

Scenario 42

NAB: A DECADE OF MISUSE:

[Accountability is something you do after the damage is done. Good governance is measures you adopt that prevent things going wrong, and in case they do, then the discrepancy is quickly detected and tackled. (Riaz A K)]

TRAGEDY OF JAVED HASHMI:

In October 2001, PML(N) decided to join hands with certain politico-religious parties of Pakistan under the guidance of its Acting President Makhdoom Javed Hashmi [*as the original leadership of the PML(N), Sharif family, had slipped away to Saudi Arabia under a dubious deal with Gen Musharraf in December 2000*] to raise loud voices against the then military rule. As per decades old power practice in Pakistan, Javed Hashmi was picked up by the NAB people through a police raid at his residence at 2AM on 31st October instant. [*Javed Hashmi was staying in Nawaz Sharif's house in Islamabad at the time of his arrest*] No charges were read over to Mr Hashmi at the time of his arrest; even the raiding officers didn't know much about details.

Later, ISPR's spokesman Gen Rashid Qureshi told that Javed Hashmi was arrested for amassing '*assets beyond his mean*'; and was being held by the NAB but the media knew it well that his detention was related to turning political developments. In those days, Gen Musharraf was contacting secular political parties frequently attempting to broaden his political base during the rising crisis in Afghanistan in the back drop of 9/11 events.

*[However, all Pakistanis knew that Javed Hashmi was a man of character; rather he was the only clean person (or one of very few like Siddiq ul Farooq) in the PML(N). After five years he was cursed, objected, neglected, annoyed, irritated and shunted out of the party by the sole proprietors of the PML(N) because he had once said in a live TV program that '**all politicians including Sharifs should truly declare their assets, here & abroad, for the sake of Pakistan**'.]*

The ***Washington Post of 1st November 2001*** had opined that Gen Musharraf's decision to abandon Pakistan's support for the then ruling Taliban in the War against Terrorism had angered Pakistan's Islamic parties, which had sympathies with Afghanistan's ruling Taliban militia. Moreover:

'The religious groups had launched protests with regular street demonstrations all over Pakistan. Javed Hashmi and PML(N) had not taken a stand with Gen Musharraf's decision to support the US-led campaign against the Taliban; contrarily they had decided to participate in the strike of 9th November being organized by the religious parties against the government. Javed Hashmi was arrested a few hours after that decision; he was the third prominent politician to be arrested, as part of the military leader's effort to prevent an escalation of the anti-government protests. The heads of two leading Islamic groups were also kept under house arrest.'

This was the scenario for which the NAB was given special powers under 1999's amendments to create an atmosphere of threat and coercion for politicians so that no one should be able to challenge the military rule. Nawaz Sharif had also done the same, rather he was the pioneer of that criminal extortion through Saifur Rehman's Ehtesab Bureau in 1997, which was polished and improved by Gen Musharraf. So it was the NAB of civil and military rulers, making fool of the whole nation in the name of accountability.

Lt Gen SHAHID AZIZ'S CASE:

Lt Gen Shahid Aziz, a former Chairman NAB, while speaking to media [**referring to 6th & 8th Dec 2009 live on GEO, the News & Dawn**] after expiry of two year's mandatory period that prevented him to discuss service matters, revealed that he was constantly pressurized to hand over the lists of politicians being probed by the NAB, but he refused to do so. However, Parliament's Standing Committee later ordered NAB to provide the updated lists naturally for the consumption of the PM Shaukat Aziz and Gen Musharraf. Moreover, he told that:

'I was appointed as the NAB chairman with a pre-condition that I would not open old cases against politicians and other prominent people and was pressurized into formally closing down cases against politicians supporting Gen Musharraf. I was told repeatedly not to create problems and not to destabilise the government, otherwise the system would collapse. They (the president & his team) gave a strange logic that corruption and economic development goes hand in hand.'

Lt Gen Shahid Aziz quoted Lt Gen Khalid Maqbool, a former NAB Chairman and Governor Punjab, as saying while trying to convince him that:

"If you stop corruption, there will be no development. If ministers and politicians are not given personal benefits in contracts, why would they pursue development schemes? They have to be given personal incentives...contracts to their sons and kinship."

Once Gen Musharraf had personally called Lt Gen Shahid Aziz, the Chairman NAB, and asked him that:

'.... drop the name of one Malik Riaz Hussain from the exit control list. (Riaz Hussain was one of the prime accused in a multi-million land scam) As President of Pakistan, I give my personal guarantee that he (Malik Riaz) would not run away. Isn't a personal guarantee of the President of Pakistan sufficient to satisfy you?' (Ref: daily 'Dawn' of 6th December 2009)

Malik's name was removed from the ECL subsequently.

Lt Gen Shahid Aziz was appointed NAB chairman on 10th November 2005 for a period of four years. According to the NAB Ordinance of 1999, the NAB Chairman cannot be removed before the expiry of four years except if he resigns but it never became clear that whether he himself opted to resign or he was forced to resign. But the record told that he was not attending his office since May 2007 due to undue interference of the government in NAB's affairs.

Lt Gen Shahid Aziz's predecessor Lt Gen Munir Hafeez had left NAB on the eve of his retirement from the army. Lt Gen Shahid was succeeded, first time in eight years, by a civil bureaucrat Nawid Ahsan, who was General Secretary Finance in the Federal Government. The appointment of Nawid Ahsan, a civilian Chief of NAB, was made in the backdrop that the President himself was planning to come out of his military uniform (An army officer, retired or serving, remains answerable to the Army Chief). Gen Musharraf had planned to keep the control of NAB exclusively with him as a civilian President.

The fact remains that Lt Gen Shahid and the then PM Shaukat Aziz were not easy with each other. The PM had once reprimanded the Chairman NAB in a public meeting not to insult senior bureaucrats on the pretext of investigation. Some reports speak out that the tussle between the two started in 2006 when the NAB under his command tried to conclude investigations against some top politicians, including Asif Ali Zardari, Nawaz Sharif, Shahbaz Sharif, Ch Shujaat Hussain and Humayum Akhtar etc on various counts; of course new cases in addition to the old files. Lt Gen Shahid was going to collect and incorporate important features and facts about those top politicians when his cousin Gen Musharraf had shown him the exit door in an un-ceremonial way.

At that time, the main issues were of sugar crisis and edible oil shortage. Chairman NAB was initially asked to close the files on the pretext that *'the prices of sugar, edible oil and petroleum products would go all time high if the investigations continued'*. In the cases then opened by the NAB Ch Shujaat Hussain, Sharif's family members, Humayun Akhtar, Jehangir Tareen, Altaf Saleem, Nasarullah Dareshak, Anwer Cheema and Mian Azhar were alleged to have hoarded about 315000 tons of sugar and the prices were taken up from Rs:20 to Rs:45 per kg for consumers.

[Lt Gen Shahid Aziz was known as an upright person. To judge his spirit of nationalism and sincerity to cause one should not forget his talk to the media to divulge on certain untold stories of Gen Musharraf's earlier era. He, being the Chief of General Staff (CGS) from Oct 2001 to Dec 2003, had revealed that the Army as an institution was kept in complete dark about what was going on between Washington and Islamabad after 9 / 11 and on 'War on Terror' deals.

GHQ and the top Army commanders had strongly opposed the handing over of Pakistanis to the US, but Gen Musharraf did so at his own. Though Office of the CGS was always taken as the nerve centre in GHQ but then it did not know most of the controversial things Gen Musharraf did.

Lt Gen Shahid told the media that while the Pakistan Army used to catch the targeted foreigners and locals and handed them over to the ISI for interrogation, they were passed on to the Americans without the knowledge of the GHQ. It caused a lot of resentment in the top echelons of the Pakistan Army when they found this was happening. Gen Musharraf kept the ISI engaged to collaborate with American CIA without the knowledge of other commanders.

Gen Musharraf had also allowed the US drones to use the Pakistani airspace for intelligence sharing besides permitting the American intelligence agencies, the CIA and the FBI, to recruit their agents in the tribal belt of Pakistan. Despite strong opposition from the GHQ, Gen Musharraf granted this permission in the name of intelligence sharing. The same drones had then carried out strikes inside Pakistan, killing hundreds of people, including innocent women and children.

Lt Gen Shahid Aziz felt no hesitation to disclose that when initially consulted after 9/11, the top commanders had decided to stay out of the conflict. However later, because of compromises by Gen Musharraf, the Army was dragged in that odd situation.

Gen Musharraf had compartmentalised the Army to such an extent that even the CGS would not know many things directly assigned by the Army Chief to other departments. Since he (Gen Musharraf) was also holding the government, the Army as an institution was not consulted on many things that were being agreed between Islamabad and Washington.]

The government did not like the media briefings by retired army officers against their policies then what if anti-national. As per usual practice in Pakistan, Lt Gen Shahid was also taken to task on lines earlier mentioned in the context of Javed Hashmi, country's typical hallmark. Baseless accusations were listed against him; investigations into alleged *'misuse of powers by a former chairman NAB'* were launched and given a booster start on 9th December 2009, within 24 hours he had appeared in the live TV program of GEO to tell the truth about Gen Musharraf and his way of managing the NAB; using it for arms twisting of any one who could dare to oppose the military ruler.

The allegations included that Lt Gen Shahid Aziz had allotted quota of LPG for himself, while his son-in-law purchased a few plots from three housing societies in lacs but sold them for millions of rupees, while the societies had allegedly given his son-in-law special discount; the General himself had manoeuvred to get a five-kanal house worth a rent of Rs:0.5 million per month for only a monthly rent of Rs:60,000 and had taken away its furniture worth Rs:15 million when he left it. The revengeful team of investigators within one night detected a fraud

done by the former Chairman in official registry of that land on which he was constructing a house. Investigations on all those closed files were immediately opened which were closed during his tenure and many more things like that.

Lt Gen Shahid Aziz rejected all the allegations levelled against him. He simply stated that he had no house when he was transferred to Lahore and he used to live at the house of his daughter, so what issues of rent or furniture.

In year 2002, after the evolution of National Anti-corruption Strategy, identification of root causes of corruption were also incorporated into the anti corruption mechanism that empowered NAB to undertake prevention and awareness of corruption and corrupt practices. The fact remains that in early days of Gen Musharraf's take over, some of the NAB officers had strictly and harshly pursued the NAB agenda to eradicate corrupt practices but it was allegedly & purposefully propagated that it had offended the business community thus hindering the economic growth. During Lt Gen Maqbool's tenure as Chairman, compromises were struck with the business community and significant politicians. Thus Khalid Maqbool's tenure was marked with peculiar reputation of striking deals and negotiating under the table compromises in the name of 'plea-bargains' in NAB's history.

[On 9th December 2004, Senator Sanaullah Baloch asked how much money had been recovered under plea bargains from politicians and civil and military officers on the orders of the court. It was revealed that whereas an amount of Rs:432 million had been recovered from politicians and nearly Rs:2 billion had been recovered from the civil-military bureaucracy under pleas bargain. During a reply to a question on 15th February 2004, it was told that the NAB had paid Rs:390 million as fees to lawyers during the past five years.]

Though there was a high-powered committee consisting of Chairman NAB, Principal Secretary to the President, Governor of State Bank etc who were also supposed to know the 'important' suspects in cases of 'high volume corruption' but practically the mechanism was not given the required transparency. The Presidency, NAB & ISI continued to deal with the business tycoons and politicians in getting their favours to prolong the military rule of Gen Musharraf. The NAB remained after the wealthy targets like Admiral Mansoor ul Haq to do plea-bargains, and it became a routine practice those days. The media and judiciary knew it well; rather the details of certain 'big deals' had also appeared in the foreign press but judiciary purposefully kept mum and compromised.

HASAN WASEEM AFZAL'S DUBIOUS ROLE:

To cut and avoid NAB's budget unto millions on account of dubious foreign trips, the government had to abolish the Special Operation Division (SOD), a subsidiary of the NAB, which was investigating matters related to illegal foreign assets and offshore bank accounts of politicians, including Sharif Family assets, Benazir Bhutto and of Asif Ali Zardari.

*[During the last two years till that date the NAB officials had made forty eight (48) foreign trips at the public expense costing over Rs:10 million for the government exchequer. One senior officer alone made 16 foreign trips that cost the exchequer Rs:3.3 million. Twenty five (25) visits were undertaken for participation in seminars, conferences and conventions in various world capitals. The NAB officials made three trips to Riyadh and Dubai to attend Pakistan Day celebrations only. A senior officer of the Bureau, during several journeys to European countries, had also **travelled to Dubai ten times for 'the special purposes'**.]*

This SOD was created on a misleading advice of one DMG officer named Hasan Waseem Afzal who was made its incharge when it came into being. Initially the officer had landed in Nawaz Sharif's Ehtesab Bureau of 1997 just to save his brother in law's skin [named Javed Zia of Gulberg III Lahore] who was nominated and the only culprit in an FIR registered with FIA

Rawalpindi on 5th September 1995. Waseem's only brother-in-law was involved in two fraud cases then:

Firstly; for selling out Cotton Mills Okara's open land after converting it into a private housing colony without clearing his bank loans.

Secondly, Mr Zia was involved in selling out a Cessna to the Punjab Government on double market price and masterminding 'commissions' in the name of the then Chief Minister Manzoor Watto.

The first and remarkable job of Hasan Waseem Afzal was to get that FIR quashed with the help of the then Chairman Saifur Rehman of Ehtesab Bureau. Then he offered his special services to Saifur Rehman to fabricate the Swiss Case against Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari during the tenure of Nawaz Sharif compelling Benazir Bhutto to leave the country. He had managed it through the services of his 'family' friend, a tarnished judge of the High Court named Malik Qayyum. [*Allegations on J Malik Qayyum have been given separately on the earlier pages along with his contentions whatsoever*]

Mr Hasan Waseem Afzal was then awarded the *Tamgha e Imtiaz* by the government of Pakistan for his services against Bhuttos and was made Deputy Chairman NAB when the government wished to penalise Benazir Bhutto who was exerting pressure on Gen Musharraf-led government for her return. He again activated cases against Benazir Bhutto and Zardari in Swiss courts, and paid tens of visits to Switzerland. The facts also appeared in media that, during his apparent visits to Switzerland and London, he had managed to strike a secret deal with Ms Bhutto and had perhaps succeeded. When the facts reached Gen Musharraf, Mr Waseem was asked to relinquish charge of his assignment in NAB and kicked out.

One may be able to find out Hasan Waseem's place in between the above paragraphs. Once on 9th December 2006, NAB organized an anti-corruption march on Constitution Avenue in Islamabad. Abdul Sattar Edhi came to lead it and the call was 'Unite against Corruption'. Earlier that day, PM Shaukat Aziz attended the formal Anti-Corruption Day function in which he openly abused NAB for its misdeeds. Later during tea, when the PM had gone away, the news reporters gathered around the Chairman and asked why the PM was so furious with NAB. Then they themselves uttered '*we know Sir, it is because you are doing POL inquiry against him.*' The video film of whole of that tea function is still available in NAB's office. Hats off to Lt Gen Shahid Aziz again.

Pakistan's NAB had been involved more in political victimization than in actual accountability since its inception, no doubt. The draconian provisions of the NAB Ordinance and their selective implementation had often brought criticism and never praise.

On **5th December 2003**, a question was raised about the military officers working in civil departments against whom cases had been registered by the NAB. The 14 military officers on the list included a former lieutenant general heading a civil department, as being 'under investigation for accumulating assets beyond his means.' The investigations, however, never concluded.

On **2nd December 2004**, a question was asked about the status of NAB cases against sitting members of Parliament, if any. Nine sitting MPs were named against whom there were cases of corruption, misuse of authority and accumulation of assets beyond their known sources of income. All these enquiries ended up in twisting arms in Gen Musharraf's favour. Lt Gen Shahid Aziz when took over as Chairman NAB, had issued directions:

'Not to continue to chase the gunahgars [sinners] but to go after the shiateen [devils], because the shiateen here in Pakistan point fingers at the gunahgars so that all appear as one and no distinction remains.' Correct it was. Our history is depleted with such truthful instances.

Federal Ministers Faisal Saleh Hayat, Aftab Sherpao, Rana Nazir Ahmad, Jehangir Khan Tareen and Liaquat Ali Jatoi were named in the above referred list. All had been the target of the NAB until they joined the King's Party; were rewarded with ministerial jobs and let off the hook. The chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Syed Mushahid Hussain, had also been named as being involved in a case of "misuse of authority." The case was closed in May 2002 after over two years of investigation. On a privilege motion, two meetings were called to discuss the case but were subsequently cancelled or held without the attendance of the Chairman NAB; no results whatsoever.

The Supreme Court once asked the NAB's Chief Prosecutor whether petitioner Siddiq ul Farooq [the Information Secretary of PML(N)] was in NAB custody and what the status of investigations against him was. In reply, the Prosecutor General admitted that the petitioner was in NAB custody but he could not inform the Court that where Siddiq ul Farooq had been 'dumped' and what the status of investigations was.

The hallmark conclusion was that while the NAB was carrying out investigations, open or secret, an accused may roam free or be made a cabinet minister or 'dumped' and forgotten; depends upon the sweet will of the rulers not the law. ***South Asia Tribune of 29th April 2005*** had indicated various mega scandals during the military regime of Gen Musharraf but the NAB kept their lips tight because certain army generals were named then.

Hats off to the Corps Commander of Lahore, Lt Gen Shahid Aziz, who had once started a serious investigation against his predecessor, the last Corps Commander of Lahore then posted in GHQ, Lt Gen Zarrar Azim [known in the real estate world of Lahore as Gen Zarrar Zameen (land)] who was so deeply involved in the scam of Lahore Defence Society that in the price of every plot of land allotted in the society, a fee of Rs:600,000 (then £7500) had to be built-in, almost automatically, meant for the Corps Commander's office. The out-going CC was using a junior officer, Major Lodhi as his front man. This major had the backing of Gen Aziz of Kargil fame who was related to Gen Musharraf as his coup partner.

The details of these Defence Society scams were mind boggling. Thousands of plots of land were designated in official files as Defence Society land and the same were then sold and re-sold on files. More paper Housing Societies were registered and approved and they claimed vast tracts of land without owning a square yard. In Lahore, there were about 12,000 files of plots for Sectors 7, 8, 9 and 10 for which there was no land actually available on the ground. As per SAT referred above:

'An on going joke in the Army Mess Circuit then prevailing was; the last request Gen Musharraf made to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in Delhi was to give him 8,000 acres of land from the Indian territory across the Wagah-Atari border, 30 miles from Lahore, in return for Kashmir and Siachin, because "my boys have already sold this land" in the files'.

Gen Musharraf's another commander, Lt Gen Tariq Wasim Ghazi of Karachi became notoriously famous for similar land scams in Defence Society Karachi, including Creek City and allotment to two special people, Humayun Butt and Fareed Veerani. Who were these specials and what their involvement was, no body was sure.

In Lahore, the Mayor Mian Amer Mahmood had claimed on 24th April 2005, that he had succeeded in vacating 3,000 kanals (375 acres) of land belonging to schools from a 'big land mafia', most of the people knew that who were that mafia - the brokers using army's name. In the same row, the former head of the NAB Lt Gen (retd) Amjad Hussain was himself accused of massive corruption in the corporation he has been heading. This charge of corruption was levelled in the Parliament involving the Fauji Foundation, undeniably the largest corporate body of Pakistan which was then heading towards buying the largest public sector company, Pakistan State Oil (PSO). It was regarding the sale of the Khoski Sugar Mills; the Parliament was told that an enquiry had been ordered in that respect but results never made open because Pak Army's name was frequently discussed allegedly involved.

While the above details show that in-service Generals and Corps Commanders were being investigated for corruption, another officially announced corruption case was against the management of the South Asian Federation (SAF) Games, interestingly consisting of all military officers headed by Lt Gen Arif Hassan. The financial irregularities to the tune of Rs:201 million were also including undue benefit to be provided to certain private firms through 'verbal agreements'; daily 'Dawn' told quoting an audit report. The 9th SAF Games were managed by its Chairman Lt Gen Arif Hassan, Chiefs included Brig Amjad Javaid, Lt Col Syed Mujtaba Tirmizi, Brig Ahmad Raza Siddiqi, Brig Abid Hussain Bhatti, Lt Col (retd) M Yahya, Lt Col Mansoor Abbas, Lt Col Umer Farooq, Lt Col Azhar Dean, Brig Arif Rasul Qureshi, Brig Khalid Rasheed Lodhi and Engr Col Usman Saeed. None of the very well qualified civilians players was found suitable for any slot.

In a military regime, obviously the Corps Commanders and senior Generals were the top Government and if scams and scandals involving those top men were officially exposed, some in the National Assembly and others by leaks to the media by their own juniors; the tall claims of Gen Musharraf to eliminate corruption were a mockery and NAB was there to provide them shelter.

During the decade of 2001-10, the Bank of Punjab (BoP) scam was taken up by the Supreme Court of Pakistan in which Chaudhrys of Gujrat were also named. Stunning details told that what our politicians have been doing with poor economy of Pakistan. The BoP scam had uncovered the multi-billion scandals of Harris Steel loan (Rs:9 billion); the controversial sale of Phalia Sugar Mill of the Chaudhrys of Gujrat for Rs:2.2 billion with BoP money borrowed by a sitting director of the Bank and the mind-boggling lending of over Rs:18 billion to five sitting directors of the BoP in violation of the Bank policy; then popped up with another Rs:1.8 billion eating up.

Lt Gen KHALID MAQBOOL's CASE:

Lt Gen Khalid Maqbool's era as Chairman NAB is marked with 'corruption within ranks' in the name of dubious plea bargains. Adml Mansoorul Haq's case is widely quoted as an instance in which the NAB recovered from him only a few thousand dollars [on record] against an allegation of \$7.2 million kickback. An amount of \$2.65 million was recovered from one Mr Jamil [country rep of the French Firm] in Agosta submarines case and set him Scot free without mention of his name in the record even. Kamran Khan is quoted for **'The Facts of May 2004'**:

'NAB officials said that the plea bargain deals are meant to recover the looted money in exchange for some grace to the accused persons who get the benefit of not going through the public trial and exposure of their misdeeds in public. But the process is attracting some criticism, as it allows the senior NAB officials to exercise their discretion in settling the amount for the plea bargain.'

'In Irfan Puri, Usman farooqi and Admiral Mansurul Haq cases the money recovered by the NAB may match their ill-gotten wealth, but in some cases some key suspects won their freedom at a cheap cost. For instance Huzoor Buksh Khalwar, a former Karachi Metropolitan director, who was arrested after a NAB investigation found that he had allegedly amassed wealth to the tune of hundreds of millions of rupees, was set free after a brief (according to the NAB standards) three months' confinement and a nominal payment of Rs16 million. Khalwar was one of the beneficiaries of a Rs600 million octroi fraud unearthed in the KMC in 1998.'

During late 2010, some latest revelations had shown that the son in law of former Punjab's Governor, Lt Gen (retd) Khalid Maqbool got a whopping Rs:1.8 billion loan from the said bank and wilfully defaulted. The Bank of Punjab's Special Asset Management (SAM) wing approached the NAB of Lahore seeking an inquiry against one Ahsan Latif [the son in law of Lt Gen Khalid Maqbool] for not returning the Rs:1.8 billion loan that was given to his company (M/s Gas Naturale) on political pressures. The written complaint of the BoP contained:

"M/s Gas Naturale (Pvt) Ltd through its directors has obtained a loan amounting to Rs:1.8 billion. The loan was awarded in an unorthodox manner, and the BoP stepped in as a sole lender to the project because of political pressure exerted by the party who happens to be son-in-law of the then Punjab Governor. Due to lending at such a large scale without merit, the loan is in default now causing loss to the bank and the project is completely stuck. The borrower is not paying its portion of equity nor is ready to transfer the project to the BoP."

Lt Gen Khalid Maqbool and Ahsan Latif were not then available to the NAB for questioning as they were abroad. The fact remains that following political pressure, the Bank management had to give loan to Ahsan Latif's company despite the fact that the company was financially incapable to support such a mega project. However, it also talks of managerial incapability of the BoP to handle the project as the company had no significant experience in the said field or business of that scale in any other industry. The BoP maintained that misleading and factually incorrect information was submitted to the bank, with wilful intent to deceive the bank authorities.

It is also on record that while this project was suffering from escalation and delays, the BoP allowed another loan of Rs:28 million to M/s Synergy Power belonging to the same group [Gas Naturale (Pvt) Ltd].

The documents also show that Lt Gen Khalid Maqbool, during his governorship, had entered into an agreement with the BoP under which he had rented out his commercial property at the Defence Housing Scheme Lahore, to the BoP for Rs:620,000 per month. The said agreement was signed between Khalid Maqbool, the then Governor, and the BoP on 1st March 2008 but subsequently cancelled on 4th April 2008.

When the contents of BoP scam having mention of Lt Gen Khalid Maqbool's son in law was published at the 'Defence Journal of Pakistan', a military's official internet site, no body came forward to comment on it because it was a story about a General's power twisting role. If he were a son of a politician or bureaucrat, the thread would have got 100s of comments criticizing the whole political and bureaucratic nexus. It was a mini mention of 'power corruption' in Pakistan. He was a retired General; he was a governor at that time, so why raising voices so loud though some say that he should be held accountable.

This was not the first case and won't be the last. People from all walks of life have done corruption in Pakistan; all should have been held for it but since Pakistan experienced the same oligarchs coming and going while running the country, the NAB would prefer to go for 'targeted accountability' again.

A report by Transparency International (TI) had once claimed that Gen Musharraf's military regime was perceived as more corrupt than its military or civilian predecessors. The ***Corruption Watchdog's 2006 Report*** on Pakistan was based on a sample of 4,000 urban and semi-urban citizens in all the four provinces. Asked about the then government, 33 percent of the respondents thought that it was corrupt in 1999-2002, but when asked to assess the period 2002-06, more than 67 percent thought it was corrupt. Yes, it was true 67% - the highest ever rating given to a government in Pakistan for corruption.

In a statement, the then ruling PML(Q) partner had told the media that despite rating as first in corruption according to Transparency International, the regime was not facing a single NAB case. This proved that the NAB was for political and not for corruption purposes. The then PPP had pledged to wash that image when voted into government. The PPP spokesman had said that:

'Transparency International findings also rejected the military regime's view that military dictatorships are honest. When military regimes of Ayub, Yahya, Zia and Musharraf were the most corrupt, creating from twenty two families to a high of sixty seven percent corruptions, it meant that the lower scores showed that the political governments had improved on the situation although there is still a long way to go. The issue of corruption should be separated from politics. The history of Pakistan

shows that the corruption prevails because laws are mocked and political parties broken by abuse of the word while the actual corruption proliferates'.

But the PPP is in power since four years now. The stories of corruption during PPP's this rule has beaten all the previous records. See the media reports; when this govt goes, more scams for billions will be unearthed.

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