

The Removal Of Imran Khan: Dismantling Pakistan's Relationships with China and Russia

Part II

By [Michael Welch](#) and [Prof. Abdul Jabbar](#)

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Region: [Asia](#), [China](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#),
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“I feel we are back in 1939; Munich. Czechoslovakia has been taken. Will the word community appease a market of 1.2bn or will it stand up for justice and humanity? If a conventional war starts between 2 countries, nuclear countries anything could happen.

“Supposing a country 7 times smaller than its neighbour; faced with a question. Either you surrender, or you fight till the end. I ask myself this question. And my belief is ‘La ilaha illAllah’, there is no God but one. We will FIGHT!”

– Imran Khan, from his speech at the United Nations General Assembly Seventy-fourth session, 9th plenary meeting (September 27, 2019) [1]

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A month following the vote of his political rivals to eject him from power, Imran Khan is riding perhaps the biggest waves of popularity that he has ever surfed upon! [2]

And with legions of supporters propping up his stature, he has launched the campaign “Ghulami Na Manzoor,” a call to unseat the “Imported government” of the recently installed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Starting after May 20th, less than a week from the time this is written, a new vote of confidence will be launched from the very grassroots population against the individuals who have conspired to remove the leader they put in place nearly four years ago.[3]

The onslaught of the public would enter into Islamabad and hound the Prime Minister

everywhere he goes with slogans of “thief and traitor.” Those unable to make the trip would protest locally in their own communities. [4]

That being said, the actual rules of governance would not likely recognize such tactics as anything more than a protest. Power appears to have returned to the old guard leaving U.S. interests in their leading role in the Pakistan stage.

One writer who has taken an interest in the current Pakistan plight, Abdul Jabbar, described the situation in Pakistan as being the latest example of what he calls Indirect Colonialism. HE puts it bluntly:

“In this kind of colonialism, the colonizing power uses local self-seeking, nation-betraying leaders to sacrifice national interests for the sake of self-advancement.

“The colonizer does not have to spend its resources on launching a formal invasion to occupy a country. Local corrupt politicians prostitute national interest to do the colonizer’s bidding.” [5]

On this week’s Global Research News Hour, Jabbar, this week’s feature guest, takes us through just how far back the new government in charge has taken the country already, away from partnership with Russia and China and towards advancing U.S. geopolitical aims. But this interview is preceded by a replay of one of Imran Khan’s most impassioned speeches, the one at the UN General Assembly relating to Islamophobia and the ever contentious Kashmir region. Toward the end of the program, we bring to the attention of listeners the role of a local terrorist army now appearing to attack Chinese in the province of Balochistan.

Imran Khan is the recently removed Prime Minister of Pakistan. He currently commands broad support within the grassroots population of the West Asian country.

Abdul Jabbar is a scholar originally from Pakistan. He has taught interdisciplinary studies (including political science) in the United States for nearly half a century, so he has been following the developments in Pakistan with great interest and concern, both from professional and personal points of view.

(Global Research News Hour Episode 355)

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Transcript – Interview with Abdul Jabbar, May 9, 2022

Global Research News Hour: This is Michael Welch for the Global Research News Hour, and the story of the Pakistan coup against Imran Khan is still an ongoing issue. Now one month into the new regime is in power, and Imran is delighting the many hundreds of thousands in the streets.

So we’re going to get a take by a new individual. His name is Abdul Jabbar. He taught English and Interdisciplinary Studies for 36 years on a full-time basis at City College of San

Francisco, including visiting professorship at University of California-Berkeley, he's a recipient of a Fulbright scholarship and two National Endowment for the Humanities Awards, he received his PhD in English from Case Western University in Cleveland Ohio, and has written three books, his latest, *The Promise, Reality, and Potential of American Cultural Diversity* is in the process of publication. He's published several articles on literary, political, and similar topics. His video lectures are available on YouTube, and has been following developments in Pakistan with great interest and concern both from professional and personal points of view. Professor Jabbar, welcome to the Global Research News Hour.

Abdul Jabbar: Thank you for having me on the program Michael.

GR: Since Imran Khan was replaced from power one month ago, has there been any fundamental changes in terms of policy that he's brought forward?

AJ: His policies have been completely turned around. His policy was for independent foreign policy, that was a major concern and that has been completely diluted with the new government because the new government is really [inaudible] in a sham. When you have a coup like this, I don't think we have any idea. For us, it's just a matter of simple foreign policy decision to bring in someone who will cooperate with our view of the region. We don't think much more than that. It leads to so many ramifications for the affected country, it's hard to even imagine.

So right now, what's happening is that the new prime minister is scrambling all over the world to get funding. He got some funding from Saudi Arabia and requesting the IMF to extend the loan. And you know every new regime that comes in uses the previous regime for causing the problems, but you know time will tell, I am not sure to what extent is it accusations that there was bad governance on the part of Imran Khan's government. I'm not so sure to what extent I can believe it, but mainly what is of concern is the assassination attempts on Imran Khan. When we make foreign policy decisions to replace someone, I don't think we really deep down want the person to be eliminated.

But the local people who take power, they have to then guard themselves against reprisal, repercussions, so they just eliminate the person, the opponent. So this time there is a lot of talk of assassinating Imran Khan, and a lot of warnings from the government, and a lot of advice from even the military that he should not call his big meeting where he expects about two million people to show up this month. There's attempt also to have him arrested, so that's the situation right now.

GR: So you mean to say that the deals with, the defense deal between Russia and Pakistan is over, that Pakistan is no longer part of the CPEC with China?

AJ: The deal with Russia was close to being completed when Imran Khan was overthrown, so that hasn't gone through. That was a huge breakthrough for Pakistan's economy, 30% discount oil, 30% discount on wheat, and Imran was just working for the benefit of the masses who are struggling with this global inflation with COVID thrown in. And that was not completely carried out, and I think it will not happen. The US will dictate terms. The US government will dictate terms with regard to Russia for sure. With China, remember China is the biggest investor in Pakistan's market. With close to 60 billion dollars of investment in the program called CPEC, which means China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

And they are, well there are many projects which are going to be very beneficial to Pakistan

in China, US has never liked the close relation of Pakistan to China. Because China is a potential threat to US economy, and the US government forgets that in 1971, Pakistan that enabled the first meeting between US and China, it was a secret meeting when Kissinger flew to Islamabad to Pakistan, and then Pakistan government arranged that secret meeting. So they were brought together, the two powers, so Pakistan was instrumental in doing that. So my take is Michael that Pakistan could play a centre role to bring either Russia and the US to clear the tensions. Pakistan believes in, believds under Imran Khan, no bases in Pakistan, no foreign bases.

No participation in foreign and I don't know what is going to happen now with terrorism in Pakistan. All the Taliban are attacking Pakistan. Pakistan retaliated and there were 47 Taliban killed inside Afghanistan. So this is been happening in the past and now this will escalate.... Terrorism brought under control under Imran Khan because he [inaudible] will have a negotiated settlement with the Taliban is no [inaudible] resolution. He was perfectly right. What we, out of 20 years of war, was to replace the Taliban with Taliban with trillions of dollars of expense and so many debts. So I think that the reversal it has taken place in the foreign policy with the new government.

GR: What can you tell me about the new prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif?

AJ: Shehbaz Sharif has many cases pending against him for corruption and money laundering like his older brother. He has power to have those cases honed in the federal judiciaries. The judiciaries in the system of the whole [inaudible] [inaudible] situations is totally still the same that was there before Imran Khan. The system is the same, he tried to change from one. He failed miserably. Because the system is there and what they do is, like whenever there's a hearing, the judges will postpone the hearing to the next day, to the next day. So Imran was furious, a few times he said the Judiciary is not doing its job.

So he had a lot of cases. He doesn't have a clean slate. You can say that he's almost like on the hill, and so are many of his cabinet members. But he's a good manager, when he was chief minister of Punjab which is the biggest province in Pakistan. He did some good work and building his home city Lahore, and the area, so he, he's a good manager, and I believe he will do whatever the US wants him to do, and since he may be able to get Pakistan some benefit in the short run.

But the people are not going to accept it. See millions of people are coming out all over the world. They demand election. In the elections, Imran will have two-thirds of majority that he needs. His problem was, Michael, that he didn't have an absolute majority when he won elections in 2018. He had to work, compromise, with people with whom he totally disagreed. So it was very difficult. Now if the elections are held, he will have an absolute majority, and even then implement the vision that got postponed, because of the corruption in all these institutions that he inherited.

GR: It sort of brings us to your latest essay, American Style Colonialism and Imperialism with Pakistan the Latest Victim. You lay out how the status as an American conquest is protected by the local puppets who succeed one another. Every once in a while, somebody will actually place the interests of the country ahead of the welfare of US wealth and undue political interests. In Pakistan, before Khan, we had Benazir Bhutto, who was assassinated in 1977. What were the dynamics that played out in that case?

AJ: 2007, think she was assassinated. '77 is when Zia-ul-Haq overthrew the democratic

government of Bhutto and then he was hanged by Zia-ul-Haq. That is the last clear demonstration of US interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan. It was in 1977, July 5th, to be accurate, I had flown to Pakistan on a visit on July 4th because I know the people there didn't travel much it was an American plane. So I travelled and I woke up to the news that the country's government is overthrown and I came to know, I heard some people in the military, some friends, I came to know that the last pieces of the strategy were finalized in the American embassy on [inaudible]. So Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was overthrown. And then a couple of years later he was executed. What happened to the country since then, what did Zia-ul-Haq bring to the country, this is mind-boggling.

He has done the most amount of damage to the country single-handedly. It was a liberal democracy under Bhutto. Bhutto was not perfect. Just talking about the democracy that was in place, and it was a liberal democracy. Zia-ul-Haq brought in the extreme Wahhabi, Saudi Arabian imported version of Islam. And curtailing women's rights, freedom of speech, and he came for 90 days to have elections but he stayed in power until he was assass- he was killed in an airplane crash. So that also were brought in all kinds of terrorists from over the world.

So they were funded by the US through Pakistan, the US and Saudi Arabia funded them under Zia-ul-Haq to fight the Soviet Union '79 invasion of Afghanistan. And so just imagine, those people came from 40 different countries, and they landed in Afghanistan with the help of Pakistan ISI and the US training. So what happened, they destroyed the social fabric of the society. Because once the war was over. they were there. They weren't leaving. I grew up in Pakistan. I don't remember any household owning Kalashnikov. And after the Soviet invasion, the US and this [inaudible] for the US, all that changed the country's society completely.

We could walk in Pakistan at 1 a.m. 2 a.m. freely, but then it was just a matter of being caught for ransom if you go to visit Pakistan. Things changed under Imran Khan simply because he said we should be in negotiated settlement and it is cultural imperialism to command another culture to obey us. And that was why he was respected by the Taliban, then we started calling him Taliban Khan. So really ironic.

GR: The elections in Pakistan are set for 2023. What do you think will take place in the interim to foil Khan's attempts to return to power? I made you mentioned a possible assassination. Are there other things they could do to finish him off in case he can avoid assassination?

AJ: Just yesterday he said that there are a lot of attempts from all kinds of quarters. He expects some of those, but even if he's assassinated it will not change the momentum because the youth, which is more aware than ever before, they want the restoration of the government that is representative of their will. And his party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, which means just "his party," Pakistan Movement for Justice, they will sweep the election. And the current government is trying to postpone the election until as you said 2023. And that, in the interim, many things can happen. You can have... Hopefully the worst scenario is civil war. That is nobody wishes. In Syria, we didn't think anything would happen when we interfered others interfered, one side was Russia, on the other side was the US, the proxy war. Two and a quarter million people have been killed, so many millions displaced... We don't know, you see when these things happen, they have their own momentum.

They take the ugliest possible terms, you can't imagine, so what will happen Michael is anybody's guess. The worst scenario is civil war. Within my own family there's a civil war going on. So I can tell you that this, there's a lot of tension, people and Saudi Arabia there was a spontaneous demonstration against Shehbaz. He had gone to Saudi Arabia and get funding. Here it pretty much is a convention to go to those holy sites in Saudi Arabia to offer prayers. So Shehbaz went there, Shehbaz Sharif and the crowd saw him recognized him and the Pakistan is living in Saudi Arabia they erupted with "Thief! Thief!" And there was a pretty much of a riot. The police came in and then more people joined in and Sharif and his Entourage were attacked and the Saudi Arabian government arrested people from both sides, and they have some draconian punishment for that. Saudi Arabia doesn't...the government doesn't want any protest, especially at that time in that place. And as you know they don't like protest, period. So they're going to give huge sentences.

The worst part of that incident was to me an FIR registered in a city in Pakistan to implicate to introduce the idea of assassinating Imran on religious grounds that he has done a sacrilege to a holy site because he's behind the whole riot, that he instigated it. He was in Pakistan of course, there is no legal ability to this and it won't win in the court. The problem is it instigates, it unleashes a tsunami of hatred and fanaticism.

It was a governor in Pakistan who simply said the blasphemy laws should be used carefully because a Christian woman was being hanged according to sources for blasphemy. And he intervened, he said, blasphemy is a very sensitive legal item, we have to use it very carefully. He was assassinated by a fanatic. Because he thought if he was being too soft on Christian minority and defaming and blaspheming the prophet. So this was the attempt to create a legal basis First Information Report. FIR is a legal document the police registered. And then it unleashes all these currents of hate, totally unfounded. So, you know, that is the worst-case scenario that could happen, that kind of assassination could take place.

Civil war is a possibility, and it's also possible to be very hopeful, that the current government will continue until the election and the interim will not see any big upheavals other than Imran Khan [inaudible] And he insists on nonviolence. He does not want his followers to do any violence. So, it is possible that probably will be the best-case scenario short of elections.

GR: Well, that's fascinating reality is playing out. Professor Jabbar I'm afraid we're out of time now , but you brought us a lot to think about. Thank you for joining us.

AJ: Thank you very much for having me on your program!

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Notes:

1. Full Transcript of Prime Minister Imran Khan's speech at the UNGA (September 28, 2019), Business Recorder; <https://www.brecorder.com/news/524851>
2. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1686378>
3. <https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/pakistan-news/ousted-from-power-imran-khan-launches-campaign-to-unseat-imported-govt-in-pakistan-articleshow.html>
4. ibid
5. <https://multipolarista.com/2022/04/25/indirect-colonialism-us-pakistan-imran-khan/>

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