late getting up to their spring position, and the other side could grab an advantage of a kilometer or so. It was like "Aha, I've gotcha!" on a tactical level. But it didn't really change things.

This time, however, the Pakistanis waylaid the Indians and penetrated all the way to Kargil. This was such a deep, significant penetration that it wasn't tactical; it threatened Indian lines of communication and support up to Siachen glacier.

The Indians came back with a vengeance. There were exchanges of fire, there was a mobilization of forces, there were bombing attacks, planes were shot down. Then the two sides started to mobilize all their forces all along the line; and it was beginning to look like the opening moves of a larger war. It got alarming.

I was therefore directed by the administration to head a presidential mission to Pakistan to convince Prime Minister Sharif and General Musharraf to withdraw their forces from Kargil.

I met with the Pakistani leaders in Islamabad on June 24 and 25 and put forth a simple rationale for withdrawing: "If you don't pull back, you're going to bring war and nuclear annihilation down on your country. That's going to be very bad news for everybody." Nobody actually quarreled with this rationale. The problem for the Pakistani leadership was the apparent national loss of face. Backing down and pulling back to the Line of Control looked like political suicide. We needed to come up with a face-saving way out of this mess. What we were able to offer was a meeting with President Clinton, which would end the isolation that had long been

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the state of affairs between our two countries, but we would announce the meeting only after a withdrawal of forces.

That got Musharraf's attention; and he encouraged Prime Minister Sharif to hear me out.

Sharif was reluctant to withdraw before the meeting with Clinton was announced (again, his problem was maintaining face); but after I insisted, he finally came around and he ordered the withdrawal. We set up a meeting with Clinton in July.

In October 1999, the tension between the civilian and military leadership of Pakistan finally came to a head. The government was freely elected but outrageously corrupt. The military found itself between a rock and a hard place. If they let the situation continue, the rot could grow bad enough that the country would collapse—a very real possibility. But there was no way to change this situation according to the normal liberal democratic rules.

Sharif set in motion his own downfall by trying to fire General Musharraf, while Musharraf was out of the country, and to put the chief of intelligence in his place. He had originally given Musharraf the job under the misperception that Musharraf would be easy to control. He had not reckoned on the general's integrity.

In response to Sharif's move, the Pakistani army executed a coup.

While the coup was moving to its climax, Musharraf was flying home; and for him, success was a very near thing. His aircraft came back into the country low on fuel; but the airports, still under the control of Sharif's forces, were closed to him. At the last possible moment, forces friendly to Musharraf took over the airport and the general landed.

Prime Minister Sharif was soon placed under arrest, and Musharraf declared his intent to clean up governmental corruption and install true democracy.

ANNEXTURE - 5

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name:

Zia-ud-Din

Date of Birth:

04 Dec. 1943

Father's Name:

Ala-ud-Din Khwaja

Last Profession:

Military Officer Ex Four Star General. Appointed Army Chief by the elected Prime Minister of democratic Government of Pakistan on the 12 Oct. 1999.

Decorations:

Hilal-e-Imitiaz(Military)-SSecond Highest Military decoration.

Qualification:

Master Degree in Strategic Studies

Post Graduate Diploma in Topographic Engineering from Defense Mapping School, DOD, USA.

Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering (Awarded Honors Grade and Gold Medal for topping the course)

Honors Degree of Bachelor of Science in War Studies

First Class Bachelor of Science Degree in Physics & Mathematics.

Professional Experience:

Veteran of three Indo-Pak Wars.

As Brigadier General commanded an infantry brigade (5000 men)

Worked as Private Secretary of the then Chief of Pakistan Army for three years in the rank of Brigadier General- the most coveted post for any officer this rank.

Promoted to two star Major General and commanded an infantry division (15000 men)

Worked as Director General Combat Development of Pakistan Army as two star Major General and was in charge for development of weapon systems including strategic doctrines, formulating Pakistan's response in international strategic calculus and its stand on arms control regimes.

Assisted and advised the then Chief of Pakistan Army on strategic issues and accompanied him on all-important foreign visits.

Promoted to three star Lieutenant General and commanded a composite infantry corps (50,000 men)

Appointed Adjutant General of Pakistan Army as Principal Staff Officer at the General Headquarter and was in charge of the Army mobilization, its recruitment, pay, discipline and the welfare, corporate ventures, as well as the Military Judicial System.

Worked as Chief of ISI as Lieutenant General and was in charge of all intelligence activities in and outside Pakistan. Simultaneously advised and assisted the Prime Minister on national security including formulation and implementation of policies on internal security, Afghanistan, Kashmir, terrorism and international relations.

During this tenure I maintained working relationship with FBI, CIA, M16, RFIS; Saudi, Jordanian, Turkish, Egyptian Intelligence, and other international intelligence agencies.

Appointed Chief of Pakistan Army and promoted to the rank of Four Star General on the 12 Oct. 1999 after present incumbent was retired. I was then senior most in Pakistan Army.



ANNEXTURE - 6

پاکستان کے سرکار



PRIME MINISTER

12 October 1999

It has been decided to retire General Pervez Musharaf, Acting Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Army Staff with immediate effect. Lt. Gen. Ziauddin has been appointed as the Chief of Army Staff with immediate effect and promoted to the rank of General.

Before orders to this effect are issued, President may kindly see.

(Mohamud Nawaz Sharif)

The President

Seen.
R. Rafiq

This is a photycopy of Prime Minister's order in which he decided General Musharraf's retirement as Chief of Army Staff and has appointed General Zia-ud-Din in his place. President of Pakistan Rafiq Tarar has also retified the order.



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