

# TRANSFORMATION OF TEHREEK E LABBAIK PAKISTAN FROM ISLAMIC NARRATIVE INTO THE POLITICAL PARTY

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## Abstract

The current study has been carried out to identify and find out the transformation of TLP from an Islamic Narrative into a political party. Moreover, this research aims to discuss the leadership of Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan, includes Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi (late) and his son Hafiz Saad Rizvi. Further, this research, after explaining the genesis, flag, symbol, slogan, participation in electoral process of Pakistan, also compares the father and the son, the two Ameers of Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan in running the party. At the end, logical conclusion has also been given with some recommendations in the flow, as it is evident from various activities by the party, especially the change in flag, where simple TLP is written. The study will work as an aid for the future researchers as well, as, due to the Ban on the social media, Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan's various projects for the people, along with the injuries and killing of the people were not reported on the electronic media.

**Keywords:** Leadership, Symbol, Electoral process, Islamic, Political party, Votes.

## INTRODUCTION

Every political or religious party raises a vision, goal, or specific agenda. Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) began its journey in 2016 as Tehreek e Rihai Mumtaz Qadri, which was renamed Tehreek e Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah (TLYRA) following Mumtaz Qadri's hanging and later changed into Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), which is a separate political wing of TLYRA1.

TLP, led by Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, has the grassroots backing of the Barelvi community's lower middle-class youth, who make up the majority of Pakistan's population. Between Taseer's assassination in 2011 and Qadri's execution, the TLP as a movement rose to prominence2. Oppressed religious communities form a collective consciousness about their concerns and use specific political or religious issues to oppose the system. TLP positioned itself as the self-appointed protector of Prophet Muhammad's Honour (Hurmat-e-Rasool) and custodian of blasphemy laws, using Mumtaz Qadri as a religious icon to acquire political value.

TLP emerged as a powerful religious force in 2017 during its three-week-long sit-in protest in Islamabad3. The protest / dharna was launched in response to a

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*modification in electoral forms that was thought to weaken an assertion of one's belief in the finality of Muhammad's prophecy. While the government claimed that the change in phrasing was due to a clerical error<sup>4</sup>, the TLP said that it violated Muhammad's honour and represented a desire to legitimate the Ahmadiyya.*

*The top leaders of the TLP have promised to uphold blasphemy laws with their life. The party has included the death sentence in its election manifesto for anyone advocating changes to these laws. TLP leaders have not only chastised the government for attempting to ease blasphemy laws, but they have also criticized Deobandi clerics like as Maulana Tariq Jameel and Maulana Fazlur Rehman for failing to protest and speak out against the planned modifications to the 2017 Election Bill<sup>4</sup>.*

*TLP, while sticking to its strict stance over Khatam e Nabuwat, planned to come into the political system of Pakistan. Seeing the masses of people in the protests conducted by TLP, its leadership in back of their mind thought to come into the power on the same narrative, therefore it registered itself in the Election Commission of Pakistan as a political party and participated in the 2018 General elections with the symbol of Crane.*

*TLP emerged as Pakistan's sixth and Punjab's third largest political party in the 2018 elections, garnering 2.2 million votes<sup>5</sup>. There could be numerous explanations for the TLP's massive vote bank in its first ever elections, such as Pakistan's majority Barelvi population, votes based on Islamic sentiments, and some role by the agencies due to the schism between the PML N administration and the establishment at the time<sup>6</sup>.*

*Aasiya Bibi, a Christian woman was sentenced to death in 2010, however, in 2018, as the case gained international attention and sparked the protests and violence in Pakistan, Supreme Court overturned Aasiya's conviction and ordered her release. Following the acquittal of the Aasiya's conviction, TLP again started protests and demanding her execution. These protests turned violent in some cases and resulted in clashes with the security forces and deaths of several people. The government eventually reached an agreement with the TLP, which included placing Bibi's name on the Exit Control List (ECL) and refraining from objecting to the review of the Supreme Court's judgment.*

*TLP after contesting in 2018 elections, also started its ground working and developed a proper working structure. Thereon, apart from keeping a strict stance over Khatam e Nabuwat, the party entered in the field and started certain welfare projects, including Sasta Bazars, installation of water pumps<sup>7</sup> in Sindh and especially during the recent flood of 2022, TLP workers dedicatedly went to the remote areas of Sindh, Balochistan and KP<sup>8</sup>.*

*Further, their latest statements over the general policies of the government including inflation, hike in fuel prices etc<sup>9</sup>. and subsequently suggesting their plans and solutions, reflects their interests to compete in the upcoming General elections of February 2024.*

*Overall, transformation of TLP from an Islamic populist party into the religious political party of Pakistan, seems positive and it has also changed the vision and policies of their leadership against the government. Now, their focus has somewhat shifted from protests to the election campaign. Although, any party who gets vote shall rule the country, but TLP, being Religious political party must clear its intentions, especially related to other Maslak's and Firqas that, TLP is not going to set any hatred towards other Sects and all Muslim Sects would be allowed to practice their religion as*

per their respective Sects.

*Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan, a party that has practically been outlawed in Pakistani electronic media due to its stringent Islamic stance. The party was formed in 2016 following Mumtaz Qadri's death sentence on February 29, 2016. Originally, there was a movement known as Tehreek e Rihai Mumtaz Qadri, led by Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi. After Mumtaz Qadri's death, the movement's name was changed to Tehreek e Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah (TLYRA). Finally, in 2018, the party's leadership decided to enter politics, and the name Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan was registered with the Election Commission of Pakistan<sup>10</sup>.*

*The party owned a proper Islamic Manifesto, that was mainly to bring the religion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to throne and its subsequent implementation, as it was understood by Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi that their Islamic stance can never be implemented in the true letter and spirit without coming into the power.*

*During the participation in its first ever general elections, the party was allotted with the symbol of crane<sup>11</sup> and contested five hundred and sixty seats. Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan gave a twenty points agenda<sup>12</sup> that includes Enforcement of Deen e Islam, Unity in Muslim Countries, Provision of basic necessities of life, eradication of social evils, enforcement of Islamic limits and punishments, Kashmir's freedom, construction of Kala Bagh Dam etc.*

*TLP although won only two seats in the Sindh Assembly, during the elections, but the vote count of TLP was surprisingly huge, and it emerged as the sixth largest political party of Pakistan which successfully secured 2.2 million votes.*

*This vote bank was mainly due to the Islamic stance of TLP along with the speeches of Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, that were drilled into the minds of people. After the elections, during the tenure of PTI government, Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan, did not step back from its stance and protests were made against the government in releasing Aasiya Bibi, and expulsion of French Ambassador.*

*The Majlis e Shura appointed Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi as the new Ameer of TLP following the tragic death of Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi.<sup>13</sup> Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi supported his father's views and issued the final demand to the government to close the French Assembly; nonetheless, Saad Hussain Rizvi was also arrested. Finally, in November 2021, following TLP's March declaration, the government, under pressure, delivered a resolution in the National Assembly against France's Blasphemy of Prophet Muhammad, along with the release of Ameer TLP, who went home victorious.*

*In the floods of 2022, Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan started their welfare projects all over Pakistan, and after this TLP, also took many welfare projects, including installation of water pumps, conducting Sasta Bazars etc. in all over Pakistan<sup>14</sup>.*

*This intent showed the willingness of TLP towards politics of Pakistan, however, due to the electronic and social media ban on the party, these projects did not come into the limelight<sup>15</sup>. During the elections of 2024, TLP was confident enough to participate, however, could not win a single seat in the National Assembly and no seats in any provincial assembly, less 1 seat in Punjab Assembly.*

#### **MANIFESTO OF TLP**

*Manifesto of any political party indicates its working principle if they form the government. Although the main stance of TLP is clear to general public i.e. Tahafuz e*

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*Khatam e Naboowat ﷺ, however, Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan during its first ever General elections of 2018, announced its official twenty points manifesto that attracted the attention of masses16. Details of party manifesto is as follows:*

- a. *To bring Religion (Deen) of Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W) to throne and implementation of Religion (Deen).*
2. *Confrontation of Anti-Islamic forces and unity in Muslim countries.*
3. *Provision of basic necessities of life.*
4. *Eradication of Social Evils.*
5. *Monastic system. (Khanqahi)*
6. *Industry and trade.*
7. *Modern farming system.*
8. *Internal and external loans.*
9. *Elimination of pollution and housing laws.*
10. *Prompt delivery of Justice and local Panchayat System.*
11. *Enforcement of Islamic Limits and Punishments.*
12. *Kashmir's freedom and construction of Kala Bagh Dam.*
13. *Women Rights.*
14. *Rights of Minorities.*
15. *Provision of an excellent education system.*
16. *Provision of free treatment.*
17. *Transparent welfare system.*
18. *Training through media.*
19. *Islamic foreign policy.*
20. *Scientific and research scope in principles of religion.*

### CHANGING TRENDS IN PARTY MANIFESTO

*Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan is a new Islamic political party and only participated in the 2018 and 2024 general elections, but, a lot of changes were found in the manifesto of 2024 general elections, and these changes in the party manifesto appears as a start of the Political Journey of TLP. Details of the party manifesto of 2024 general elections are appended as under17:-*

*Islamic countries will be urged to form a "World Islamic Block" to immediately support oppressed Muslims in Palestine, Kashmir, and around the world.*

*The Pakistan Army will not be neglected to keep pace with modern technology in its arsenal. The justice system will be reformed by keeping the Farooqi era in view as an ideal model.*

*Peace and Security will be ensured through Islamic laws and penalties, and empowering law enforcement agencies under the constitution. The interest-based economic system will be abolished, and an Islamic economic system will gradually be introduced.*

*The gradual elimination of both internal and external debts will be pursued by utilizing all available means. Laws for a simple lifestyle will be enacted for rulers and leading office-bearers in every field. Protocols will be abolished, huge income disparities will be eliminated in salaries, unnecessary perks will be immediately terminated, and officers in power will be made to serve people according to the Constitution. High-quality Islamic schools, colleges, and universities will be established.*

*Educational qualifications and professional skills will be the criteria for*

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government employment, while nepotism, bribery, and political interference will be penalized.

Special attention will be given to the agricultural sector, with free irrigation water, and essential resources such as electricity, fertilizers, high-quality seeds, agricultural medicines, and tools will be provided at extremely affordable rates. Farmers will be informed about government rates on a daily basis, and no middleman will be allowed to exploit their hard work.

Industries will be provided with inexpensive gas and electricity by eliminating excessive taxes. Special attention will be given to storing water resources, and the construction of small and large dams across the country will be immediately initiated.

All mineral resources of Pakistan will be under federal control. An annual tender system will be introduced, where bids will be invited on an equal basis from within and outside the country.

Immediate reforms will be implemented in the tax system, putting an end to bribery, blackmail, and harassment by tax authorities. The burden of taxes on the public will be minimized, and the system of Zakat and Ushr will be immediately enforced.

A special institution will be established to protect women's rights, ensuring their legal and Sharia rights in inheritance and other matters.

A comprehensive plan for the construction of cities, urban areas, and roads, as well as bridges, will be developed at the government level. Strict enforcement of construction laws will be ensured, and in this process, fair distribution will be the top priority.

A reasonable portion of the budget will be allocated for health. A ministry with discretionary powers will be established to encourage goodness and prevent evil among the people.

Special efforts will be made for the promotion of tourism across the country. The protection of local and foreign tourists, affordable accommodation, standard food, and other necessities will be taken into consideration.

#### **FLAG, SYMBOL & SLOGANS**

Flag of TLP is of green, white and black colour, having "TLP" engraved in the middle of the flag in the white portion. The previous flag had Tehreek e Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah ﷺ engraved in the middle and depicted the religious stance of the party, however, the updated flag is a simple flag with 1 rectangular black portion in vertical position. After the black 2 green rectangular portion on top and bottom and 1 white rectangular portion in the middle. (See flag in Appendix I) The party name TLP in black bold colour is written in this white portion<sup>18</sup>. TLP was allotted with the symbol of Crane in 2018, after it got registered itself as a political party with Election Commission of Pakistan.<sup>19</sup>

Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan is a new political party who have only contested the 2018 and 2024 general elections. TLP caught the voters' sentiments during its first election campaign with various Islamic slogans like "Labbaik Labbaik Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah ﷺ, Aaya Aaya Deen Aaya, Unhain Jana Unhain Maana, Dekho Dekho Kon Aaya Muhammad Arabi ﷺ ka Deen Aaya, Jab Deen Takht par aaye ga Har Muslim Izzat Paaye ga, Azadi ka din aaye ga, Jab Deen Takht pr aaye ga"

#### **ROLE OF PARTY LEADERSHIP**

Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan emerged after 2016, and in these eight years, TLP

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had only two leaders / Ameer. The Ameer of TLP was Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, and after his death, his son, Hafiz Saad Hussain Rizvi was appointed as the new Ameer by the party.<sup>20</sup> Role of both party leaders is appended below :-

*Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi as a Religious & Political Leader*

*Tehreek e Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah ﷺ was formed in October 2016, after Mumtaz Qadri got death sentence on 29 February 2016, on charge of Killing of Governor Punjab Salman Taseer.<sup>21</sup> Tehreek e Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah was created under the leadership of late Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, and its political wing Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan was formed as TLYRA's political wing. The primary goal of establishing this religious and political party was to safeguard the honour and finality of the Prophet Muhammad.*

*The sensation of Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi with his enthusiastic speeches<sup>22</sup> and generating the sense of responsibility against the Blasphemy, catched the sentiments of thousands of people on the roads of Pakistan. Moreover, the movement raised by Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi and his team gained a huge momentum via social media where TLP mobilized its supporters all across the country.<sup>23</sup>*

*A list of some of the enthusiastic words by Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, which he delivered during his speeches, addresses before, during and after the protests is appended below. These words worked as the flame into the hearts of people, which were already sad or quiet after the blasphemy issues, for protection of the honour of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, after the death sentence to Mumtaz Qadri, release order for Aasiya Bibi etc.*

*Even if we were burnt to ashes in Faizabad, these things don't matter, as compared to the finality of of Prophethood of Prophet ﷺ. If you want honour in this world and in the hereafter, Put up the slogan... Ya Rasool Allah ﷺ.*

*Labbaik's slogan is not political. There is no greater slogan of faith than this. Saying Labbaik two times means to be present till the Day of Judgement. Thrice means Oh Prophet ﷺ your slave is present for you even in Paradise. Inhain jannaa; inhain maana*

*There is forgiveness for the sinner, but the traitor who has betrayed the religion cannot be forgiven. No matter how many sins there may be, but when the Holy Prophet ﷺ will present plea on the Day of Resurrection, many sinners will also be seen walking with the righteous. But there is no forgiveness for the traitor.*

*Wherever you go, speak of the honour and dignity of the Holy Prophet.*

*A war has begun, and this is a war of honour of the Prophet. The one who doesn't participate in this war, he betrays the Messenger of Allah.*

*Those who speak against us will be held accountable in this world as well as in the hereafter.*

*What is the purpose of creating Pakistan if we don't respect the Holy Prophet?*

*Islam doesn't need anyone's help, nor does it ask for help to work for it.*

*People run to the mosque for saying prayers. But when it comes to paying homage to the Prophet, they called it politics.*

*Even after centuries, if someone puts a slogan of Labbaik on my grave, I will definitely answer (this slogan) from inside the grave.*

*Verbal love is not enough about the Prophet ﷺ. Tell us, what have you answered the enemies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ?*

*These quotes of Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi actually had attraction as almost*

*every quote carried the name of our Beloved Holy Prophet ﷺ, and after these words were delivered by the Ameer of TLP, it created a huge difference and resulted in the gathering of mega masses of the people in the Jalsas or protests organized by TLP, evident in many videos over the social media.*

*There is a major contribution made by Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi in having a strong political party through his furious speeches, strong conviction, and standing firm in his belief.<sup>24</sup> These all things motivated the people and the stance of Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan drilled into the minds of majority humble and middle class.*

*Born in 1966, Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, died on 20 November 2020 at Lahore. Although, TLP was not given the due media coverage due to speeches made against the blasphemous content, however, on his death, Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi was all over the electronic media in Pakistan,<sup>25</sup> as well as international media.<sup>26</sup> Everyone praised him and condolences were seen by every field of people, whether religious or political opponents. On his sad demise, condolences from the government officials and many political figures, including ex-prime minister Mr. Imran Khan<sup>27</sup>, Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Mr. Faisal Jawed Khan (PTI), Mr. Siraj ul Haq from Jamaat e Islami and many more. During his funeral in Lahore, huge masses<sup>28</sup> were on the roads for witnessing his last face and offer Jannaza prayer, and these masses included general people from all over Pakistan, political leaders, religious figures etc.<sup>29</sup> Then Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Jawed Bajwa also offered condolences with the family of the grieved.<sup>30</sup>*

#### **ALLAMA SAAD HUSSAIN RIZVI AS A RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL LEADER**

*It was a biggest and almost impossible challenge for the new Ameer to maintain and hold the legacy of his late father at the age of only twenty-six years.<sup>31</sup> Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi, after being appointed as the new Ameer of TLP, demanded the government to act upon the agreement that was made with TLP regarding exile of the French Ambassador, for which the government said that the issue will be taken to the parliament.*

*The deadline of the agreement was 18th February 2021; however, it was extended between the government and TLP till 20th April 2021. On 12th April 2021, Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi got arrested by the government and placed in detention. The arrest of Ameer further heightened the clashes between TLP and the government and resulted in the nationwide protest. On 19th April 2021, the government and TLP members, again made the agreement to release the Ameer and fulfil the demands of their previous agreement.*

*This agreement was also not fulfilled for the coming months and made the situation worse. In November 2021, TLP leadership announced Namoos e Risalat March from Lahore in the context of the arrest of the Ameer Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi and expelling of the French Ambassador. Eventually, on 18th November 2021, resolution against French Ambassador was presented in the National Assembly, along with the release of Hafiz Saad Hussain Rizvi, who returned from jail after the historical struggle. Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi stood firm during this period and did not step back from his point.*

*Hafiz Saad Hussain Rizvi, at a young age had to face multiple challenges after being appointed as the Ameer of Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan. One important point to mention regarding the blames on Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan made by Mufti Muneeb*

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ur Rehman,<sup>32</sup> a prominent religious figure in Pakistan during the arrest of Saad Hussain Rizvi. Tehreek e Labbaik had to face the accusations of stepping back from the expulsion of French Ambassador and closure of French Embassy. If the accusations would be true, then there would have been a big dent on the party, however, all accusations turned to be wrong after the media briefing by then interior minister Mr. Sheikh Rasheed that Hafiz Saad Hussain Rizvi had insisted over the closure of French Embassy.<sup>33</sup> The statement of interior minister in favour of Ameer Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan increased the respect of young and enthusiastic Ameer among the people. Moreover, strict stance of Saad Hussain Rizvi on these issues also made a stamp regarding correct selection of Saad Hussain Rizvi as the Ameer of the party.

During the floods of 2022 in Pakistan, Ameer Saad Hussain Rizvi entered the field as a proper political party. A lot of aid was collected by Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan for the flood victims of Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan. TLP workers distributed the aid into the remote areas, all over Pakistan.<sup>34</sup>

In 2023, apart from Islamic statements in the speeches of Ameer TLP, a change in the views (not compromising over Tahafuz e Khatam e Nabuwat ﷺ) was also seen,<sup>35</sup> where at many points Saad Rizvi talked about inflation, fuel price hikes, along with valuable suggestions regarding different fuel prices for different classes of people.<sup>36</sup> These all statements given during the addresses and interviews showed the changing stance of TLP, due to the elections of 2024.

### PARTICIPATION OF TLP IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS - 2018

Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan is a new political party that registered itself with Election Commission of Pakistan in 2018. So far, Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan has only contested in only one general elections of 2018, but the point of discussion is that TLP emerged as the 6th largest party of Pakistan.<sup>37</sup> Although TLP could not secure any seat in National Assembly, but the number of voters it grabbed is inspiring. Below is the result of National & Provincial Assembly elections of 2018: -

#### Vote Bank of TLP in 2018 General Elections

Assembly	Number of votes	Positions	Winning Seats
National Assembly	2234316	6th	0
Punjab	18,67,625	4th	0
Sindh	4,14,635	7th	2
KhyberPakhtunkhwa	78,125	8th	0
Balochistan	10,999	16th	0

Source: (Statistical Reports- Election Commission of Pakistan)

Above results show that TLP could not secure more than two seats in National & Provincial Assembly, but the total vote bank all over the Pakistan (National & Provincial level) turned out to be 4.6 million.

### PARTICIPATION OF TLP IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS - 2024

The huge mandate received by TLP in general elections of 2018, generated confidence that TLP can form the government in the general elections of 2024. Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan after 2018 elections entered and approached the masses at a grassroots level and a change in its stance was observed. Apart from not compromising over the Islamic stance, an increase in the political statements was seen in the videos and interviews of Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi already mentioned earlier.

However, in the general elections of 2024, Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan could only secure one seat in Punjab Assembly<sup>38</sup> and could not win a single seat in either

provincial or National Assembly. This shocking result in the case of TLP was not expected by many, especially the party itself. TLP is of the same opinion as all other opposition parties i.e the elections were so much rigged and never seen in history. Further "Majority of seats in Punjab were distributed among PML N and PTI. Same is the case with National Assembly, where almost 21 to 25 seats were of TLP, but were taken away technically by forging the Form 45's of maximum constituencies. Election results were changed, and we have the original signed Form 45 with us".39 Protests against the rigged elections were also conducted, but no fruitful result was obtained, due to the weak institutions, especially The Election Commission of Pakistan".

### **IMPACTS OF TLP OVER PAKISTAN'S POLITICS**

Coming over to the last and important part of the study where Impact of TLP over Pakistan's Politics will be discussed. Before carrying out the discussion on the topic, a social media poll was carried out with a group of students over some important questions. (See Appendix II)

#### **TLP; AN EXTREMIST PARTY?**

TLP officials said that it is mainly due to the state-controlled media which projected wrong image of TLP in Pakistan and same way, international media worked on the information sharing instead of on ground investigation. In the poll answers, 75 percent of students do not think TLP as an extremist political party, 25 percent students answered in Yes. TLP official stated that due to wrong projection of our electronic media, which is a state-controlled media, no one in the government is able to defend the respect & honour of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and they call us extremists. If what they say is true, then anyone who stands for the honour of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ anywhere will be extremist.40 They crackdown on TLP workers and to ensure their international kings, call our non-violent and unarmed and innocent persons as extremist.41

#### **Reasons for Popularity?**

50 percent students think that the increased popularity of Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan was due to the Islamic narrative it build and 50 percent students credited both Islamic narratives along with the personality and speeches of late Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi. No one gave all credit to Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, and I also agree that popularity of TLP cannot be credited alone to Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, yet through his personality and enthusiastic speeches, stance of TLP was stamped on the hearts of majority.

#### **CRACKDOWN ON NON BARELVI MASLAKS IF TLP COMES INTO POWER?**

25 percent of students answered that they don't think if TLP comes to power, it is going for a crackdown over non Barelvi Maslaks, whereas a majority with 75 percent students answered in "Yes, to some extent". No one answered this question in complete Yes. During the interview with TLP official, he answered that their party consists of the individuals from all Maslaks, and otherwise, we are a peace loving as per the teachings of our Holy Prophet Muhammad.42

Hafiz Saad Hussain Rizvi is following in the footsteps of his father?

100 percent of students replied negatively to this question. Looking at the political behaviour of Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan, it has not completely, but changed quite a lot after the death of Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi. I personally agree with the current stance of Tereek e Labbaik Pakistan by keeping its basic Islamic stance and

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*performing politics on ground, evident from many welfare videos by TLP leadership over social media. TLP official negated this and said that there will be no compromise over its basic stance, however, there is just an addition in the political views i.e. the welfare of our people and their will never be any compromise over our basic stance which is Tahafuz e Khatam e Nabuwat* 43

*Will Pakistan progress and compete internationally if TLP comes to power?*

*A mixed response was received, with half of students agreed with the question and answered it as “Yes, to some extent” and the remaining 50 percent thought otherwise. No student fully agreed and answered in complete Yes. If opportunity comes, Is TLP going to form a government with two third majority?*

*No student thinks that TLP will form a government in upcoming elections with two third majority. 87.5 percent of students think that TLP is not going to make a coalition government if two third majority is not received, only 12.5 percent answered of the coalition government. I also agree that if TLP if gets the majority of two third, it will form the government, however, if they do not get the majority, they are not forming the coalition government, also stated by the TLP official.*44

### IMPACT OF TLP OVER PAKISTANI POLITICS

*87.5 percent students said that after seeing the increasing popularity of TLP, other political parties started using Islamic Sermons in their gatherings in order to compete with TLP. 12.5 percent are of the opinion that TLP is being used from time to time for building the pressure on the governments. No one answered the positive and negative option. I also agree with 87.5 percent of the students’ answer.*

### VOTE COUNT FOR TLP

*On asking if you are going to vote for TLP in the coming elections and surprisingly 100 percent of students answered negatively. Looking at the poll results, the impact of TLP over Pakistan’s politics cannot be ruled out. First, it is clear that majority Pakistani do not think TLP as an extremist political party and it is mainly because of the Islamic narrative of Tahafuz e Khatam e Nabuwat that TLP has successfully drilled among the masses of people, who do not grade, rather no Muslim can grade the love for Prophet Muhammad as extremism, however, the Non-Muslims cannot understand this love as also said by ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan in United Nations.*

*Further, on telephonic conversation with a TLP official, the viewpoint of TLP also made quite clear. So far, the majority thought that TLP holds violence as they have attacked many policemen during their protests in the past. However, after looking at pictures and videos, it shows that, innocent people in TLP protests were also killed in result of the crackdown. (See Appendix I) where TLP protesters including young and old, having no arms and weapons but being tortured during the crackdown. Due to the ban on the party, and state-controlled media, TLP protests were not given any media coverage and only the viewpoint of the government was being floated on the media.*

*Yet, TLP being Islamic political party has a very deep impact over the politics of Pakistan. At present, it has only participated in 2018 and 2024 general elections and emerged as the sixth largest party of Pakistan in the general elections of 2018. Many analysts believe that especially in Punjab, if TLP would not be in the 2018 elections, then there would have been clear victory of PML N and TLP’s presence in 2024 elections has again grabbed the voters of PTI’s independent candidates. Therefore, TLP has left a very deep impact over the Pakistani politics.*

## CONCLUSION

The TLP has worked to establish anti-blasphemy vigilantism as an expression of love for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It developed as a movement for antiblasphemy that established the TLP's power and significance as a political force. The TLP promotes vigilante responses to avenge the incidents of blasphemy as an expression of love for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This helps them harness contemporary folk Islam in Pakistan that is shaped by Barelvi Islam and works as an effective strategy to gain political support from the Barelvi following for the cause of the TLP. Furthermore, it shows that the TLP draws public support around an Islamist mission of anti-blasphemy of the Prophet that has a significant appeal for Barelvi Muslims. The transformation of TLP from a movement and protests, to entering the political system of Pakistan is of utmost importance. In the initial years, Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan stood against many eventualities that as per their thinking was against Islam. Some of the major happenings includes protests against the Elections Bill of 2017, Faizabad Dharna in November 2017, Data Shab Dharna in April 2018, March against Holland in August 2018, Punjab Assembly Dharna in October 2018, Masjid Wazir Khan issue in 2020, another Dharna at Faizabad on blasphemy by France in November 2020, Detention of Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi etc.

After the release of Allama Saad Hussain Rizvi, there are still many rallies and Jalsas of TLP conducted, however, since 2022 flood, TLP's leadership entered in the ground politics, where they reached remote areas of Pakistan and helped them from the aid collected. This showed a clear verdict of TLP that, they will be performing actual field work in the politics, if at all they want to form the government. In 2018 general elections, although TLP emerged as the sixth largest political party of Pakistan, but it was clear to all and especially the TLP leadership, that it was mainly due to their Islamic narrative along with the speeches made by Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi, however, groundwork is also mandatory in order to gain the constituency wise support. In the start, the support by the people to TLP was a cumulative support, as their manifesto was circled all in all around Islamic narrative. People in Pakistan, apart from their strong feeling and emotion for the Islam, also concerns about the welfare works in terms of politics. Therefore, TLP was on the foots all over Pakistan for the elections, and in the past two years, where all other political parties were facing the political instability, TLP stood firm and carried many welfare projects for the needy people, that included flood relief camps in remote areas of Sindh, Balochistan and KP, and conducting Sasta Bazar for general public.<sup>45</sup>

Transformation of TLYRA in TLP occurred in 2018, once the party leadership decided to participate in general elections, where 560 candidates all over the country filed their nomination papers. Although TLP won only two seats in the Sindh Provincial Assembly, but it was shocking for everyone that TLP, in a short span of time, emerged as the sixth largest political party of Pakistan.

Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan is facing problems in terms of media coverage, as there are a lot of welfare projects done by TLP, but they were not projected in the electronic media. Moreover, their social media accounts including twitter, facebook, YouTube etc. are also banned. In a conversation with TLP official, following lessons were drawn :-

1. TLP is not going to form a coalition government at any cost.

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2. *TLP if makes the government will focus on enforcement of Islamic laws.*
3. *Interest based Banking system will be replaced with Islamic Banking system.*
4. *TLP holds soft corner for Afghanis.*
5. *Every Pakistani will live freely, not compromising on the honour of Prophet Muhammad.*

*In the general elections of 2024, TLP secured only one seat in Punjab Assembly, which was not expected by many, especially the party itself. TLP official revealed that they have maximum Form 45 with them and as per the Form 45's, they won almost 21 to 25 seats in National Assembly of Pakistan, and their protests against the rigged elections were not fruitful due to the weak institutions especially The Election Commission of Pakistan, they were treated with injustice.*

*Finally, TLP has a positive intent to work for the people of Pakistan. In the past, they were found with an avenging nature, yet a change is also seen in the party, especially after the General Elections of 2024, where, they were found peaceful after the elections and no massive kind of protests were seen by TLP, rather the protests by TLP were more of a show parade. If TLP truly wants to form the government, then, their stance on all these reservations mentioned above and especially the stance against all the non Barelvi Maslaks must be cleared, using every media platform, and in their campaigns/Jalsas for the next elections likely to be held in 2028.*



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