

CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR IN THE NARRATIVE OF PAKISTAN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (PDM) OF 2020

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Abstract

Despite political, social, legal, administrative, and economic challenges, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is still making progress. However, in 2020, a new threat emerged in the form of an anti-government alliance called the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), which is a coalition of 11 political parties acting against the ruling party of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), demanded the resignation of the then Prime Minister Imran Khan and the stepping down of the Chairman CPEC Authority, which may create political instability in Pakistan shortly and may disturb CPEC progress, due to agitations¹. This article focuses on the PDM narration building around CPEC. To this end, twenty political party-based alliances since 1950 are analyzed to give an accurate account of the modern impressions of historical politics. Political Opportunity Theory (POT) was utilized to know the PDM's narration affectivity. The result of the study shows that the PDM may influence PTI and CPEC in near future and may dethrone the PTI government through no confidence. However, historically speaking, the majorities of anti-government oppositional alliances have only been partially successful and have failed to overthrow the ruling governments.

Keywords: Pakistan Democratic Movement, Political Opportunity Theory, CPEC, PTI, PPPP, PMLN, China, Pakistan

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¹This study was conducted in 2021 the focus of the study was the year 2020 and 2021 PDM's Anti-PTI narrative in the context of CPEC. The result of the study predicted in 2021 later on come true in 2022, like the stepping down of the Chairman of CPECA, the dethroning of Imran Khan through a No-Confidence motion, and the winding up of China Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority in 2022.

Introduction:

Political allegations have been made in Pakistan in the name of eradicating corruption since 1988. The first such incident took place when the first female prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, was ousted by the then-president of Pakistan, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, using Articles 58-2 (b) of the 1973 Constitution. He accused her of corruption, nepotism, and tyranny. Khan also used the article on April 18, 1993, against the then-prime minister, Nawaz Sharif accused him of corruption and mismanagement. Like Benazir Bhutto, Sharif was sent home (Tarar, 2019). Since independence, no elected prime minister of Pakistan completed his or her five-year term until 2018. Most of such Chief Executives were ousted by the presidents, martial laws, or the judiciary on charges of corruption or abuse of power (Manzoor, 2017). Similarly, the current government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was given a mandate in 2018 to eradicate corruption, nepotism and embezzlement.

Pakistan's history is full of small and large oppositional alliances against the ruling party. Many political parties and politicians were found involved in the formation of anti-ruling party fronts, the United Front (UF) of 1953, the National Democratic Front (NDF) of 1962, the Combined Opposition Parties (COP) of 1964, the Democratic Action Committee (DAC) of 1968, the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) 1967-1968, the United Democratic Front (UDF) of 1974, the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) of 1977, the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) of 1983, the Islami Jamhoori Ittihad (IJI) or the Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA) from 1988 to 1996, the Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA), the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) of 2002 and Pakistan Democratic Movement of 2020 & 2021 are some of instances. According to Siddiqui, these alliances have been successful, and they have not failed to achieve their goals (Saddiqi, 2020). However, the results of our study are the opposite; we find that 30% of the coalitions have failed, 55% have partially succeeded, and 15% have succeeded in achieving their goals (see detailed Table A).

The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) is the ring or loop in the chain of anti-ruling party alliances and was formally announced

on September 20, 2020, in Islamabad, where an all-party conference against the ruling party was held. PDM made 26 demands. Like, Prime Minister Imran Khan should resign because the election is rigged in his favor. The undemocratic force must stop its interference in politics, free and fair re-elections after the formulation of election reforms must be held with no role of the armed forces and intelligence agencies, political prisoners must be released, the cases against journalists be withdrawn, the National Action Plan against terrorism must be implemented, the projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor be speeded up, and across-the-board accountability need to be implemented under a new accountability law (Dawn, 2020d). PDM other demand was the stepping down of Chairman of CPEC Authority until his innocence was proven, the removal of media censorship, an end to the corruption, and the lowering of the price of household commodities, utility bills, and medicines were PDM demands.

In context of PDM political activities like strikes, it was predicted that political instability may ignite again and may halt developmental projects, foreign investments, and especially the progress of the CPEC. Due to the PDM's infancy, scholars paid little attention to its implications on CPEC. This study extends the literature on the collective behavior of the PDM and its impact on the CPEC by addressing overt and covert statements and concerns related to the PDM and CPEC by applying the Political Opportunity Theory (POT) to PDM mottos. However this study is limited to PDM's concern about CPEC. This study is carried out with the help of political opportunity theory, for which the frame of the study of past events has been taken from Graham Allison's book, '*Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides' Trap?*' Where Allison analyzed sixteen cases from history to establish his argument, thereby given this study a causal hypothesis that yes; PDM can influence CPEC's progress and influence the government of PTI. Also based on one of the questions posited in political opportunity theory (POT), which determined the influence of a social movement (Meyer, 2004). Meyer established four parameters in this regard for knowing social movement, such as i) mobilization, ii) advancing particular claim rather than others, iii) cultivating some alliances rather than others, and iv) effecting

mainstream institutional politics and policy (Meyer, 2004). This study aims to examine all the four parameters in regard to the PDM narration and impact on CPEC.

This study provides a new perspective to Pakistani and foreign investors in helping them that they should keep in mind the conflictive politics of this country if they are planning some developmental projects like CPEC. Suggestions of this study state that “policymakers in Pakistan must develop in advance terms of reference (TORs) for agitations, strikes and set-ins and pass it from parliament. This is similar suggestion to the UK’s bill of empowerment of police to shut down protests(Whiteside, 2021). This suggestion is also in line with ex-interior minister and Senator Rehman Malik, who said, “What is important is the general public’s smooth business and regular duties of the administration, and if there any agitation government should make proper alternate routes(S. R. Malik, 2020)”. As in the previous era (2013-2018), Imran Khan made national and international developments uncertain due to his 120-day-long set-in at the capital of Pakistan(Murtaza & Azhar, 2020). If PDM succeeds in its intended goals, and if it overthrows the government, this would be synonymous with reversing existing government policies, including reversing CPEC Authority and its related ordinances.

Past Alliances

The first alliance in the history of Pakistan was an electoral alliance, which was formed at East-Pakistan in 1953 named the United Front (UF) for the upcoming elections of 1954. That coalition secured 233 seats out of 308 at the Provincial Assembly of East Pakistan and is considered the first successful coalition (R. Z. Malik, 2014, p. 57). The second alliance was the National Democratic Front (NDF) of opposition parties of 1962, with its objectives of restoring democracy and opposing the presidential system of Ayub Khan. However, the NDF failed to achieve its objectives due to the president's strict surveillance. The third alliance was the electoral alliance of the Combined Opposition Parties (COP) of 1964, with its objectives of nominating common candidates against Ayub Khan and of contesting elections from the common platform; it achieved its two objectives

despite having mutual differences. However, this alliance mobilization was confined to major cities only (Ziring, 2009, p. 39) because the alliance did not win in all areas, that's why failed its wish of winning the presidency. Fourth, after the COP's failure at winning the presidency, on January 2, 1965, the five parties regrouped again and renamed the COP as the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), which is the same name as that is using by the PDM of 2020-2021. Their motto was the restoration of democracy with parliamentary setup; however, this alliance failed to achieve its objectives. The fifth alliance, the Democratic Action Committee (DAC) of 1969, was a regrouping of the PDM, with the objectives of direct election on the basis of adult franchise and the removal of Ayub Khan from the presidentship (Ziring, 2009, p. 34). Due to immense anti-government agitations and processions, Khan lost his confidence and faith in the common man, as well as in his generals, and proclaimed martial law on March 25, 1969 (Hussain, 2020). However, instead of the imposition of martial law, DAC was partially successful in achieving its objectives in the disguise of the government of Z.A. Bhutto. Yahya Khan, the Chief Martial Law Administrator abrogated the 1962 constitution and promised early elections. However, he did not keep his promise of holding early elections and the transfer of power to elected representatives. However, the rallies and agitations under the leadership of the DAC compelled General Yahya Khan to step down and hand over power to Z.A. Bhutto (Azeem & Tabassum, 2018).

The sixth alliance, the United Democratic Front (UDF), (1973 to 1976), was an alliance within the parliament of opposition parties, with objectives of putting pressure on Z.A. Bhutto in regard to the constitution-making process and for incorporating some Islamic clauses; however, this gathering was both constructive and democratic. It supported the constitutional development of Bhutto's government, while on the other hand it repelled some of Bhutto's policies (Azeem & Tabassum, 2018). However, the UDF achieved only partial success in its objectives due to its internal rift and Bhutto's holding of emergency power in his hands (Feldman, 1974).

Here, we divide the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) of 1977 into two phases according to its objectives, namely, the pre-election and postelection PNA. The seventh alliance, namely, the pre-election PNA was founded on 11 January 1977, and it remained active until 8 March 1977; its prime objectives were to contest elections from the common platform and to defeat the PPP in the upcoming election of 1977. This alliance was dubbed the "gang of nine aiming to restore exploitation" by Bhutto (Raza, 1997, p. 238)". The pre-election PNA was partially successful because it contested from a common platform and won 36 seats in the National Assembly within a short time period of two months, while it failed to achieve its second objective of defeating Bhutto. After the PPP's victory, which won 150 out of 200 seats, the PNA alleged that the 1977 election was a rigged election.

The eighth alliance, the postelection PNA which was active from 9 March 1977 to July 5, 1977; this alliance was a pressure-building alliance with its two objectives, namely, reelections and the toppling of Bhutto, and their activism created disturbances and political destabilization. On April 21, 1977, Bhutto told the Saudi ambassador that the United States backed all these destabilizing political elements in Pakistan; he said the same to Azimov, the Soviet ambassador (Raza, 1997, pp. 183-184). The postelection PNA failed to achieve its objectives because of the imposition of martial law in 1977 and the presence of internal rifts. The ninth alliance, the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), was anti-Zia and his dictatorship. It was an offshoot of the PNA. The MRD realized that Zia-Ul-Haq was not ready to fulfill his early election promise within 90 days (Mushtaq, 2015, p. 112), nor was General Zia ready for the transfer of power to party-based elected representatives. Zia announced a nonparty base election when he realized the political parties' inclinations against him. Instead of a compromised democracy, the MRD achieved partial success in reaching one of its two objectives, which were the elections themselves and the transfer of power to elected representatives.

Islami Jamhoori Ittihad (IJI), or the Islamic Democratic Alliance, is divided into four phases according to its objectives. The tenth alliance, IJI (i), which was comprised of an electoral alliance against Benazir Bhutto (BB) in 1988, established with two objectives,

namely, to contest the election from the common platform and to defeat the PPP in the 1988 elections. This alliance partially succeeded in contesting the election from the common platform and winning over 54 seats within three months of preparation, but they failed in achieving their second objective of defeating BB. Benazir came to power on December 2, 1988, as the first female prime minister of Pakistan; however, Nawaz Sharif did not let her govern smoothly and offered tough time (Kureshi, 2014). The eleventh alliance, IJI (ii), was a Parliamentary alliance (from mid-December 1988 until June 3, 1989). The second objective of IJI (ii) was to put pressure on the BB's government. The alliance was partially successful in achieving its second objective. The twelfth alliance, IJI plus the Combined Opposition Parties alliance (iii), was from June 4th, 1989, to October 1990, with an objective of launching a vote of no-confidence against BB. They brought two no-confidences, but both time failed in achieving displacement of BB. The objective of this alliance was partially achieved because they brought one vote of no confidence to parliament but face failure, while the other one failed outside of parliament. This alliance was successful in achieving both its objectives which enabled Nawaz Sharif to become prime minister of Pakistan.

The Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA) has two phases: pre-election and postelection PDA. The fourteenth alliance, the pre-election PDA, which was formed in December 1990, was an electoral alliance under the leadership of the PPP to contest the election from a common platform and win over the IJI. The alliance was partially successful in its objectives; they contested the election from the common platform but did not defeat the IJI, although they won 45 seats within three months of preparations. The fifteenth alliance, the postelection PDA, which was in effect from 1990 to 1993, also had two objectives, namely, to oust Nawaz Sharif from the post of prime minister and to compel the government to announce new elections, which were partially achieved. Due to stressful relation with president, Nawaz Sharif was not ousted but was removed by the president through unconstitutional way; however, the second demand for new elections was accepted.

The sixteenth alliance, Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) was an anti-government alliance established on May 15, 1998, with two objectives: dethroning Nawaz Sharif from Primeministership seat and compel the government for new elections. However, Musharaf's takeover and the imposition of emergency failed GDAs efforts. The seventeenth alliance was the Pakistan Awami Ittehad (Pakistan People's Alliance), which was against Nawaz Sharif within Parliament and mentored by BB from 1997 to 1999 with its two objectives to oust Nawaz Sharif from office and hold new elections. Like the GDA, this alliance also failed due to Musharaf's takeover. The eighteenth alliance, the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD), was formed in 2000, and its campaign was against Musharraf's government. In 2002, the Muslim League (Q) Party headed by Musharraf did not win a simple majority in the National Assembly. Nawab Zada Nasrullah Khan, the key architect of alliances in Pakistan, believed that democracy is the only route of development for Pakistan. He used to say that a single party could not fight a military dictatorship. For this purpose, he felt that all political parties, other democratic forces, and people from different walks of life must unite in fight against Musharraf (Khan, 2020). However, this alliance did not deliver the goals for which it was formed.

The nineteenth alliance, the All Parties Democratic Movement (APDM), was headed by Nawaz Sharif in 2007, with its two objectives of restoring democracy under the 1973 constitution and keeping Musharraf away from re-election as president. Regarding the issue of Musharraf, there were internal rifts within the alliance, while the goal of holding a new election the point of knotting, which was achieved. Therefore, this alliance was partially successful in achieving its objectives. The twentieth alliance, the Pakistan Awami Ittehad (PAI), which was organized by Musharraf in 2007, was an electoral alliance with the sole objective of contesting the election from a common platform. However, this alliance was announced and then failed to in infancy.

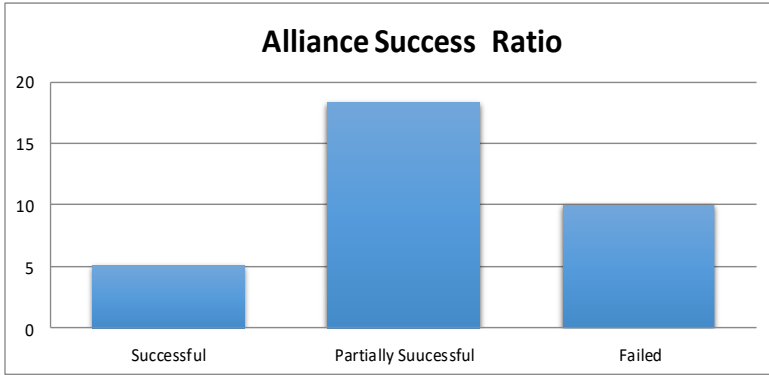
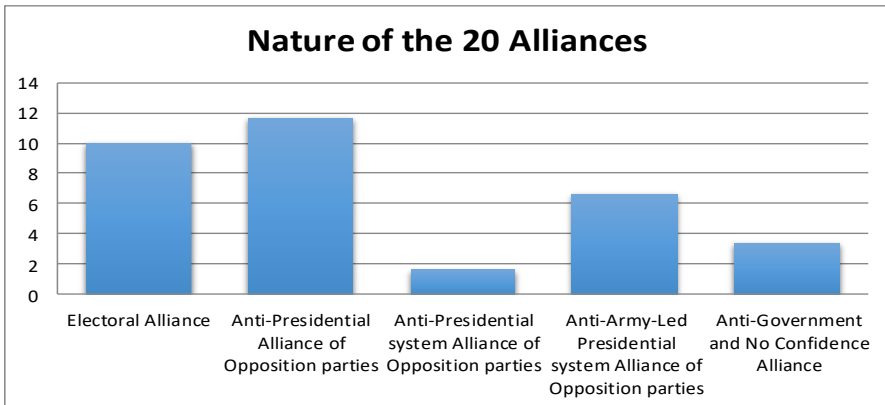


Figure 1: Political Alliances Success Ratio (Annex-A)



In figure 1, 20 different historical oppositional alliances of Pakistan have been analyzed from 1953 to 2017. The table (Annex-A) shows that out of these twenty alliances, only 6 (30%) were successful in achieving their objective(s), 11 (55%) were partially successful, and 3 (15%) absolutely failed in achieving its objectives. For further information, consult Table A in Appendix.

Table B: Alliances of Parties in Pakistan and its nature

Background of PDM's formation

In October 2019, the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN), and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F) announced anti-government rallies, in which a sit-in was planned until Khan's resignation. However that time PPPP and PMLN both left JUI-F alone (Jamal, 2020). In February 2020, PPPP and PMLN resumed their anti-government protests and rallies in hope of toppling the PTI in July 2020. However, that did not happen, but their activities continued until mid-December 15, 2021.

The All Parties Conference was transformed into the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). The media reported their early meetings and their motive of ousting Imran Khan from power. In this context, the PPPP and the PMLN gathered in Lahore once again. Their meetings were considered a sign of the government's failure for what Imran Khan promised in his pre-election era (Riaz, 2020). PDM two big partners developed inflation conception and of devaluation of the rupee against the USD. Beside that about government's uneven attitude towards the common man by ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif and ex-president of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari (Pakistan Today, 2019). That is how these oppositional parties strengthened their rhetoric and merged it into one alliance to show their street power but is still to be tested over time. This study is limited only to PDM narrative about CPEC.

PDM, PTI and CPEC

The establishment of the CPEC Authority is an emblem of centralization which adds another item to the list of interprovincial and central-province grievances, which had been to some extent minimized by the 18th constitutional amendment (Adeney, 2020, p. 446). However, the PTI government's behavior of rolling back of the 18th amendment and giving CPEC authority to undemocratic forces widened the gap again. The PTI's controversial views about the CPEC are considered their hostility to the project. As a senior research fellow at Strategic Studies in Islamabad, Dr. Ahmad Rashid Malik concluded that "Imran

Khan has taken a different stance on the CPEC, and there are PTI U-turns and changing views on the CPEC(A. R. Malik, 2017)". In 2014, the PTI chairman has raised concerns about different aspects of CPEC project (Behera, 2018, p. 248), despite meeting with the then-Chinese ambassador Sun Weidong twice, Imran Khan was not satisfied and raised concerns about the project time and again, which is why he continued his criticism and stated that "instead of provinces, China needs to handle the CPEC through the federal government". At the same time, Imran Khan's sit-in at Islamabad disturbed the scheduled visit of President Xi Jinping of September 2014, due to which Xi's visit was delayed for more than six months, along with that PTI was trumpeting that "It is a loan and not an investment, which is very expensive(A. R. Malik, 2017). On the other hand, PTI government budget for 2020-21 is 11% lower than the size of the estimated 2019-20 budget for the CPEC, which, according to economic expert Dr. Kasier Bengali, means that economic managers are trying to appease the IMF and other international lenders by not mentioning the CPEC in their budget(Reporter, 2020)". The PDM's countrywide agitation plan showed that it planned to start its demonstrations from the province of Baluchistan on October 11, 2020 (Dawn, 2020c), which was then rescheduled for October 18, 2020. Raised the question of why the PDM chose Quetta, although all political and nonpolitical stakeholders knew the sensitivity of the area due to the Gawadar ports and CPEC. Since then, it has been anticipated that agitating political parties are not happy with the government's decisions about the CPEC, particularly regarding its decision of making an authority.

The second concern of the PDM is the CPEC-Authority Act of 2019. On the one hand, the whole CPEC was allotted to retired military officers, while on the other hand, it bypassed parliament. From November until mid-December 2020, PDM criticized CPEC dealings and the approach of PTI, however, on December 27, 2020, at Larkana, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari openly opposed the approach of the PTI government regarding CPEC. He demanded that "we don't need the current CPEC, We need the CPEC dealt during the Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif terms, which was equally beneficial to all ethnicities and areas, we also need to maximize benefits for backward areas with the

maximum benefits out of it(Jang, 2020).” According to Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, “CPECA legality and its immunity from the legal procedure are the concerns of the PDM (Kumar, 2020)”. The CPEC Authority ordinance gives immunity from investigations to CPECA staff. This immunity caught the attention of national and international critiques such as Alice Wells for issues related to transparency (ANI, 2019). Before that disagreement over the National Finance Commission (NFC) awards and the CPEC share was imminent problems in the PTI government. However, a question arises as why PDM is more furious this time, was clarified by Yemen Zubair in these words: "I can see the Titans clash is over the benefits of the CPEC(Dawn, 2020a). The leaders of the PTI are linking PDM processions and agitations with CPEC animosity, and scholars are linking it to a new setback to CPEC progress(Kugelman, 2020).

Similar to the CPEC Authority’s ordinance, the PTI government issued the Pakistan Islands Development Authority (PIDA) ordinance, which also caused Centre-province rift, and in reaction to that Sindh provincial assembly passed the anti-PIDA resolution. Through PIDA’s ordinance, the government of Pakistan brought Buddo and Bundal Islands, which are located in Sindh province, under the jurisdiction of the Centre, which is an important geographic point for the CPEC. Upon the central government’s unilateral and nonparliamentary approach, one of provincial party named *Sindh’s Taraqi Passand Party* (STTP) leader, Dr. Qadir Maqsi, issued a warning statement that ‘he would not be silent upon Sindh’s exploitation, which is equal to destruction and the plundering of 80,000 people’s jobs and their opportunities(Chaudhary, 2020)”.

The history of the CPEC reveals previous government’s (PML-N) inability to protect it from bearings of the PTI sit-in during 2014. Similarly, the PTI-led government seems unable and unprepared for any agitation and processions by PDM parties or any other groups, which may halt developmental works. While contrary to that Pakistani leadership has time and again assured its success regardless of any political change in Pakistan, and political leadership pledged for successful completion of CPEC (Kovrig, 2018)”. Shakti Sinha said that “the current political turmoil in Pakistan will dent the country’s

economy and for that, political stability is critical”, which did not seem in near future (IANS, 2020).

Imran Khan reacted to PDM activities and said that ‘inside Gilgit-Baltistan, India is fully mobilized because here is CPEC and they (PDM and India) are trying to spread chaos in the area(Dawn, 2020b), which verifies one assumption that PDM’s implicit intentions is to target the current handling of the CPEC. Because one of PDM's demands is Asim Saleem Bajwa’s stepping down from the Chairmanship of CPEC Authority. Ex-prime minister Nawaz Sharif’s address to the APC on September 20, 2020, completely focused on Asim Saleem Bajwa, the Chairman of CPEC-Authority(Mir, 2020), while at the same time, the PDM is demanding that the work on the CPEC need to be excelled, as there has been no progress in the last five months, especially on the motorway and railway modernization(Kumar, 2020). Some party workers of the PDM believe that the current rush to panic by the government party is due to the opposition's demand that the assets of Asim Saleem Bajwa be brought to an independent inquiry. Until the inquiry's completion, he must step down from the chairmanship post(Shakil, 2020).

Further dismay was obtained from constitutional issue of Gilgit-Baltistan. In light of making Gilgit-Baltistan a constitutional province, the PDM was expected to come to the assembly because the government aimed to make Gilgit-Baltistan the fifth province of Pakistan. In reaction to the PTI government’s policies, the opposition did not come to legislation regarding the essential issue of Gilgit-Baltistan, which is the backbone of the CPEC. The meeting called for Gilgit-Baltistan issue by the speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan was boycotted by PDM(Dawn, 2020a). This boycott was observed for five consecutive sessions. Khan repeatedly highlighted the CPEC’s timely completion; however, contrary to that, it is speculated that the PDM may sabotage the CPEC execution process and thus impede the country's economic revival (IANS, 2020), was PTI stance. Keeping in mind the sensitivity and geographical importance of the area due to the CPEC, authority holders must redress their grievances, irrespective of their political affiliation. However, some writers believe that the current machinery of the state is inclined only towards the PTI

and is against the PDM's motto. This may broaden the gaps between political forces(Safi, 2020). However, in May 2020, India protested against Pakistan's decision to give the Gilgit-Baltistan a constitutional status. India assumes that due to the CPEC, Pakistan is bringing GB under constitutional cover(Bhatia, 2020). On the other hand, rumors were circulating that it was China's suggestion to make GB the fifth province of Pakistan (Sohail, 2020). Some Indian experts believed that if Modi wrested GB from Pakistan, it would create a catastrophic situation of war in Asia between India and Pakistan (Kulkarni, 2020). This also shows that India's intentions for further encroachment on the Pakistani territory in the border area never stopped. On the other hand, India also plans to keep vacant seats in Lok Saba allocated to GB and Azad Kashmir by claiming these areas as rightful regions to make yet another hurdle in the way of the CPEC.

Political Opportunity Theory's results and PDM:

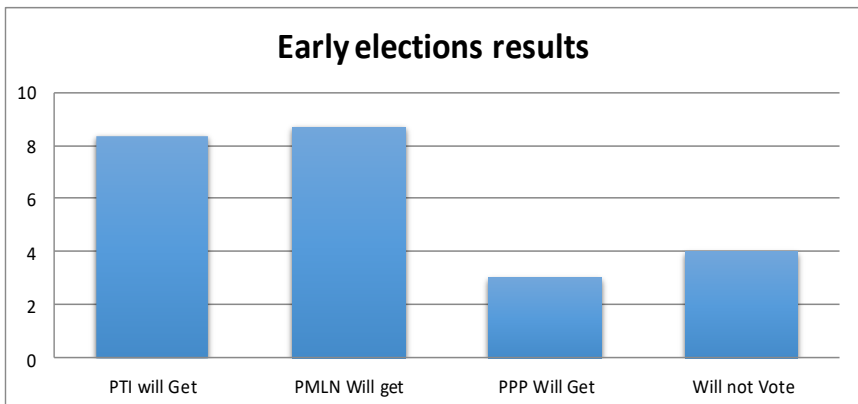
According to Morgan, political opportunity theory can be divided into static and dynamic elements. Static elements denote a stable and nontransferable nature, while dynamic elements depend on the actions of political actors, which are essential elements for interpreting the emergence of a political movement and related groups (Salah, 2017). For dynamic elements, our study set four indicators that can reveal the influence of the PDM on PTI government policies. This test will also highlight the level of narration making against PTI and pro-PDM.

1. Mobilization:

It is an essential byproduct of POT to mobilize a heavy number of masses. Pakistan's twenty alliances (Annex-A) history reveals that they were able to motivate huge gatherings. The case of the PDM in 2020 is yet to be tested by POT. Despite government hindrances, the PDM has organized tens of thousands of supporters' agitations and processions, which has been observed during the Quetta, Karachi, Peshawar, Gujranwala, Multan, and Lahore. The result of this mobilization was measured by one study conducted by the Institute for Public Opinion Research (IPOR) from October 27 to November 11, 2020, which found that 26% of Pakistanis are in favor of the PMLN compared to the PTI, which is considered the favorite but is only supported by 25% of

Pakistanis if early election results are to be held, along with the 9% of votes that would go to the PPPP (Figure, 3). The total number of registered voters in Pakistan is 118,224,697; if we add together the PMLN and the PPPP (9%+26%), we get a total of 35%. We may calculate out these percentage for the PDM, the PTI and those who ‘don’t vote’ (which total 40%), which will give us 41378738 for PDM, 29556241 for PTI, and 47290149 who do not vote. This shows that the PPPP and the PMLN can form the government, as they share the same platform regarding PDM activities, and their unity could help motivate more voters for mid-term elections. Such unity may halt the process of the current government and its policies. Within six months, more than 41378738 voters out of 118,224,697 could be motivated. This suggests to policy makers that any agenda that can be carried out by political parties with unification can help make difficult decisions. A survey revealed that the PDM platform motivated a number of voters, which is explained by the table below.

Figure 3 Voter turnout against mentioned parties in 2020 early elections(IPOR, 2020)



Along with the IPOR study revelations, BBC Urdu also stated that all PDM parties are successful in the mobilization of their workers(Khaliq, 2020). This mobilization was verified by IPOR, which showed that

45% of Pakistanis agreed with the PDM's demands for mid-term elections (Figure, 4).

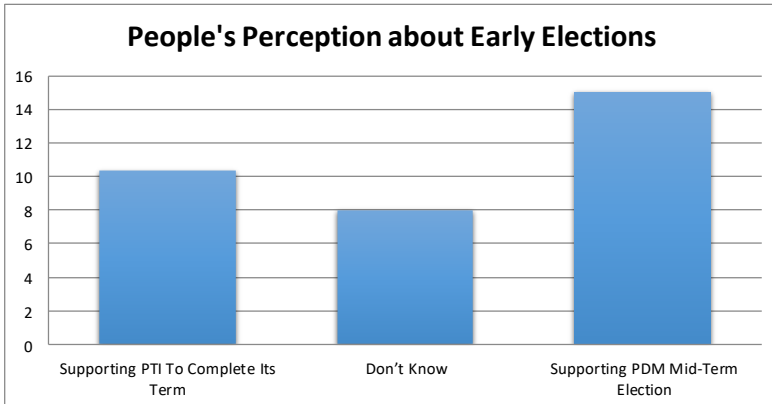
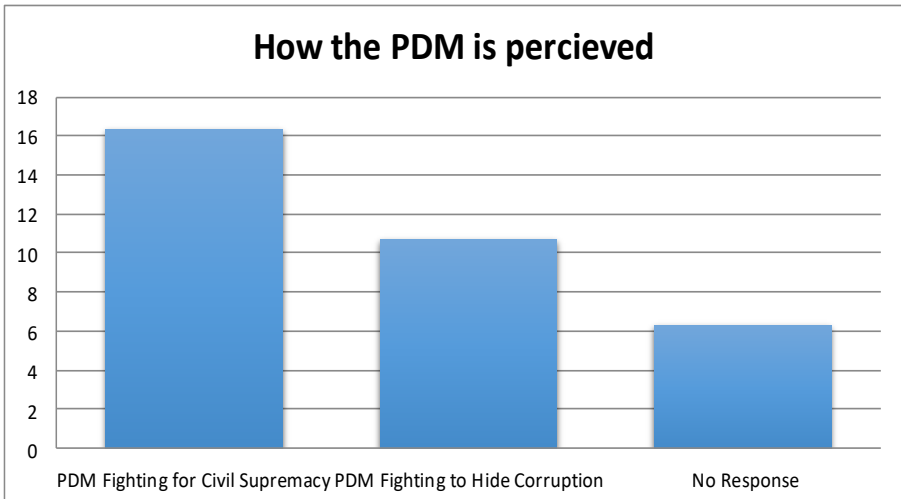


Figure 4 People's perception about Early Election in 2020 (IPOR, 2020)

2. Advancing particular claims rather than others

In Pakistani politics, agitations against elected governments generally happen due to either the interference of undemocratic forces or the opposition party's inability to ward off institutional pressure and gain favors from institutions that matter within the country (Jamal, 2020). However, this time, the PDM is considered one of the first alliances in Pakistan's history that accumulated all oppositional political parties to challenge military interference in politics (Baloch & Ellis, 2020). The military has taken an increasingly covert role in governance under Imran Khan, with both active duty and retired military official taking critical positions in his administration, including in the areas of health, telecommunications, economic affairs, and the CPEC (Hashim, 2020). The history of alliances against the ruling party in Pakistan reveals that most of the past alliances were against dictatorships, corruption, and election rigging and that the resignation of dictators such as Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, Zia, and Musharaf were either for the restoration of the constitution and democracy or against the elected prime ministers of Bhutto and Sharif. However, this new PDM alliance demands the expulsion of army involvement from the

political scene of Pakistan. From the date of its independence until 2020, there is no oppositional alliance against military involvement in Pakistan, which shows that the PDM is advancing a particular claim rather than other claims. In September 2020, a Gallup survey revealed that 51% of people in Pakistan were in agreement regarding the noninterference role of the military in politics, while 40% disagreed, and 9% did not respond to the question of whether the military should play a role in politics (Gallup, 2020, p. 2). One and half months later, another survey asked the same question about civil supremacy under the PDM; 49% of the respondents agreed that the PDM is aiming for civil supremacy, which shows that there is enough space and demand for civil supremacy (Figure, 5).



Figure, 5 PDM's perception in the eyes of common man in 2020 (IPOR, 2020)

According to the BBC, "It is happening for the first time in Pakistan that direct military role is being questioned(Khaliq, 2020)". All 11 major parties have been building an anti-army narrative in Pakistan since September 2020. Studies have revealed people's satisfaction with the PDM narratives. One of the demands of the PDM is to end the establishment's role in politics. In regard to that narrative, the PDM

seems successful because 49% of survey respondents reported believing that the current movement is for civil supremacy (Figure, 5). The overall narrative was dominated by Nawaz Sharif's speech given on September 20, 2020, in which he criticized the military's clandestine role. The abovementioned survey shows that Pakistani citizens are in favor of civil supremacy, which has been minimized by the PTI government. In other words, certain PTI policies are unacceptable to the political and nonpolitical junta of Pakistan, including dealing of CPEC through Authority and Ordinance.

3. Cultivating some alliances more than others

In the history of Pakistan, out of twenty alliances, six alliances were supported either directly or indirectly by the military establishment. Although 6 alliances were anti-army government, the probability of excluding the establishment role is 50/50; last year, Imran Khan questioned law enforcement agencies about how Maulana entered Islamabad for his sit-in in 2019. The PDM seems apparently anti-establishment, but Muhammad Zubair's (Nawaz Sharif's spokesperson) meeting with the army's chief has created doubts about the actions and sayings of the PMLN. There is no doubt that the PDM is questioning the army's involvement in the recent election of 2018. To date, the PDM is a unique alliance of all political parties that are against the involvement of the establishment in political Spector. Based on their apparent narrative, they can be whole-heartily seen as an alliance that cultivating some alliances more than others. This component of PDM does not fully fulfill the criteria POT.

4. Effecting mainstream institutional politics and policies

Since September 2020, PDM parties have not participated in any assembly process, which has created political stagnation. For example, they did not participate in the legislation regarding Gilgit-Baltistan, which is the backbone of the CPEC project; similarly, they have ignored every meeting strategically important. Through its spokesperson, Murtaza Wahab, the PPPP said that "there will be no dialogs until the PTI government rolls back the PIDA ordinance, which is very important to CPEC". Similarly, PDM agitations take a lot of the government's time to deal with. One statistician and ex-civil servant of

Pakistan noted that current PDM activities may bring treasury benches under immense pressure. This has been noticed by diverting public budgets advertising about PTI-government achievements rather of securing scarce resources for human development and other national priorities(Ahmed, 2020). One of India's ex-envoys to Pakistan, T.C.A. Raghavan, mentioned that "for some time, the current political turmoil (PDM) will be continued, which will have implications for the CPEC, because in past, the progress has been slowed down by various reasons(IANS, 2020)".

Conclusion

It is required that treasury bench and opposition must show sensitivity in respect to CPEC, to ensure its transparency and accountability, may need bring it to the floor of parliament, instead of making it political problem. This study provided enough evidences from past twenty Anti-Government alliances that PDM cannot topple the current government of PTI except in an unconstitutional discourse or through no-confidence motion, because its demands have no constitutional way out for deposing current government, however, it may give birth to an unhealthy precedent of processions, agitations, sit-ins, road blockages and other kinds of pressure building against the established government, which will never let any successive government achieve their agendas. Similarly, clouds of political instability will ever prevail. Political opportunity theory's four component analysis showed that PDM has increased political awareness instead of complete blackout in the media; thus, the PDM is taking its place in the heart and mind of common man and in intelligentsia. This shows that military leadership should take a few steps back and let political leadership decide the fate of the country.

It is found that the political leadership of the PDM is openly against the CPEC's PTI approach, which is CPEC handing over power to its Authority rather than to parliament through a responsible law. In addition to PDM leadership's reservations over the share distribution of the CPECs Senator Mushahid Hussian Syed accurately pointed out that the CPEC Authority's legality and immunity from legal procedures are

concerns of the PDM. Our study identified that Punjab and Sindh are not cooperating with the federal government in relation to successfully completing the CPEC project. Sindh is delaying the progress of the railway and circular line, while the ML1 and Punjab government allies (PML-F) have reservations over the River Ravi Project. The list of grievances of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan, and Gilgit-Baltistan is long regarding the CPEC sharing formula.

In nutshell, if the PDM or its partner political parties get success in attaining power, such power will be seen as synonymous with the reversal of PTI policies regarding the CPEC, the PIDA and Gilgit-Baltistan. This suggests that foreign investors need to compel their investments to make them protected by parliament. Otherwise, with internal political fluctuations, nonexistent civil institutions would make this process more difficult. The CPEC needs the consent of all political forces within parliament, which, on the one hand, can make the CPEC sustainable, while on the other hand, can make it less controversial. PDM if succeeds in toppling PTI-government needs to establish CPEC Ministry, to bury all the socio-economic problems at once.

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Appendix: **Sheet A**

S N	Alliance Name	Nature of Alliance	Objectives	Demands	Result
1	United Front (UF) 1953	Electoral Alliance	Contest Election from common platform against PML	i) Provincial autonomy. ii) Improve Social and economic conditions. iii) Bengali Should be declared as second official language	Successful
2	National Democratic Front (NDF) 1962	Opposition Parties anti- Presidential Alliance	1) Restoration of Democracy, 2) Oppose Presidential system	i) Federal Structure, ii) Parliamentary Democracy, iii) restoration of 1956 constitution	Failed
3	Combined Opposition Parties (COP) 1964	Electoral Alliance	1) Nominate common candidate. 2) Contest Election from common platform against President	i) Restoration of Parliamentary democracy, ii) Direct Election for PA and NA, iii) Legislative and Budgetary authority to Assembles, iv) Federal Parliamentary structure, v) Provincial Autonomy, vi) Containment of Presidential Power, vi) left ban on Political parties, vii) Repel of all repressive and draconian Laws	Successful
4	Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) 1967- 1968	Anti- Presidential system Alliance	Revert to Parliamentary Democracy and Adult Franchise	i) Removal of disparities between East and West Pakistan in Ten Years, ii) free Press, iii) Shifting of Naval Headquarters to East Pakistan, iv) Establishment of Defense Council on parity basis, v) Establishing complete fundamental rights, vi) alliance regarding foreign policy vii) Restoration of	Failed

				1956 Constitution, Viii) Withdrawal of Emergency, ix) Release of Political prisoners, x) Dissolution of National Assembly, xi) Press Freedom.	
5	Democratic Action Committee (DAC) Jan, 9, 1969	Anti-Army led- Presidential system Alliance of opposition Parties	i) Direct Elections on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise, ii) Immediate lifting of the state of emergency	i) Repeal of Laws, ii) withdrawal of Press Curbs, iii) Restoration of Right of strike, iv) Election based on adult franchise, v) Abolishing of state of emergency, vi) Release of Political prisoners, vii) Establishment of Federal parliamentary form of government	Partially Successful
6	United Democratic Front (UDF) Feb, 28, 1973	Anti-Government demonstrative alliance	i) To Achieve an Islamic, democratic and parliamentary constitution, ii) to build pressure on Government for incorporating their demands in Constitution	i) Ensuring Fundamental rights for all citizens, ii) To Liberate people from all forms of exploitation, iii) Provision of basic necessities to common man, iv) provincial autonomy from the encroachment of Centre, v) Protect ideological frontiers of the country, vi) Extraction of national emergency	Partially Successful
7	Pre-Election Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) 11 Jan, 1977 till March 8, 1977	Opposition Parties Alliance	1. To Contest Election from Common Platform, 2) To defeat PPP in upcoming Election of 1977	Religio economic issues to be resolved	Partially Successful

8	Post-Election Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) 9 March 1977 to July 5, 1977	Opposition Parties Alliance	To pressurize Government for announcing re-election	i) Resignation of Bhutto from Pmship, ii) Appointment of Neutral Election Commission, iii) elections under Army and Judiciary's supervision	Failed
9	Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) 1981-1988	Anti-Army led- Presidential system Alliance of opposition Parties	To Transfer power to the elected representatives of Pakistan	i) Restoration of Political Parties, ii) Abolition of Censorship, Abolishment of Military Courts, iii) Reinstatement of Civil Courts with Basic Rights and Responsibilities, iv) Restoration of 1973 Constitution, v) Holding of elections according to 1973 constitution.	Partially Successful
10	Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA), 1988	Electoral Alliance	i) To contest Election from Common platform, ii) To win over PPP in 1988 election	i) Supremacy of Islamic Law, ii) Provision of Economic Opportunities, iii) inexpensive and non-discriminatory system of Justice, iv) Safeguarding women rights, v) Full support of Afghan Jihad, vi) promotion of nuclear power for peaceful purpose, vii) Independence of Kashmir	Partially Successful
11	Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA), (Dec 1988 to June 3, 1989)	Anti-Government oppositional alliance	i) To Counter PPP power at Parliament in Post 1988 election era,	i) Supremacy of Islamic Law, ii) Provision of Economic Opportunities, iii) inexpensive and non-discriminatory system of Justice, iv) Safeguarding women rights, v) Full support of Afghan Jihad, vi) promotion of nuclear power for peaceful purpose, vii) Independence of Kashmir	partially Successful

1 2	Combined Opposition Parties (COP) From June 4, 1989 to Oct, 1990	No-Confidence alliance	i) to Bring No Confidence against BB, ii) Fresh Elections	i) Proper Federal Government System, ii) provincial autonomy, iii) Enforcement of Sharia, iv) Economic and Social Justice) Improvement of Law and order situation, vi) accountability of Government through healthy criticism	Partially Successful
1 3	Islami Jamhoori Itehad (IJI) Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA), 1990 till 1993	Electoral Alliance	i) To contest Election from Common platform, ii) To win over PPP in 1990 election	i) Supremacy of Islamic Law, ii) Provision of Economic Opportunities, iii) inexpensive and non-discriminatory system of Justice, iv) Safeguarding women rights, v) Full support of Afghan Jihad, vi) promotion of nuclear power for peaceful purpose, vii) Independence of Kashmir	Successful
1 4	Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA) Dec, 1990 Pre-Election	Electoral Alliance	i) To contest Election from Common platform, ii) To win over IJI in 1990 election		Partially Successful
1 5	Pakistan Democratic alliance (PDA) 1990 - 1993 post-Election	anti-Government Oppositional Alliance	i) dethrone Nawaz Sharif (IJI) Led Government, ii) Fresh Elections	Formation of National Consensus Government	Partially Successful
1 6	Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA)	Anti-Government Oppositional	i) Displace Nawaz Sharif from PMship, ii) form	1) Fresh Elections within 90 days, ii) Resignation of Nawaz Sharif	Failed

	May 15, 1998	Alliance	government by GDA		
17	Pakistan Awami Ittehad (PAI) by Benazir, 1997-1999	Anti-Government Opposition Alliance	Establishment of Islamic Welfare state	Resignation of Nawaz Sharif	Failed
18	All Parties Democratic Movement by Nawaz Sharif 2007	Anti-Army led- Presidential system Alliance of opposition Parties	i) Restoration of democracy and 1973 constitution, ii) Avoid Musharraf from re-election as president for second term	i) Rule of law, ii) End of Military rule, iii) restore Judges, iv) restore constitution	Partially Successful
19	Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) by Benazir Bhutto (2007)	Anti-Army led- Presidential system Alliance of opposition Parties	Defending Judiciary	Reinstating of Chief Justice	Partially Successful
20	Pakistan Awami Ittehad (PAI) by Musharraf, 2017	Electoral Alliance	To Contest Election from common platform	The courts and armed forces must be allowed to function, as both institutions are working in the country's favor	Failed