

**Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA**

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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Questions

- 1. Please provide information on PML(Q): its constitution, structure and Presidents since 2003.**
- 2. Please provide information on harassment of PML(Q) members in Lahore at the hands of the PPP since 2005, including the election in 2005, the intervening period when Musharraf and PML(Q) were in power and recent elections to date.**
- 3. If harassment is reported, please advise if there is a profile of those harassed, such as leaders etc.**
- 4. Please advise whether any PML(Q) politicians were successful in the recent elections and whether they have faced any difficulties.**
- 5. Please advise if there are links between the police and PPP since 2005 which would affect protection for activists of the PML(Q) or its youth wing now or since 2005.**

RESPONSE

Note: the Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) (PML(Q)) is also commonly referred to as the Pakistan Muslim League (PML), both in media reports and on the party's website.

1. Please provide information on PML(Q): its constitution, structure and Presidents since 2003.

Question 2 of *RRT Research Response PAK33746*, of 17 September 2008, provides information on the history, structure, and constitution of the PML(Q). To summarise the main points:

- The PML(Q) was formed in 2001 after a split in the Pakistan Muslim League (PML), and many founding members were defectors from the PML and Pakistan People's

Party (PPP). The remaining PML party members formed the Pakistan Muslim League.

- The PML(Q) came to power after winning 25.7% of the popular vote and 69 out of 272 seats at the 2002 national elections.
- Sources indicate that the party was a strong supporter of ex-President Musharraf.
- Media reports suggest that the party is struggling for survival after a poor showing in the February 2008 elections ('Pakistan Muslim League Quaid-e-Azam (PML Q) Profile' (undated), Pakistan Elections website <http://www.elections.com.pk/partydetails.php?id=41> – Accessed 11 September 2008 – Attachment 33; 'Out with the president's men' 2008, *The Economist*, 21 February http://www.economist.com/world/asia/displaystory.cfm?story_id=10727840 – Accessed 26 February 2008 – Attachment 34; RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response PAK33746*, 17 September – Attachment 1).

The constitution of the PML(Q), which provides detailed information regarding the structure of the party, is provided as Attachment 2 ('Constitution' (undated), Pakistan Muslim League website <http://www.pml.org.pk/details.aspx?id=3e37ca2e-58a8-4ed8-a8aa-39f30fa0594f&cha=1&cat=9> – Accessed 9 October 2008 – Attachment 2).

According to the PML(Q) website, the current president of the party is Chaudry Shujaat Hussain, who has been the president since 2002 ('President' (undated), Pakistan Muslim League website <http://www.pml.org.pk/details.aspx?id=e92d90e7-ed02-4328-9c3a-1acec8018290&cha=1&cat=9> – Accessed 15 October 2008 – Attachment 3).

A September 2008 article from the *PakTribune* newspaper makes reference to "PML(Q) Punjab President Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi" ('Pervaiz Elahi says Punjab government about to fall – Slams PML-N govt for PML-Q workers' arrest' 2008, *PakTribune*, 19 September <http://www.paktribune.com/news/index.shtml?205865> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 7).

'Wings' of the PML(Q) are the Women, Sports, Youth, Lawyers and Labour ('Specialised Wings of PML' (undated), Pakistan Muslim League website <http://www.pml.org.pk/details.aspx?id=6c49b73d-b21f-45f4-b964-a46e11fc5f11&cha=1&cat=9&temp=1> – Accessed 15 October 2008 – Attachment 4).

The Youth Wing of the PML(Q) is headed by president Aleem Adil Sheikh, and the secretary-general is Shahbaz Goshi ('PML Youth Wing' (undated), Pakistan Muslim League website <http://www.pml.org.pk/details.aspx?id=689ca153-f0a8-40bc-bf66-dccb18f70db2&cha=1&cat=9> – Accessed 15 October 2008 – Attachment 5).

A 2005 report on political parties in Pakistan from the International Crisis Group (ICG) provides background on the formation of the PML(Q), which is describes as a "military-created" party composed mainly of defectors from the PML(N). The report states that, in September 2005, the PML(Q) was "in power in the centre, the ruling party in Punjab, and a coalition partner in the Sindh and Balochistan provincial administrations":

The “Muslim League” label continues to be evocative, associated with the All-India Muslim League that is generally credited with having won Pakistan’s independence. A variety of right-of-centre parties have used variations of the name, each claiming to be the rightful political heir, including Ayub Khan’s Convention Muslim League and Fatima Jinnah’s Council Muslim League in the 1965 elections. In the 2002 elections six parties entered parliament on Muslim League platforms.

Today, the two largest parties taking up the Muslim League mantle are the PML-N, a faction formed under Nawaz Sharif’s leadership in 1993, and its Musharraf-era offshoot, the PML-Q. Both advocate moderate economic policies centred on privatisation and deregulation. In the past the PML-N benefited from the military, corporate and bureaucratic patronage the PML-Q now enjoys. Party activists from both factions stress ideological attachments to the All-India Muslim League and its leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

...The military-created PML-Q also claims the All-India Muslim League’s legacy. Its leadership is composed largely of former members of PML-N who joined the splinter group after the army ousted Sharif’s government in 1999. The new faction also usurped PML-N offices in Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore. The PML-Q is currently in power in the centre, the ruling party in Punjab, and a coalition partner in the Sindh and Balochistan provincial administrations. Dependent as it is on the military, however, it has had to dilute its party ideology, a topic discussed in greater detail below.

...While the PML-Q claims to operate independently on party matters, including nomination of officials and candidates, senior members told Crisis Group that the military is heavily involved in the screening process for important appointments to party, government and parliamentary posts. All major central leaders, including the PML-Q president, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, have been handpicked and serve at the military’s pleasure. PML-Q provincial chief ministers are selected by the military and then automatically given the office of provincial party president. Other senior party officials have been given major cabinet posts, widening the gap in the process between its leadership and ordinary members.

...Having created the PML-Q, the military is understandably bent on controlling it, further diluting its message and retarding its organisational development. “The [PML-Q] is in an ideological vacuum because that’s the best way the military can keep control of it”, said Khanzada Emran Khan. The PML-Q’s military benefactors decide party policy in all key areas, domestic or foreign. The relationship was aptly symbolised in May 2005 when Musharraf chaired a PML-Q central executive meeting, violating a constitutional prohibition against an army chief attending a party meeting.

...The PML-Q leadership is understandably unwilling to challenge the military’s preferences or directions, well aware that the patronage it enjoys will continue only while it serves the military’s interests (International Crisis Group 2005, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, Asia Report no.102, 28 September http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/102_authoritarianism_and_political_party_reform_in_pakistan.pdf – Accessed 9 December 2005 – Attachment 6).

- 2. Please provide information on harassment of PML(Q) members in Lahore at the hands of the PPP since 2005, including the election in 2005, the intervening period when Musharraf and PML(Q) were in power and recent elections to date.**
- 3. If harassment is reported, please advise if there is a profile of those harassed, such as leaders etc.**

No reports could be located, between the time of the 2005 municipal elections and the 2008 provincial and national elections, in which PML(Q) supporters complained of victimisation

by the PPP or the PML(N). The available information suggests that there is a connection between political incumbency and control of the police and security forces, and it appears more likely that the PML(Q) would have been in a position to harass political opponents than the opposition parties. A July 2008 report from the International Crisis Group addresses PML(Q) control of the police and security forces between 2005 and the elections in 2008; this issue is addressed more fully in Question 5 below. Nonetheless, since the rise of the PPP and PML(N) to power, federally and in Punjab, in the recent elections, these parties are now in a position to treat leaders and workers of the PML(Q) as they had been treated in recent years. Available information suggests that both ground-level workers and leaders of political parties are targeted by political opponents (for the 2005 elections, see: Kronstadt, K. 2005, *Pakistan's Domestic Political Developments*, United States Diplomatic Mission to Italy website, Congressional Research Service, 19 September <http://www.italy.usembassy.gov/pdf/other/RL32615.pdf> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 8; International Crisis Group 2005, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, Asia Report no.102, 28 September. (http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/102_authoritarianism_and_political_party_reform_in_pakistan.pdf – Accessed 9 December 2005 – Attachment 6; and Human Rights Commission of Pakistan 2006, *State of Human Rights in 2005*, HRCP website, January <http://hrcp-web.org/HRCP%20AR%202005.pdf> – Accessed 14 October 2008 – Attachment 9; for the connection between the police and the PML(Q), see: International Crisis Group 2008, *Reforming Pakistan's Police*, Asia Report N° 157, 14 July – Attachment 22; for reports of anti-PML(Q) actions, see: 'Gilani's a 'government in exile' run by Zardari, alleges PML-Q' 2008, *Newstrack India* (source: ANI), 23 July <http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/7959> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 12; Mahmood, A. 2008, 'PML-Q's tit for tat: Phone bugging', *Dawn*, 28 May <http://www.dawn.com/2008/05/28/top6.htm> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 13; and 'Action against Wajahat force continues' 2008, *Dawn*, 21 September <http://www.dawn.com/2008/09/21/nat14.htm> – Accessed 20 October 2008 – Attachment 11).

The 2005 elections

A 2005 Congressional Research Service report to Congress titled *Pakistan's Domestic Political Developments* provides information on the 2005 municipal elections. Among the claims made in the report are that: "President Musharraf was violating the code of conduct by urging voters to cast ballots for candidates favoured by the ruling PML-Q"; "scores of Pakistanis were killed and as many as 1,000 were injured in poll-related violence around the country"; there was "widespread vote-rigging"; and that the electoral process was a "typically vice-regal electoral exercise":

Although August 2005 municipal elections ostensibly were non-party affairs, officials from the opposition PPP complained in July that President Musharraf was violating the code of conduct by urging voters to cast ballots for candidates favoured by the ruling PML-Q. Then, in a blow to the hopes of Islamist sympathisers, the Pakistan Supreme Court ruled that candidates with religious education were ineligible to run in municipal elections unless they have studied English, Pakistan studies, and Urdu. Islamist leaders criticised the ruling. The voting for candidates in 110 districts, which came in two phases on August 18 and August 25, involved deployment of tens of thousands of troops for security purposes, yet scores of Pakistanis were killed and as many as 1,000 were injured in poll-related violence around the country. Claims of widespread vote-rigging and women being barred from polling stations in the Frontier Province spurred Pakistan's major opposition parties – both secular and Islamist – to issue a joint call for a national strike to protest President Musharraf's "military takeover,"

“dictatorial behavior,” and “blatant rigging.” Ensuing protests were only moderate in scale (with Quetta being an exception) and Information Minister Rashid called the strike “a total failure.”

Candidates favored by Pakistan’s ruling party appear to have fared quite well in all four provinces, and PML-Q gains were seen as a major boost for President Musharraf, who may have to rely on the ruling party to win the presidency in 2007. Musharraf expressed satisfaction with “a victory for the moderates” and “a defeat for the extremists.” However, one Pakistani analyst opined that the outcome would be unlikely to yield political harmony and had only exacerbated the sense of bitterness and alienation felt among opposition parties. Others warn that apparent irregularities could in fact harm Musharraf’s image; a former Pakistani ambassador called the process a “typically vice-regal electoral exercise” (Kronstadt, K. 2005, *Pakistan’s Domestic Political Developments*, United States Diplomatic Mission to Italy website, Congressional Research Service, 19 September <http://www.italy.usembassy.gov/pdf/other/RL32615.pdf> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 8).

The abovementioned 2005 ICG report on political parties in Pakistan claims that the PML(Q) rigged the poll and harassed members of PPP and PML(N) in the 2005 local government elections. This included the arrest of high-profile PPP leaders on anti-terror and kidnapping charges, kidnappings and arrests of PPP and PML(N) workers; the report claims that “[o]pposition candidates and supporters were systematically targeted”. The report also states that “violence during the first two phases of the elections, on 18 and 25 August 2005, claimed at least 45 lives, with hundreds injured in scuffles”, and that the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) “concluded that, ‘large scale pre-poll rigging and manipulation of the polls over large parts of the country have struck a grievous blow to the concept of multi-party and pluralistic democracy’”:

In the 2005 local elections, the government embarked on an all-out effort, including rigging, to ensure that the PML-Q won. This was necessary because the ruling party has failed to transform itself from a disparate group of defectors and factions into an independent political entity. Taking no chances, General Musharraf had opted to conduct the elections on a non-party basis, restricting parties from organising openly at the local level and using party flags, posters or other symbols to mobilise their voters. Candidates had to declare that they had no connection to any party, and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP)’s rules called for the disqualification of any candidate who revealed such a link.

...In the run-up to and during the polls, the government targeted opposition political party leaders and workers. For example, Nadeem Qaira, a PPP tehsil nazim (mayor) and brother of a PPP MNA from Gujarat, Qamar Qaira, was arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act. On 4 April, Ghulam Qadir Chandio, a PPP MPA in Sindh, was arrested on kidnapping charges and denied bail until the alleged victim stated publicly that he had not been kidnapped. Chandio was later rearrested for robbery. There were numerous reports of kidnappings of PPP and PML-N leaders and workers as well as false charges to prevent their candidates from contesting the polls. Opposition candidates and supporters were systematically targeted, with many, particularly from PML-N, coerced or persuaded to defect to PML-Q.

...The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) chose to overlook the massive abuse of state resources by the ruling party. Although violence during the first two phases of the elections, on 18 and 25 August 2005, claimed at least 45 lives, with hundreds injured in scuffles, the ECP did nothing, while General Musharraf congratulated the ruling party for its massive and unsurprising victory. However, the independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) concluded that, “large scale pre-poll rigging and manipulation of the polls over large parts of the country have struck a grievous blow to the concept of multi-party and pluralistic

democracy” (International Crisis Group 2005, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, Asia Report no.102, 28 September.
(http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/102_authoritarianism_and_political_party_reform_in_pakistan.pdf – Accessed 9 December 2005 – Attachment 6).

A 2006 Human Rights Commission of Pakistan report on human rights, covering the year 2005, noted that “[t]he pattern seen in previous years, of attempts to weaken opposition parties and persuade members to switch over to the ruling PML continued”, and that “The trend...was most visible in the Punjab”. The report quotes allegations from PPP and PML(N) leaders that “the Punjab government had intimidated and harassed leaders to persuade them to defect” to the PML(Q), and states that “[t]housands of political workers associated with opposition parties were arrested during the year”. The report relates the arrest of “hundreds” of PPP supporters in Lahore who had gathered to welcome home PPP leader Asif Ali Zardari, and quotes claims from the PPP that “at least 2,000 workers were arrested countrywide, including dozens of parliamentarians and party leaders”:

The pattern seen in previous years, of attempts to weaken opposition parties and persuade members to switch over to the ruling PML continued.

The trend, which violated the principle of multi-party democracy, was most visible in the Punjab, Between April and August 2005, at least 20 PML-N members, including several MPAs and MNAs, announced their decision to join the PML. At least five leaders of other parties, including the PPP, also switched alliances.

Leaders of the PML-N and PPP alleged the Punjab government had intimidated and harassed leaders to persuade them to defect, while also using offers of important positions within the ruling party or government as a means to bribe them over. The luring over of opposition leaders assumed greater pace just before and after the local government polls in August, with the Punjab authorities aiming to strengthen their own position in various districts by acquiring the support of opposition leaders who wielded political influence. The PML-N repeatedly stated the tactics were intended to cover-up the considerable support of the party in the Punjab, and to ensure establishment-backed candidates assumed the maximum number of district nazim posts. Even more sinister than the intimidation of opposition leaders in the Punjab was the open threat to their safety that came during the year.

...The determination to prevent people participating in political events was most obviously demonstrated in the harsh measures taken to restrict assembly. Thousands of political workers associated with opposition parties were arrested during the year.

...One of the largest round-ups came in April, when Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader and spouse of party chairperson Benazir Bhutto, Asif Ali Zardari, returned home to the country after a stay in Dubai. While the PPP planned a big reception for Zardari at Lahore Airport, and a rally to Data Darbar shrine, last minute changes in flight schedule created chaos. Some reports stated the changes had been deliberately orchestrated by authorities to create confusion and prevent party workers from reaching the airport. Zardari, who arrived at dawn, was whisked swiftly away under police escort to his home in the cantonment area. Meanwhile, scores of PPP workers were arrested at the airport. Others were held from outside Zardari’s house and across the city. An HRCP fact-finding mission, led by its chairperson, expressed dismay over the ruthless force to which party workers had been subjected. Women, children, the young and old alike, were mercilessly dragged away to police stations with scant respect for their dignity. HRCP learnt at least three women were injured. The HRCP team was denied entry to police stations, within some of which children were held.

Several women political activists complained even the sick were not provided medical care. Some women workers were subsequently sent off to distant jails where they remained detained for weeks and even months. PPP workers entering the city were rounded up in hundreds. Others were held in Karachi, Islamabad, Multan, Gujranwala and other cities as they set out for Lahore. The PPP maintained at least 2,000 workers were arrested countrywide, including dozens of parliamentarians and party leaders.

Families of detained PPP leaders including Ahmed Mukhtar, former Multan mayor, Salauddin Dogar and Irfan Sheikh, filed petitions before the Lahore High Court (LHC) in April complaining they were not being permitted to meet the prisoners held at Multan Jail. The court ordered jail authorities to permit meetings.

At Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi authorities told families of leaders that only the home secretary could grant permission for arrested workers to be allowed to meet relatives. Many leaders complained that they were kept in prison far beyond the 90-day period laid down under Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) regulations.

...The use of anti-terrorism laws as well as National Accountability Bureau (NAB) regulations against opposition politicians was more blatant than in previous years throughout 2005.

Dozens of political workers were charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act after being arrested at rallies or other public gatherings. They included members of the National Assembly and the Punjab and Sindh provincial assemblies (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan 2006, *State of Human Rights in 2005*, HRCP website, January, pp.163-167 <http://hrcp-web.org/HRCP%20AR%202005.pdf> – Accessed 14 October 2008 – Attachment 9).

Recent media reports

Recent press reports from Pakistan provide information indicating that, with the shift in political power and control after the 2008 elections, the PML(Q) is now experiencing a crackdown on its members and officials under the PPP-PML(N) coalition government.

A September 2008 report in *The Nation* states that the Punjab government, a coalition between the PML(N) and PPP, is cracking down on “the leaders and workers of the PML-Q” and “expediting efforts on the pending cases against some top PML-Q leaders”. The report states that the government is arresting “activists of the Wahajat Force”, the private PML(Q) militia:

Punjab government has launched a crackdown against the leaders and workers of the PML-Q, the former ruling party, which is considered as the main remnant of General Musharraf.

Sources said that apart from expediting efforts on the pending cases against some top PML-Q leaders, the Punjab government had also launched a crackdown against what is being officially described as ‘Wajahat Force’ in Gujrat district, which the PML-Q said was part of political victimisation.

The Punjab government has taken up with NWFP and AJK governments to track down the activists of the Wajahat Force who were allegedly hiding to escape their arrests in Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, Peshawar, Swat, Haripur, Abbottabad, Mansehra and Battagram districts (Malik, M. 2008, ‘Parties agree to facilitate two-party system’, *The Nation*, 24 September <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/25-Sep-2008/Parties-agree-to-facilitate-twoparty-system> – Accessed 20 October 2008 – Attachment 10).

Another article from September 2008, taken from the *Dawn* newspaper, provides further information about the arrests of “activists of Wajahat force” in Gujrat, Punjab, approximately 120km north of Lahore. The report claims that a PML(Q) council nazim and a district president were among those arrested “in some already registered robbery and theft cases in various areas of the district”. According to this article, a “PML-N district president...and secretary-general...denied PML N role in the police crackdown on the force”:

A search operation to arrest the activists of Wajahat force is still under way in Gujrat as a PML-Q spokesman has claimed more arrests during the last 24 hours.

Reports said Gujrat Saddar SI Amjad Husain got three-day remand from a special anti-terrorism court for the 20 activists who were arrested on Thursday during a major crackdown. Since then a number of workers had gone underground to prevent their arrests.

PML-Q spokesman and private secretary to MNA Wajahat Husain, Hameedullah Bhatti, told *Dawn* that former Barilla Sharif union council nazim Chaudhry Asghar, Ghewranwali UC ex-nazim Chaudhry Zulfiqar and MSF district president Zahid Bhatti were arrested on Saturday in some already registered robbery and theft cases in various areas of the district.

Police is still unable to arrest main office-bearers of the force, including its district president Shehzad Gull, a UC nazim, and tehsil president Adeel Arshad who is wanted in many other cases of heinous crimes.

Sources said Adeel Arshad had fled to Europe to avoid his arrest and many others were still at large.

They said raiding teams from Mandi Bahauddin and Gujranwala had been called as it was feared that local police had leaked information to influential activists. Sources said former Punjab chief minister Pervaiz Elahi and Wajahat Husain talked to the detained activists on cell phones of the visitors. Wajahat Husain has also constituted a free legal aid committee for the arrested workers.

Meanwhile, PML-N district president Malik Hanif Awan and secretary-general MPA Haji Nasir Mehmood in a joint statement appreciated the police operation against the Wajahat force and denied that the action was political victimisation.

They also denied PML N role in the police crackdown on the force (‘Action against Wajahat force continues’ 2008, *Dawn*, 21 September <http://www.dawn.com/2008/09/21/nat14.htm> – Accessed 20 October 2008 – Attachment 11).

A July 2008 report sourced from the *Newstrack India* website quotes a PML(Q) leader claiming that party leaders are “being victimised”:

Mushahid Hussain said that PML leaders and workers were being subjected to inhuman atrocities and cited the example of Altaf Unnar and his son. He also alleged that the Shirazis of Thatta and PML-Q leaders in other districts were also being victimised (‘Gilani’s a ‘government in exile’ run by Zardari, alleges PML-Q’ 2008, *Newstrack India* (source: ANI), 23 July <http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/7959> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 12).

A May 2008 report in *Dawn* provides detail on allegations of threats against an independent candidate in the coming by-elections, who was accompanied at a press conference by senior

PML(Q) figures, and also states that the candidate “had not approached police to seek protection”. Also quoted are allegations from a PML(Q) source that “PML-Q’s candidates for various seats in Bhakkar, Rawalpindi and Lahore were being harassed and forced to withdraw their nominations”:

A day after the PML-N released an alleged phone tape implicating PML-Q leaders in a plot against the Sharif brothers’ candidature in the coming by-elections, the former ruling party has made public the recording of a couple of threatening phone calls allegedly made to a candidate contesting against former chief minister Shahbaz Sharif.

Naeem Shahzad, an independent candidate for a provincial assembly seat in Lahore, said at a press conference that he had recorded the calls made to his cellphone on Monday, but he had been harassed for several days. He was accompanied by Punjab PML-Q secretary-general Chaudhry Zaheer and former law minister Basharat Raja.

A recording of the calls was also played on the occasion.

Sources said Mr Shahzad had not approached police to seek protection or taken legal action on the matter, but had sought the help of some rivals of the Sharif brothers.

...He alleged that PML-Q’s candidates for various seats in Bhakkar, Rawalpindi and Lahore were being harassed and forced to withdraw their nominations.

...He alleged that PML-Q candidate Ikhtlaq Ahmed Guddoo had withdrawn from the contest against the PML-N chief under pressure (Mahmood, A. 2008, ‘PML-Q’s tit for tat: Phone bugging’, *Dawn*, 28 May <http://www.dawn.com/2008/05/28/top6.htm> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 13).

A May 2008 report from the *GEO.tv* news website (which claims that Altaf Unnar is a member of the PML-N, while all other reports located name Unnar as a PML-Q leader) states that a leading PML(Q) figure had his nomination papers for the by-election rejected because he failed to appear before a returning officer because he was being held in detention:

Pakistan Muslim League-N leader Altaf Unnar has filed appeal in Sindh High Court against rejection of his nomination papers for contesting by-polls from NA-207.

The appeal challenges the decision of the concerned returning officer who rejected the nomination papers for Altaf Hussain Unnar’s not appearing before him.

Under the rules it is mandatory for a candidate to appear before concerned returning officer while it is also a right of every citizen to participate in the elections.

But, Altaf Unnar failed to appear before the returning officer because of his detention due under various cases (‘Unnar files appeal against rejection of papers’ 2008, *GEO.tv* website, 16 May <http://www.geo.tv/5-16-2008/18194.htm> – Accessed 20 October 2008 – Attachment 14).

An April 2008 report from The Pakistani Spectator blog website identifies Unnar as “a prominent leader of PML-Q in Sindh”, and quotes a PML(Q) spokesperson who claims that “this is one of the many steps taken by PPP government in Sindh to victimise the PML-Q workers and leaders”. The author of the blog entry concludes that “given the political vendetta history of Pakistan, this seems yet another round of political victimisation”:

Former provincial minister for power and relief, a prominent leader of PML-Q in Sindh and an old adversary of Zardari family has been arrested and put on body remand of 5 days.

According to the media reports, He was arrested in a case lodged with the Budhapur police on the complaint of MNA of Pakistan People's Party, Dr. Azra Pechuho, the sister of PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari. Earlier police had refused to lodge the case for which an order was passed by concerned additional district and sessions judge on application filed under sections 22-A Cr.PC by Dr. Azra. The application was filed after the MNA allegedly came under firing on February 10, 2007 in a clash outside a polling station in Budhapur during by-elections of PS-71.

According to the PML-Q spokesperson this is one of the many steps taken by PPP government in Sindh to victimise the PML-Q workers and leaders and they have produced a list of 2000 cases registered against their workers throughout Sindh.

This is pretty much alarming. If anybody has committed any sin, then he or she should be punished but given the political vendetta history of Pakistan, this seems yet another round of political victimisation (Khan, A. 2008, 'Altaf Unnar of PML-Q Under Arrest', The Pakistani Spectator blog website, 18 April <http://www.pakspectator.com/altaf-unnar-of-pml-q-under-arrest/> – Accessed 20 October 2008 – Attachment 15).

RRT Research Response PAK30061, of 10 April 2006, provides information on the 2005 local elections in Lahore, quoting an International Crisis Group report which states that the PML(Q) won the election convincingly at nazim (mayor), town and union levels, although opposition parties including the PPP claimed widespread rigging (International Crisis Group 2005, *Pakistan's Local Polls: Shoring Up Military Rule*, Asia Briefing N°43, 22 November p.2 & n.2 – Attachment 27; RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response PAK30061*, 10 April – Attachment 16).

Question 3 of *RRT Research Response PAK33746*, of 17 September 2008, provides information on recent violence against PML(Q) members in the wake of the 2008 elections. According to sources quoted by this response:

- A 15 September 2008 article in *The Nation* reports claims by the PML(Q) President who states that ““PML-Q legislators, workers and office-bearers are being targeted in Sindh and Punjab provinces” (‘Pervaiz Elahi resigns as Opposition Leader’ 2008, *The Nation*, 15 September <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/15-Sep-2008/Pervaiz-Elahi-resigns-as-Opposition-Leader> – Accessed 15 September 2008 – Attachment 28).
- A 22 July 2008 article found on the PML(Q) website states: “Chaudhry Shujaat [party president]...alleged that the PPP had unleashed a reign of terror against PML-Q leaders and workers”, that they were being “victimised” and “subjected to inhuman atrocities” (Malik, A. 2008, ‘PML-Q leaders call it a “government in exile”’, Pakistan Muslim League (Q) website, source: *Daily Dawn*, 22 July <http://www.pml.org.pk/Details.aspx?id=b48a87bd-619a-4c68-a0ab-75b3dd9bf086&cha=1&cat=1&subcat=1> – Accessed 11 September 2008 – Attachment 29; RRT Research & Information 2008, *Research Response PAK33746*, 17 September – Attachment 1).

4. Please advise whether any PML(Q) politicians were successful in the recent elections and whether they have faced any difficulties.

According to data from the Pakistan Election Commission, in the 2008 national and provincial elections PML(Q) candidates won 54 seats (of 339) in the National Assembly, 6 of 124 in the NWFP Assembly, 84 of 369 in the Punjab Assembly, 9 of 165 in the Sindh Assembly, and 19 of 65 in the Balochistan Assembly (for National Assembly results, see: Pakistan Election Commission 2008, 'Party Position Summary', Pakistan Election Commission website, 28 June <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/pps.pdf> – Accessed 13 August 2008 – Attachment 17; for Provincial Assembly results, see: Pakistan Election Commission 2008, 'Provincial Assemblies: Party Position Including Reserved Seats', Pakistan Election Commission website, 28 June <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/PAPosition.pdf> – Accessed 13 August 2008 – Attachment 18).

Please see Questions 2&3 above for reports of harassment of PML(Q) politicians since the February 2008 elections.

Two recent articles in *Dawn* provide information on the current situation of the PML(Q) since the February 2008 election:

- A September 2008 article states that “political experts believe that in the near future more PML-Q members...will either join the PPP or the PML-N” and that the PML(Q) “is facing extinction within a month of the ouster of Gen (retired) Musharraf”. This follows the PML(Q)’s presidential candidate receiving only 44 of 126 projected votes in the September presidential election, which the article attributes to the fact that “most of the PML-Q members...have changed their loyalties in less than one month of his resignation and are now trying to prove their allegiance to their new-found friends and arch rivals of the past – Pakistan People’s Party and the PML-N”:

Saturday’s presidential election proved to be a Waterloo for the Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q), whose numerical strength in the parliament as well as provincial assemblies was reduced to almost one-thirds, posing a serious challenge to it in terms of maintaining its existence.

According to the unofficial results of the elections, PML-Q’s candidate Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed got only 44 electoral votes even though, keeping in view the party’s strength in all the assemblies and parliament, he was projected to secure 126 votes.

The result clearly shows that most of the PML-Q members, who were earlier staunch supporters of former president Gen (retired) Pervez Musharraf, have changed their loyalties in less than one month of his resignation and are now trying to prove their allegiance to their new-found friends and arch rivals of the past – Pakistan People’s Party and the PML-N.

...The PML-Q had suffered a major blow when a strong group of about 30 parliamentarians attended the dinner hosted by Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani at the PM House on Friday evening which had been arranged to show their strength ahead of the presidential elections.

Soon after the announcement of the unofficial results, a dejected Senator Mushahid Hussain – who was the only candidate who ran an extensive campaign – alleged some

foul-play in the polling held for the presidential election. On the other hand, another PML-Q MNA Sheikh Waqas Akram declared that those who had not voted for the party's candidate were "turncoats". Talking to the media, he termed the presidential election a good omen for the party, saying that now the real PML-Q would play the role of a true opposition in the parliament.

However, political experts believe that in the near future more PML-Q members will ditch the Chaudhrys of Gujrat and will either join the PPP or the PML-N, thus proving that the PML-Q was really a "King's Party" which is facing extinction within a month of the ouster of Gen (retd) Musharraf (Wasim, A. 2008, 'Presidential poll PML-Q's Waterloo', *Dawn*, 7 September <http://www.dawn.com/2008/09/07/nat5.htm> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 19).

- An October 2008 report states that the PML(Q) is considering entering into a coalition with the PPP at the federal level, and could "seek the chief ministership of Punjab in return for cooperation with the PPP in the country's biggest province, where the PPP and the PML-N are together in government but remain strange bedfellows":

The PML-Q is 'inclined' to become coalition partner with the PPP at the federal level, putting aside some positive gestures lately sent by the PML-N.

Party sources told Dawn on Tuesday that the situation had reached a stage that only some major development could change the mindset of the party leadership.

Top PML-Q and the PPP leaders were in contact with each other and their outcome would be made public in near future.

...President Asif Ali Zardari phoned Shujaat and asked him that his party – the PML-Q – should join the federal government without delay.

...Although the opinion was divided at the outset, more people were supportive of cooperation with the PPP by the time the meeting came to an end.

"The mood and the body language of Shujaat showed that he won't have any problem working with the PPP, burying the bitterness of the past", sources said.

Some of the participants said that the PML-Q should seek the chief ministership of Punjab in return for cooperation with the PPP in the country's biggest province, where the PPP and the PML-N are together in government but remain strange bedfellows. However, more internal party discussions on the subjects will be held later (Mumtaz, A. 2008, 'PML-Q 'inclined' to join hands with PPP: PML-N monitoring situation', *Dawn*, 1 October <http://www.dawn.com/2008/10/01/nat19.htm> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 20).

5. Please advise if there are links between the police and PPP since 2005 which would affect protection for activists of the PML(Q) or its youth wing now or since 2005.

Please see Questions 2&3 above for information on the 2005 local government elections which, though ostensibly non-party political, resulted (allegedly through rigging and voter and candidate intimidation) in the widespread election of PML(Q)-affiliated candidates across the provinces of Pakistan.

A 2008 report from the International Crisis Group claims that the Musharraf-controlled PML(Q) government has "used the force for political ends", and notes that "Police are

dependent on provincial chief ministers or district nazims for tenure and promotion, and the report quotes a police officer claiming that ‘they have no choice but to do the bidding of their political masters’’. The US Department of State’s (USDOS) 2008 *Country Report on Human Rights Practices* for Pakistan states that “control of the police falls under elected local district chief executives known as nazims”, and that “[p]olice force effectiveness varied greatly by district, ranging from reasonably good to completely ineffective”. The USDOS report also reports claims from PML(N) and PPP sources that they endured mass arrests and harassment at the hands of the police and security forces. A February 2008 article from the Pakistani Spectator blog website draws attention to the complexity of the political situation in Punjab, with the PML(N), PML(Q) and PPP all claiming areas of influence and control. A 29 February 2008 article on the Overseas Pakistani Friends blog website, sourced from *The Nation*, provides information suggesting that the police force in Punjab was undergoing radical upheaval within ten days of the election, as the victorious PML(N) government move to install their own police hierarchy and remove those loyal to the PML(Q). An August 2008 article in the *Daily Times* claims that PPP lawmakers, despite being part of the ruling coalition in Punjab, “have no say in formulating decisions regarding the administration and development affairs of the province”, and that “no request of the PPP legislators had been entertained in postings, transfers and appointments even at the district level”. Two recent Pakistani media reports provide information suggesting that, with the change in political power and influence at the federal and provincial level, PML(Q) members are complaining of harassment, intimidation, and arrest at the hands of the police in Sindh and Punjab (please see Questions 2&3 above for more reports) (for the 2005 elections, see: Kronstadt, K. 2005, *Pakistan’s Domestic Political Developments*, United States Diplomatic Mission to Italy website, Congressional Research Service, 19 September <http://www.italy.usembassy.gov/pdf/other/RL32615.pdf> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 8; International Crisis Group 2005, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, Asia Report no.102, 28 September. (http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/102_authoritarianism_and_political_party_reform_in_pakistan.pdf – Accessed 9 December 2005 – Attachment 6; and Human Rights Commission of Pakistan 2006, *State of Human Rights in 2005*, HRCP website, January <http://hrcp-web.org/HRCP%20AR%202005.pdf> – Accessed 14 October 2008 – Attachment 9; for recent reports on the police in Pakistan, see: US Department of State 2008, *Country Report on Human Rights Practices – Pakistan*, 11 March – Attachment 21; International Crisis Group 2008, *Reforming Pakistan’s Police*, Asia Report N° 157, 14 July – Attachment 22; Hameed, A. 2008, ‘Tsunami to hit Punjab Police’, Overseas Pakistani Friends blog website (source: *The Nation*), 29 February <http://www.opfblog.com/699/tsunami-to-hit-punjab-police/> – Accessed 22 October 2008 – Attachment 31; and Sumra, A. 2008, ‘PPP legislators in Punjab have no say in decision making’, *Daily Times*, 26 August http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C08%5C26%5Cstory_26-8-2008_pg7_16 – Accessed 22 October 2008 – Attachment 32; for media reports on police harassment of PML(Q) members, see: ‘Police harassing PML-Q workers’ 2008, *Dawn*, 25 July <http://www.dawn.com/2008/07/25/nat31.htm> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 24; and ‘Pervaiz Elahi says Punjab government about to fall – Slams PML-N govt for PML-Q workers’ arrest’ 2008, *PakTribune*, 19 September <http://www.paktribune.com/news/index.shtml?205865> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 25).

The 2008 US Department of State’s *Country Report on Human Rights Practices* for Pakistan provides information on the police and security forces in Pakistan. The report states that “control of the police falls under elected local district chief executives known as nazims”,

that “corruption within the police was rampant”, and that “[p]olice force effectiveness varied greatly by district, ranging from reasonably good to completely ineffective”. It may be of interest to note in that case that the report states that “[p]olice charged fees to register genuine complaints and accepted money for registering false complaints. Bribes to avoid charges were commonplace. Individuals paid police to humiliate their opponents and avenge personal grievances”. The report also states that “the government used preventive detention, mass arrests, and excessive force to quell or prevent protests, political rallies, or civil unrest” and that “[s]ome political groups claimed their members were marked for arrest based on their political affiliation”, and quotes claims by PML(N) and PPP sources that they endured mass arrests and harassment at the hands of the police and security forces:

Police have primary internal security responsibilities for most areas of the country. Under the Police Order (Second Amendment) Ordinance promulgated in 2005, control of the police falls under elected local district chief executives known as nazims. Paramilitary forces such as the Rangers, the Frontier Constabulary, and the Islamabad Capital Territory Police fall under the Ministry of the Interior. Provincial governments control these forces when they assist in law and order operations. During some religious holidays, the government deployed the regular army in sensitive areas to help maintain public order.

Corruption within the police was rampant. Police charged fees to register genuine complaints and accepted money for registering false complaints. Bribes to avoid charges were commonplace. Individuals paid police to humiliate their opponents and avenge personal grievances. Corruption was most prominent among police SHOs, some of whom reportedly operated arrest-for-ransom operations and established unsanctioned stations to increase illicit revenue collection.

Police force effectiveness varied greatly by district, ranging from reasonably good to completely ineffective. Some members of the police force committed numerous, serious human rights abuses. Failure to punish abuses created a climate of impunity. Police and prison officials frequently used the threat of abuse to extort money from prisoners and their families. The inspector general, district police officers, district nazims, provincial interior or chief ministers, the federal interior or prime minister, or the courts can order internal investigations into abuses and order administrative sanctions. Executive branch and police officials can recommend and the courts can order criminal prosecution, and these mechanisms were sometimes used.

The Punjab provincial government initiated regular training and retraining of police at all levels, both in technical skills and human rights. The Karachi city government reportedly gave the city’s human rights officers facilities in which they could hold training. At least two NGOs, Sahil and SHARP, worked with police for the purpose of training. In 2005 President Musharraf reissued and amended the 2002 Police Order, which transfers oversight responsibility of police from provinces to districts and calls for the establishment of local oversight bodies. In the Punjab and NWFP, public safety commissions were established and functioned; however, according to SHARP and the Global Foundation, the commissions existed but operated under a vague mandate. During the year district public safety commissions in Punjab, Sindh, and a majority of districts in NWFP and Balochistan were established but their effectiveness was undermined because of inadequate staffing.

...As in previous years, the government used preventive detention, mass arrests, and excessive force to quell or prevent protests, political rallies, or civil unrest.

On June 15, Amnesty International expressed concern regarding a series of arbitrary arrests of opposition party workers and other political activists that had occurred over a two-week period. According to media reports, police arrested approximately 800 to 1,200 persons,

primarily in Punjab, to prevent mass demonstrations protesting the suspension of the chief justice in March.

In early September police arrested hundreds of party workers from the PML–N in an effort to prevent welcome rallies for the return of exiled former prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

...Some political groups claimed their members were marked for arrest based on their political affiliation.

...Police often used preventive detention and excessive force against demonstrators, members of civil society, political activists, and journalists.

...According to the PPP, they faced increased intimidation following the assassination of Benazir Bhutto on December 27. The PPP reported that 1,627 cases were registered against 510,351 of their activists in one district of Hyderabad (US Department of State 2008, *Country Report on Human Rights Practices – Pakistan*, 11 March – Attachment 21).

A July 2008 report from the ICG, titled *Reforming Pakistan's Police*, claims that “Pakistan’s police force is incapable of combating crime, upholding the law or protecting citizens and the state against militant violence”. The report states that Pakistan’s police have “a well-deserved reputation for corruption, high-handedness and abuse of human rights”, and that the Musharraf-controlled PML(Q) government has “used the force for political ends”, and that “Musharraf relied primarily on the police to crush political dissent”. Nonetheless, the report goes on to state that “[b]asic law and order responsibilities in the four federal units are vested in their provincial governments”, and that the PML(Q), the PML(N), and the PPP have all politicised and used the police force to their own ends while in power, claiming that “police officials were too often diverted from their primary duty of maintaining law and order to carrying out the commands of their political masters”. Police are dependent on provincial chief ministers or district nazims for tenure and promotion, and the report quotes a police officer claiming that “they have no choice but to do the bidding of their political masters”. The PML(Q) is singled out in the report for its hindering of police reform, and for its use of the police to harass political opponents and rig elections; the report states that “[i]n many districts, for instance, district police officers arrested opposition workers on false charges, and opposition rallies were broken up”. Finally, the report states that “[i]n 2006, the Punjab government’s ‘Anti- Corruption Establishment’ report warned that police corruption was ‘very high’, ranging from bribes to registering false cases and dropping charges against criminals”:

After decades of misuse and neglect, Pakistan’s police force is incapable of combating crime, upholding the law or protecting citizens and the state against militant violence.

...The police remained a political pawn, with transfers and promotions used to reward those willing to follow orders, no matter how illegal, and to punish the few professional officers who dared to challenge their military masters.

...The new civilian government has inherited a police force with a well-deserved reputation for corruption, high-handedness and abuse of human rights, which served the military well for over eight years, suppressing Musharraf’s civilian opposition and more than willing to accept any task – from extrajudicial killings and torture to rigging elections.

...Following Musharraf’s 1999 coup, the regime used the force for political ends. In 2007, Musharraf relied primarily on the police to crush political dissent, as he faced the most serious challenge to his power in the aftermath of the sacking of the chief justice of the

Supreme Court. The police were once again the military-led government's coercive instrument of choice after the promulgation of martial law in November. In the run-up to national elections in February 2008 and on election day, too, the regime used the police against its political opponents.

While Musharraf relied on the police to counter political opposition, his government deprived the force of adequate resources – administrative, technical and fiscal. After almost a decade of neglect, it is not surprising that the police have proved incapable of maintaining internal security.

...Basic law and order responsibilities in the four federal units are vested in their provincial governments. The police forces in the provinces act independently of each other, and there is no nationwide integration. However, the federal interior ministry exercises overall supervision.

...In the flawed democratic transition of the 1990s that followed Zia's death in 1988, successive elected governments were dismissed by the military, using the president as proxy, before they completed their terms of office. Nor did the two main political players, Benazir Bhutto's PPP and Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) help to consolidate democracy, as they entered into untenable alliances with the military to gain or to retain power.

Bent on undermining each other, their governments politicised the police further. Although Bhutto did attempt to reform police procedures and capabilities with regard to gender-related violence, PPP governments also made large-scale appointments at the assistant sub-inspector level on political grounds, particularly in Bhutto's home province of Sindh. PML-N governments followed suit in Punjab, Sharif's home province. Political considerations also determined postings and transfers, particularly at the higher levels. At the operational level, too, police officials were too often diverted from their primary duty of maintaining law and order to carrying out the commands of their political masters.

...“We still have no security of tenure”, said a district police officer posted in Punjab. “Only those who are loyal to the chief minister have any chance of serving out their three-year tenure; the rest would be lucky to last three months in one place”. Another controversial amendment concerns the authority given to the district nazim to write the district police officer's annual performance evaluation report, which has a direct bearing on promotion prospects. The original order gave the nazim no such power.

Due to these amendments, police officers are now dependent for postings, transfers and continuation in office on their provincial chief minister and, as far as district police officers are concerned, on the nazim for promotion. “How can one expect the police to be impartial and unbiased when it is subjected every day to untold political pressures from all sides?” asked an officer in Islamabad. “Most police officers feel that, in order to secure their career prospects, they have no choice but to do the bidding of their political masters. Any defiance on their part could, and often does, wreck their careers”.

...In 2007, police officials also attributed much of the blame for the failed reform to Musharraf's PML-Q allies. “They simply could not accept the increased checks on their power, which is why they inserted amendments to make the police their handmaiden once again”, said an officer. Officers were particularly critical of the issuance by PML-Q chief ministers and other influential politicians of illegal orders for postings and transfers in the form of directives to the provincial police officer and his subordinates. This practice, said a police official in Lahore, “has resulted in massive political interference, lack of tenure for officers and a steady erosion of good management and professionalism”.

...The military-led government used the police repeatedly to crush political dissent countrywide. In the fading days of the regime, during the protests that followed Musharraf's attempt to remove Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry in July 2007, the police brutally attacked demonstrators. Even the chief justice was manhandled.

...In the run-up to national elections in February 2008, the military-led regime relied primarily on the police and intelligence agencies to harass political opponents and rig the polls. In many districts, for instance, district police officers arrested opposition workers on false charges, and opposition rallies were broken up. A police officer in the Intelligence Bureau (IB) disclosed that the government had asked the IB "to shortlist prospective candidates in each district, check them out completely and then recommend the most suitable. This is not something that falls within the purview of the Bureau; it is an inherently political function that inevitably compromises our professionalism"

...Even the Election Commission of Pakistan, not known for its independence, was forced to take "serious notice of the large-scale postings/transfers of police officers in the province of Sindh after issuance of the election schedule, despite the ban imposed by the Election Commission in that regard". In Punjab, too, the government relied on the police to do its bidding, rehiring handpicked retired police officers and transferring and posting officers at will.

...Transparency International's "Global Corruption Barometer 2007" called the police the most corrupt public sector agency in Pakistan.

...In 2006, the Punjab government's "Anti-Corruption Establishment" report warned that police corruption was "very high", ranging from bribes to registering false cases and dropping charges against criminals. This warning, however, was not accompanied by remedial action (International Crisis Group 2008, *Reforming Pakistan's Police*, Asia Report N° 157, 14 July – Attachment 22).

A February 2008 article from the Pakistani Spectator blog website claims that the political situation in Punjab in the lead up to the elections is "complex", and that "Punjab has remained the...Pakistan Muslim League's Province, and now as the Muslim League is divided into two factions, and the tremendous sympathy vote PPP Benazir Bhutto's party is enjoying, the competition in Punjab has become tri-polar". The article states that the PML(N) holds sway in urban areas like Lahore, while the "PML-Q's influence is largely in the rural areas of Punjab", and the PPP's in the south:

In Punjab, urban areas like Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Faisalabad, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur and other are swayed towards PML-N, and there is every chance that PML-N would be a victor in these areas. PML-Q's influence is largely in the rural areas of Punjab, where the literacy rate is low and people vote for the Biradar, and PML-N has also got huge influence in the rural areas too, especially in the Northern Punjab. PPP's vote bank cannot be ignored too, especially in the south of Punjab, which is closer to Sindh (Khan, A. 2008, 'Result of Pakistan Election 2008: Punjab Assembly (Tentative)', The Pakistani Spectator blog website, 17 February <http://www.pakspectator.com/result-of-pakistan-election-2008-punjab-assembly-tentative/> – Accessed 22 October 2008 – Attachment 30).

A February 2008 report in the *International Herald Tribune* provides information on the use of police and private militias in Punjab province in the lead-up to the federal and provincial election. The report notes claims that the Chaudhry family, prominent PML(Q) leaders, "use a private family militia and the Punjab police to intimidate voters" and keep PPP and PML(N) supporters "away from the polls". The report mentions the "Wajahat Force", the

alleged private militia run by Chaudhry Wajahat, younger brother of PML(Q) chairman Chaudhry Shujaat, and notes claims from a political opponent of the PML(Q) that a “local policeman guarding [his] rally boasted a sticker of Wajahat on his bullet belt”:

But here in Punjab Province, the biggest prize, the bare-knuckle election fight has included charges of armed intimidation by the police and private militias, as well as bribes through government favors. The threat of violence and the suspicion of rigging hang thick in the air. There has even been bickering over who should operate the polling stations.

...This election battle is especially sharp because Punjab is the home of the political patrons of Musharraf, the powerful and hard-nosed Chaudhry clan, which is working hard to keep its grip across the province, Pakistan’s most populous. The scion of the family, Chaudhry Pervez Elahi, a confidant of Musharraf, is the president’s choice to be the next prime minister should his party win.

...The Chaudhrys, he asserts, use a private family militia and the Punjab police to intimidate voters. The intention, he said, is to keep his supporters away from the polls and tip the vote in favor of the incumbent, Chaudhry Shujaat, the chairman of Musharraf’s party, the Pakistan Muslim League-Q.

An independent group, the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency visited Gujrat last week, and in its report Feb. 11 said “a general atmosphere of fear was detected among candidates and workers of parties opposed to Chaudhry Shujaat and his group.”

The group recommended that the army should be deployed in Gujrat on election day because that was the best way to prevent “a major threat of violence.”

To counter the Chaudhry forces, Mukhtar, who has run against Shujaat five times, and won once, said he felt compelled to organize his own election day security force. They are 160 armed men from a private security company.

...Most upsetting, Mukhtar said, are the armed men — “goons” he called them — who operate as the “Wajahat Force.” Chaudhry Wajahat, the younger brother of his election rival, Shujaat, is advertised on banners around Gujrat as the “commander of the Wajahat force,” a group that Mukhtar says is an “illegal army.”

...Wajahat turned up at one of his election rallies last week with a caravan of dozens of sport utility vehicles, and a pickup truck of half a dozen members of the Punjab elite police force. A local policeman guarding the rally boasted a sticker of Wajahat on his bullet belt (Perlez, J. 2008, ‘Doubts on fairness and security as Pakistani vote nears’, *International Herald Tribune*, 17 February <http://www.iht.com/bin/printfriendly.php?id=10103771> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 23).

A 29 February 2008 article from the Overseas Pakistani Friends blog website, sourced from *The Nation*, provides information suggesting that the police force in Punjab was undergoing radical upheaval within ten days of the election. The report states that the Punjab Police Chief has resigned, and “many of his deputies have also started packing up even before the formation of next provincial government by the victorious Nawaz group of Pakistan Muslim League”, and that “[t]he top police officers of Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Multan and many other cities of the province are reportedly on the hit list of PML-N for the victimisation of its workers and candidates in recent past”.

Following into the footsteps of departed Punjab Police Chief, Ahmed Nasim, many of his deputies have also started packing up even before the formation of next provincial government by the victorious Nawaz group of Pakistan Muslim League.

Most of these police officers are not only annoyed by the good performance of N-League in the recent general elections but are also carrying a heavy heart for the ugly defeat of their mentor, Chaudhry Pervez Ellahi, in these polls, well placed sources in the police department have confided to *The Nation*.

Not only this, many of the City Police Officers (CPOs) and District Police Officers (DPOs) are also being snubbed by their mentor and former Chief Executive of the country's biggest province for failing to "do the need full when it was required the most" in recent general elections, the sources further said.

Remember, many of the CPOs and DPOs were reshuffled in many cities of Punjab in later half of year 2007 according to political preferences of Q-League. However, the "blue-eyed boys" of the then rulers are now feeling threatened as PML-N leaders have heat burn against many of them for trying to coerce the election results despite being linked to pre-poll rigging. The top police officers of Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Multan and many other cities of the province are reportedly on the hit list of PML-N for the victimisation of its workers and candidates in recent past.

As most of the favourite officers of the former Chief Minister Punjab are fancying their transfers from lucrative positions, some of them are trying hard to win the blessing of future rulers of Punjab.

In one such bid, a police inspector, who was suspended just few days before the elections even after the announcement of election schedule, has been restored at the place of his previous posting shortly after the polls.

The reason for the extraordinary removal of the officer was then given as increase in car-theft cases within his area of responsibility, insiders say. The SHO was actually placed under suspension for not helping out a Q-League candidate against Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, the PML-N stalwart, who also happens to be the relative of same police officer, they maintained.

"The reinstatement has now come as an attempt to win heart of the Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan but it may prove futile," the sources privy to gimmicks in police department further revealed.

...Former IGP Sindh and the co-accused of Sharif brother in Plane Hijacking Case, Rana Maqbool Ahmed, is reportedly being given the task by the PML-N to short-list all such officers who managed their appointments on the basis of favouritism during the past five years or so and indulged in malpractices and corruption to please their mentors (Hameed, A. 2008, 'Tsunami to hit Punjab Police', Overseas Pakistani Friends blog website (source: *The Nation*), 29 February <http://www.opfblog.com/699/tsunami-to-hit-punjab-police/> – Accessed 22 October 2008 – Attachment 31).

An August 2008 article in the *Daily Times* claims that PPP lawmakers "have no say in formulating decisions regarding the administration and development affairs of the province" of Punjab, despite being part of the ruling coalition government. According to this report, Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif (younger brother of PML(N) leader Nawaz Sharif) "had posted civil and police officers on all the top slots including the chief secretary, inspector general of police, administrative secretaries, regional police officers, district coordination officers and district police officers", and "no request of the PPP legislators had been entertained in postings, transfers and appointments even at the district level":

Even in minor and local issues, the PPP legislators were not properly accommodated, complained the lawmakers to the top party leadership. All transfers, postings and appointments in the administrative and police hierarchy were made without consulting the PPP lawmakers, they maintained.

...Chief minister: An official posted in the Civil Secretariat said the chief minister had posted civil and police officers on all the top slots including the chief secretary, inspector general of police, administrative secretaries, regional police officers, district coordination officers and district police officers. He said the CM conducted interviews of all the officers before their posting orders, without taking the PPP legislators into confidence.

He said no request of the PPP legislators had been entertained in postings, transfers and appointments even at the district level.

...Punjab Minister for Population Welfare Naleem Jabbar had admitted in a public gathering that the PPP legislators were facing hurdles in the transfer and posting of officials in police and administrative hierarchy of the province (Sumra, A. 2008, 'PPP legislators in Punjab have no say in decision making', *Daily Times*, 26 August http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C08%5C26%5Cstory_26-8-2008_pg7_16 – Accessed 22 October 2008 – Attachment 32)

Two recent media reports provide information that the police in Punjab and Sindh provinces are being used against PML(Q) workers and leaders.

A July 2008 report from *Dawn* reports that a PML(Q) politician in Sindh claimed that police are “victimising” local PML(Q) workers, and that they are “being implicated in concocted cases”:

Talking to journalists here on Thursday, Allah Nawaz alleged that the government had unleashed a rein of terror against the rival political parties’ activists and forcing relatives of local body representatives to vote against Khushhal Pakistan nazim during a no confidence motion.

...He said that Kario Ghanwar police had arrested his brother Mukhi Nizamani and he was challaned under Section 13-D of Arms Act a week ago only to pressurise him.

He said that his brother was rearrested by Kario Ghanwar and Golarchi police from outside the district jail when he was released on bail.

...He said the PML-Q workers were being implicated in concocted cases.

...He demanded an end to victimising the PML-Q workers ('Police harassing PML-Q workers' 2008, *Dawn*, 25 July <http://www.dawn.com/2008/07/25/nat31.htm> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 24).

A September 2008 article in the *PakTribune* reports claims by the PML(Q) Punjab President Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi that “around 175 workers of the PML-Q were arrested” overnight in the Gujrat district of Punjab province. He characterised this as “political victimisation”, and claimed that “PML-N leaders were also blatantly using the state machinery and the bureaucracy was working on their directions to harass the PML-Q workers”. Elahi is quoted denying that the Wajahat Force is a private militia, and claiming that “it was merely a political wing just like youth force or student wing of any party”:

Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam) Punjab President Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has slammed the provincial government for carrying out massive arrests of PML-Q workers in Gujrat district and demanded of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to take suo motu notice against the government.

...Addressing a press conference on Thursday at his residence, Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi alleged that around 175 workers of the PML-Q were arrested in different raids carried out last night. He said the police also registered sealed FIRs against most of the arrested workers.

He termed this a highly shameful act. He added the political victimisation of the party workers was being carried out everywhere.

...Pervaiz Elahi said the PML-N leaders were also blatantly using the state machinery and the bureaucracy was working on their directions to harass the PML-Q workers.

...He warned the bureaucracy to avoid serving as a tool in the hands of Sharifs or “we will also set an example for them in the days to come”.

When asked if police action was taken against the Wajahat Force, a group allegedly supported by Chaudhry Wajahat Hussain, a brother of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, Pervaiz Elahi said the action was against the political workers.

About the Wajahat Force, he said it was merely a political wing just like youth force or student wing of any party (‘Pervaiz Elahi says Punjab government about to fall – Slams PML-N govt for PML-Q workers’ arrest’ 2008, *PakTribune*, 19 September <http://www.paktribune.com/news/index.shtml?205865> – Accessed 17 October 2008 – Attachment 25).

Question 4 of *RRT Research Response PAK31335*, of 26 February 2007, provides information on police in Pakistan, including reports on the professionalism and effectiveness of police in Punjab (RRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response PAK31335*, 26 February – Attachment 26).

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