

Power and Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Pro-Government and Independent Press in Pakistan

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Abstract

The present study aims to explore how powerful groups in a society may control the policies and discourse of media. It critically evaluates the discourse of pro-government and independent press in Pakistan focusing on a popular news event of the restoration of the former Chief Justice (March 2009). It compares and analyzes the presentation of the event by two broadsheet Pakistani newspapers 'Daily Times' and 'The News' for the purpose. In addition, the texts from other national and international newspapers are also used to present a comprehensive analysis of the news item under investigation. The collected data was analyzed qualitatively in terms of textual and contextual analyses using the tools of framing, transitivity, referential strategies and highlighting the comparative-synchronic and historical-diachronic details of the news item. The findings reveal that the media discourse may not necessarily present public opinion and certain pro-government newspapers exploit news report to support the government perspective. It further shows that the referential strategies, framing, word choice and other linguistic tools used by such newspapers may be biased in the favour of government and its hidden agenda. Finally, the study provides an example of the influence of powerful groups on media discourse and suggests exposing such influences to avoid misleading public opinion.

Keywords: *critical discourse analysis, media discourse, framing, transitivity, referential strategies*

1. Introduction

Independence of media has always been a point of concern for common people in the developing and poor countries (Centre for Media Assistance-CIMA, 2007). Pakistan is no exception to this general trend. Since the creation of country (1947), the media has been under strict control of the government. The factors of economic dependence on the government, secret political affiliation and fears of legal action have always forced newspapers to portray the government's version of reality (Akhtar, 2000). Successive Political and military governments in the country have exploited the media to thrust their agenda on the public by influencing its opinion. However, a visible change in the government-press relationship has been seen recently in Pakistan. Some sections of the press have become independent as they have diversified their income sources. Shoeb (2008)

argues that 'commercial interests, media liberalization, journalistic integrity, and media globalization have weakened the media's traditional dependence on the government' (p. 7). An analysis of these changing media trends and government-media relation may yield interesting results for researchers and academics.

Owing to its ever-increasing importance, newspaper texts have been analysed from various angles by the discourse analysts all over the world. It is interesting to note that most of the critical discourse analyses of newspapers have been carried out in the developed countries (Martin & White, 2005; Fairclough, 1995a; van Dijk, 1991). There is a limited research in this area in the developing countries (Lihua, 2009). It is high time to conduct such research in Pakistan as it may help us to understand the true agendas of newspaper discourse which shapes public opinion to a large extent (Fairclough, 1998).

Through a comparative analysis of pro-government and independent newspapers' reports, this study aims to examine how powerful people or institutions influence the discourse of media (newspapers) to further their hidden agendas and interests. The study uncovers strategies used to angle media reporting in order to influence public opinion in the favour of powerful people and institutions. It employs the approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA) for unearthing hidden ideologies and the angling of point of views as mentioned by van Dijk (2000). The sample of two broadsheet Pakistani English newspapers, '*Daily Times*' (pro-government) and '*The News*' (independent) have been selected for the purpose. However, references from other national (*Daily Dawn*) and international newspapers (*New York Times*) have also been presented to support the analysis. The CDA approach has been adopted to investigate the power-relations and ideological associations of these newspapers. This approach believes in discovering those social, political and cultural structures that can help people to understand the reality (Lakoff, 2007). It also focuses on the ways in which discourse is used to perceive and actualize power and ideology in a society (Martin & White, 2005).

2. Background of the News Reports

The news event which would be analysed here is about the restoration of deposed judges by the government of Pakistan which took place during March 2009. Being one of the important events from the political and judicial history of the country, the selected event serves the purpose of the study the best as it heralded a new era of public struggle and awareness. Almost fifty-nine judges, including the Chief Justice (CJ) Iftikhar Chaudhry, were removed from their offices by the then President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf as they refused to rectify his extra-constitutional measures (Hussain, 2007). At this period of political confusion, a section of print media including '*Daily Times*' aligned with Musharraf to salvage his image. The people related to pro-government

newspaper were rewarded by the government with financial benefits and political positions. For example, *'Daily Times'* editor became the federal minister of Pakistan, and its owner was made the governor of Punjab (the largest province of Pakistan). In the meantime, then independent media including *'The News'* and lawyers continued to convince the government to restore judges. The succeeding government, which took over after the removal of Musharaf, also refused to restore judges despite its party's (PPP) promises in the election campaign. The struggle of lawyers turned into a mass movement and finally succeeded on March 15, 2009 when the government had to reinstate the deposed judges under immense public pressure. *'New York Times'* summarised the event as follows:

The reinstatement of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry culminated a two year struggle by Pakistan's lawyers to safeguard an independent judiciary highlighted by long processions, sometimes violent clashes, and the repeated assert and detention of the leaders of the movement. (*New York Times*, March 17, 2009).

For a systematic analysis of the aforementioned important news event and the role of the relevant newspapers, it's pivotal to give an overview of the connection between power, discourse and newspapers.

3. Power, Discourse and Newspapers

Power may be defined as a relationship between different groups or institutions in a society where a prestigious group exercises control over the less prestigious one by influencing its collective thoughts and actions. Powerful groups in a society also enjoy special accesses to important social resources including media (van Dijk, 1995). Keeping this aspect of mass media in mind, Fairclough (1995a) has advised the analysts to have the economic and political look of media in mind while analysing its discourse. Discourse may be a way to express oneself in the form of words. Locke (2004) views discourse as 'language in use as a social practice' which not only represents the world but also constructs it through the creation of meaning (p.13). Newspapers play a vital role 'within the broader framework of the social, cultural, political, or economic power structures of society' (van Dijk, 1995, p.9). In order to understand the powerful influence of newspapers on various societies, it is essential to examine the 'structures and strategies' of their discourses (p.10). CDA focuses on the complex relationship between newspaper, its institutional management and target audience. For example, different features of newspaper reporting topics, quotation or reference patterns, context and form of headlines, etc., not only manifest the influence of various social actors or institutions but also affect interpretation and understanding for/of the readers. CDA studies (Coeseemans, 2012; van Leeuwen, 2008 among others) argue that the discourse in media usually recontextualizes the social events and practices presented through news reports and articles. This

implies that media discourse, through its language, discursive strategies and representation, constructs new contexts of social practices which are different from their original contexts. People may not be fully aware of the manipulation of media discourse but it always has a strong impact on their understanding of the world around them (Coeseemans, 2012). A brief background of the relevant principles of CDA is given below as Section 4.

4. Background to CDA Approaches

Discourse analysis guides us to understand language not as an abstract entity but as a living force and a carrier of meaning in a particular social, cultural and political context (McGregor, 2003). It is believed that most of meanings and values in a text are expressed implicitly than explicitly (Hyland, 2005 cited in Paltridge, 2008). CDA helps us to decode hidden meanings as it aims to explore the relationship between a certain discourse and the socio-political settings in which it is produced (Rogers, 2004). Therefore, it may be defined as the study and interpretation of written and spoken text to figure out the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias (van Dijk, 1998).

If we look at the varied nature of discourses used in diverse fields of knowledge and professions, it can be assumed that there cannot be a single uniform methodology to analyze all of them (van Dijk, 2000). An analysis based on CDA may apply multiple analytical tools to examine a text in detail keeping in mind nature of the text and purpose of the analysis. Broadly speaking, as Paltridge (2008) contends, CDA may include genre analysis, framing of the text (including foregrounding and backgrounding), sentence level analysis (including topicalization, agent-patient relation) and the word and phrase level analysis (e.g. word choice, metaphors).

Carvalho (2013) proposes a detailed framework based on CDA for the analysis of newspaper or media discourse which includes two major dimensions; textual and contextual. Textual analysis may include the investigation of the following aspects of media discourse: 'layout and structural organization'; 'objects'; 'actors'; 'language, grammar and rhetoric'; 'discursive strategies' and 'ideological standpoints'. Contextual analysis may be based on the 'comparative-synchronic' and 'historical-diachronic' analyses of texts (Carvalho, 2013, p. 16). The former looks 'at various representations of an issue at the time of the writing of one specific news text' by comparing these representations, whereas, the latter investigates broader socio-political dimensions and background of the text or of the news event reported in it (p. 20). Discourse analysts should 'go beyond the immediate text to assess the accuracy of particular representations' (Philo, 2007, p. 185).

As discussed earlier, the present study aims to investigate the power access of government to newspaper discourse in order to uncover its persuasive and manipulative effects on the readers. A critical approach to the analysis has been applied here because it focuses on power relations managed and carried out through discourse (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). In order to analyze news reports in detail, the study examined their textual as well as contextual aspects. This also included comparative-synchronic and historical diachronic (Carvalho, 2013) analysis of the texts under investigation. The limitations of time and space make it almost impossible to conduct a complete CDA of a text or of all aspects of some media discourse (van Dijk, 2001; Carvalho, 2013). Therefore, we conducted the textual analysis of selected texts primarily based on the following tools; framing, transitivity, word choice and referential strategies.

Framing may be defined as the focus of the text. It looks at the presentation of the context of a text along with its writer's perspective or ideology (Paltridge, 2008). The concepts of 'foregrounding' and 'backgrounding' are closely associated with the framing. Foregrounding brings forth what has been emphasized by the writer, while backgrounding focuses on important issues that have been ignored by the writer purposefully. In order to give a complete picture of the intentions of a text, the framing may include background knowledge or ideas which a discourse presupposes (Huckin, 1997).

Transitivity may be seen as the syntactic analysis of a clause or sentence which deals with the position and sequence of elements in it (Fowler, 1991). It also aims at discovering the roles assigned to various participants of an action in a sentence. 'Agents' are the doers of an action (Fowler, 1991; Saeed, 2009) and the 'patients' or 'objects' are those affected materially or ideologically by the action (Richardson, 2007). It also highlights the syntactic transformations (Fowler, 1991) in a sentence structure that may change the focus on actors.

Word choice is another important tool to identify a text's real perspective and hidden ideologies. Words may have different connotations according to their varied uses. The social, political and cultural background of words is used purposefully in a text to convey a certain ideology. For example, the use of words protestor and demonstrator in different news reports may prove this point. A protestor is the one who dissents from an established policy while a demonstrator seeks to make something evident. A newspaper portrays the negative picture of those advocating for peace in an area when it calls them protestors (McGregor, 2003).

Referential strategies are the ways in which different individuals or groups are named or referred to in a text. These strategies are used frequently in journalism to refer to different social actors while creating their particular image/s for a

certain socio-political impact (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). These actors are individualized or generalized to achieve different psychological, social or political goals by influencing the readers (van Leeuwen, 1996).

5. Critical Analysis and Discussion

5.1. Headline

A headline is the most important part of a news report as it not only reveals the most important topic of the news but also reflects newspaper's perspective on it (Teo, 2000). Either a report is objective or biased may be assessed by a careful reading of the headline because important facts are possibly twisted and moulded here. For example, it has been observed that sometimes not so important facts or actors of a piece of news are highlighted in the headline to background the main actors or important events (van Dijk, 1998). The same stands true for the *Daily Times'* headline given below:

Gilani restores CJP IftikharChaudary, sacked judges: March triumphs, Justice gets Justice.

The Prime Minister (PM) Gilani has been shown as the main actor who restored the chief justice Iftikhar and other sacked judges. Fowler (1991) argues that if an agent's actions have an effect on other objects or patients, the actions are assumed to be under strict control of the agents. Therefore, here the PM is shown to be in total control of the situation and appears to have restored judges on his free will. This is contrary to the reality on ground as it was the pressure of the public rally and Pakistan army which compelled the PM to restore the judges and accede to the public demands. Had the PM refused to do so, he would have to lose his government. This first part of headline clearly shows pro-government policy of the newspaper and may be seen as an example of 'the discursive manipulation of reality by different social actors' (Carvalho, 2013, p. 21).

The second part of headline mentions the word 'March' and leaves out 'Long' as the complete name of this huge procession of people against the government was 'Long March'. Thus, it downplays the impact of this great show of power by the common people of Pakistan according to the interpretation of the referential strategies discussed by Reisigl and Wodak (2001). Even the third part of this detailed headline implies that justice has been granted and not won by the CJ and the people. Now, if we look at '*The News'* headline, it provides a different picture of the story;

People's power restores Justice Iftikhar.

Here, 'people's power', not the government, has been presented as the main force behind the CJ's restoration. The political, social and moral victory belongs

to the people of Pakistan and not to the government. The headline and news report of another leading Pakistani English newspaper *'Dawn'* (March 16, 2009) is presented here to explain the situation further. It says in the headline *'Govt agrees to reinstate Iftikhar'*, and summarize the news like this; 'The move came as tens of thousands of opposition supporters joined the lawyers' long march in Lahore and started to move towards Islamabad for staging a sit-in outside the parliament'. This report also implies that the government did not restore the CJ by its free will rather, it was forced to do so under an intense public pressure. Therefore, *Daily Times'* headline seems to be biased and pro-government. The headline is detailed, typical of a broadsheet newspaper but still it misses the central point and the true reflection of the event.

On the contrary, *'The News'* headline is short but seems to represent the true picture of the story. Short and brief headlines are, sometimes, also used to dramatize the news event (Conboy, 2006). The choice of words and phrases in the headlines also reflect the policy and ideology of the newspapers (Fowler, 1991). In the case of the headline in *'Daily Times'*, the use of the word 'sacked' for the judges seems harsh and discriminatory. According to the *Cambridge Advanced Learner Dictionary*, it means 'to remove some one from a job, usually because they have done something wrong or badly'. By using this word in the headline, the newspaper seems to align with government's stance which kept on justifying the removal of judges all the time before their restoration. In contrast, *'The News'* has avoided using such term in the headline and its use of the phrase 'people's power' sounds democratic and independent. This headline appears to be a true depiction of the reality and, therefore, free from any external influence or political pressure.

5.2. Framing of the context

As mentioned earlier (section 5), knowing the framing of a text may help a critical discourse analyst unearth the main objective or perspective of a news report. Similar to the line followed by the newspaper in headline, the lead (sub-headlines) of *'Daily Times'* also propagates the agenda and the motive of the powerful government (see Appendix A). It purposely highlights the government's action by presenting the PM as the main actor who restored judges to their jobs. The lead, in this way, seems to be a typical example of the foregrounding. Usually, a lead is supposed to present important information or perspective missed in the headline (van Dijk, 1998) but the lead of *'Daily Times'* newspaper fails to do so. It seems that the lead deliberately backgrounds (Huckin, 1997) other important actors of the story including the lawyers, the opposition parties and the public sentiment. The government is being presented as releasing the political workers (see Appendix A) instead of disclosing why they were arrested or what cause they were promoting. In other words, the newspaper is trying to salvage the image of the government by hiding the anti-

government sentiment prevailed in the public. *'The News'* has no lead after the headline which may be understood as an institutional policy or reporter's strong belief in the headline (van Dijk, 1985). However, a comparison of *'Daily Times'* lead is made here with that of an international newspaper *'The Guardian'* (a UK-based newspaper) to uncover its hidden agenda and political affiliation: *Pro-judiciary campaign had left Zardari [the then President of Pakistan] shaken.* (*The Guardian*, March 16, 2009).

This lead seems to indicate a loss of popularity and moral authority of the government among the masses. It also presupposes that the decision of the restoration of judges was taken by the government against its will. Public pressure demonstrated in the massive rally of more than one hundred thousand people had become so intense that the rulers had to accede to public demands. A huge rally of masses was heading towards the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad, and its participants were determined not to return unless their demands were met or the government were overthrown. The lead of *'The Guardian'* clearly describes that it was 'Pro-judiciary campaign' led by the people which is the agent and forced the government to take this decision. Therefore, it defies *'Daily Times'* pro-government presentation of the news. Here, the focus of *'Daily Times'* report becomes very clear as it aims to highlight the government's version of the story and not the independent or complete one.

5.3. Transitivity

In order to understand a discourse, determining the agency of actions is not sufficient, the nature of actions (positive/ negative) should also be analysed to comprehend the real roles and importance of the social actors. The transitivity as reflected in the report of *'Daily Times'* makes its policy very obvious. In all but one sentences, the prime minister and his government have been presented as the agents of the action (see Appendix A). Moreover, all actions in all sentences have been portrayed positively. Examples of this biased presentation can be found in the following sentences:

[The] Prime minister said he, in consultation with President Asif Zardari, had decided the time has come to fulfil "the promises" ... (pp.6-9).

Gillani ordered the provincial governments to immediately lift section 144, (pp.24-25). No other social actors in the event have been presented as agent here. This also exemplifies how 'language mediates ideology in a variety of social institutions' (Wodak, 2001, p. 10). On the contrary, the report of *'The News'* (see Appendix B) presents the CJ, the opposition leaders, the media and the lawyers as agents for nineteen times in the text and, on all occasions, it was positive. While referring to Chaudhry Nisar (the opposition leader), it reported;

Chaudary Nisar told Geo News that Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani phoned him that he was going to announce the restoration of the deposed Chief Justice.... (pp.22-23).

The long march of the people for the restoration of judges has also been presented as an agent;

The long march led by PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif despite strict measures to block it contributed immensely to the decision taken by the government (pp.13-14).

In contrast, this report has shown the government and its officials as agents only for eight times among which the representation was negative for four times. Overall, the above comparative synchronic analysis of these reports shows that hidden ideologies are 'embedded in the selection and representation of objects and actors, and in the language and discursive strategies employed in a text' (Carvalho, 2013, p.19).

5.4. Word Choice

The vocabulary used in a newspaper not only describes an experience but it also differentiates between different views or ideas about that experience (Fowler, 1991). *The News*' report (see Appendix B) has used democratic, emotive but simple words to make them easy to understand for everyone. The words and phrases in *The News*' reporting not only acknowledge people's great struggle but also connote a sense of happiness. For example, the restoration of the judges has been described as a '*historic decision*' (12), and '*historic development*' (20). The words and phrases like '*common people of Pakistan*' (7), '*continuation of democracy*' (13) and '*celebrate*' (29) in the given context exemplify the text's overall pro-democracy tone. It has used the word '*deposed*' frequently for the judges as compared to '*sacked*' in *Daily Times*' (mentioned earlier). '*Deposed*' is a mild and nonderogatory term as compared to '*sacked*'. The choice of words/phrases in *The News*' reporting seems to respond positively to the psychological state and sentiments of the common people who participated in or supported the long march. In contrast, the *Daily Times*' reporting (see Appendix A) misses a democratic tone and is written in a formal register of news reporting. It seems that it has been used deliberately to conceal the real facts of the news item from common people. Moreover, the use of words like '*struggle*' (96) and '*fulfil the "promises"*' (9) for the ruling party and '*ordered*' for the PM manifests its progovernment stance. This politically motivated choice of words confirms Locke's (2004) argument that '[p]eople construct texts to achieve a desired result with a particular audience' (p.20).

5. 5. Referential strategies

An investigation into the referential strategies of both the reports reveals a serious difference in their use of references. *'Daily Times'* report has referred to government, ruling party at that time (Pakistan Peoples Party), and their office holders including the PM and the president for twenty five times. While the opposition leaders have been referred to only two times. Two personalities brought into light were Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif. It is also interesting to note that only the names, and not the voices, of these leaders have been included in the text. Their opinions, contributions or even reactions to the event have been ignored. This kind of strategy may reveal a newspaper's biased tendency to include only selected people in the report to further their own agenda and ideology (van Dijk, 1998). The newspaper has used the generalized terms like 'political workers' and 'political parties' to overshadow the important individuals' contributions. In contrast, *'The News'* report refers to all the important social actors involved in this news event. It refers to government and its important officials sixteen times while all important opposition leaders, political parties, the CJ, the media and the common people have been referred to thirty two times. In short, it includes references from almost all the important circles of the society related to the event reported in the news. Moreover, this report also seems to be consistent in using full names of all the actors and has used abbreviations only for the political parties which are well known to the people of Pakistan. Therefore, this may not to be considered an attempt to conceal any fact or to overshadow somebody's importance. However, *'Daily Times'* report refers to the CJ only as 'Chaudhry' (14) instead of using his full name more than once in the text. An important and deliberate omission seems to be made by the report when it uses 'CoD' (17) instead of 'Charter of Democracy' for the agreement made by the ruling party of that time with the opposition sometime ago. This may possibly be because of the strong public criticism raised against the government for not acting according to the Charter of Democracy.

'Daily Times' report displays a strong inclination towards selected references when it refers to the PM recalling the deceased leader of his party who was popular in the public. He recalled that former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had also struggled for the reinstatement of the sacked judges... (pp.15-17).

It seems to be a deliberate effort to save ruling party's image and bring forward a goodwill for it in the public. The analysis supports Coesemans (2012) and Phelan's (2009) argument that newspaper discourses may be angled to further the interests and image of certain groups.

6. Conclusions

From the analysis above, it is concluded that the powerful individuals and institutions affect the production of the newspaper discourse in Pakistan. This

also highlights a strong nexus between politics and media discourse in the country. The analysis of *'Daily Times'* report shows that the newspaper presented a biased version of the story in order to further the cause of its powerful aide – the then government of Pakistan. The report seemed to conceal important details and deliberately downplay the roles and contributions of important actors of the news event, for example, lawyers, opposition parties and the common people of Pakistan. On the contrary, *'The News'* reporting appeared to provide its readers with a balanced view of the news item analysed in this study as it highlighted all the major actors and events of the happening. The news coverage of the international newspapers - *'The Guardian'* and *'New York Times'* - also confirmed the presentation of *'The News'* report and, therefore, exposed the partiality hidden in *'Daily Times'* report. As this kind of biased reporting may have serious socio-psychological effects on readers, there is a need to analyze media discourse critically, especially, in the developing countries where people can be more easily misled. In addition, social critics and critical linguists should highlight the manipulation of the media discourse in their societies. Simultaneously, young students may also be trained in the skills of critical discourse analysis as these may help them understand the hidden meanings and agendas in the popular social and media discourse. Finally, sensitising them towards critical discourse analysis may also enhance their critical thinking abilities.

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(http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/17/world/asia/17judge.html?_r=1&scp=3&sq=chief%20justice%20restored%20by%20pakistani%20government&st=cse) Assessed April 18, 2000.

Appendix A

Daily Times - Site Edition

Monday, March 16, 2009

Gilani restores CJP Iftikhar Chaudhry, sacked judges: March triumphs, Justice gets justice

** PM says Chaudhry to be reinstated as chief justice of Pakistan after Justice Dogar's retirement on 21st*

** Lifts Section 144, orders release of all political workers*

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani early on Monday announced the reinstatement of all sacked judges, including Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, after the retirement of Chief Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar on March 21.

In a brief address to the nation at 5:50am, the prime minister said he, in consultation with President Asif Zardari, had decided the time had come to fulfil "the promises". "I announce that all judges including Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry will be reinstated on March 21," he said, adding that a notification to this effect would be issued today. The prime minister said it was not possible to reinstate Chaudhry while Dogar was still in office as chief justice. He recalled that former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had also struggled for the reinstatement of the sacked judges, and that the Pakistan People's Party and the government also wanted the restoration. Gilani did not mention how the sacked judges would be reinstated, or whether the number of judges would be increased.

The prime minister also announced that the government would file a review petition in the Supreme Court against the decision of a three member bench to disqualify Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif. However, the prime minister did not mention any timeline for the removal of governor's rule in the Punjab. Gilani invited all political parties to work together for the implementation of the CoD. However, he did not refer to the repeal of the 17th Amendment. Gilani ordered the provincial governments to immediately lift Section 144 and to release all political workers arrested in connection with the long march. The announcements came following a marathon session between President Asif Ali Zardari, Gilani and General Ashfaq Kayani, Zulfikar Ghuman and Irfan Ghauri.

Appendix B

The News International - Site Edition

Monday, March 16, 2009

People's Power Restores Justice Iftikhar

RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani early on Monday morning announced the restoration of all the deposed judges including Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry.

In his address to the nation, the prime minister said that Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry would take charge as Chief Justice of Pakistan on the retirement of the present Chief Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar on March 21.

The prime minister also announced an end to Section 144 throughout the country and release of all political prisoners. Justice Iftikhar is being reinstated as chief justice of Pakistan, after the long struggle of lawyers, politicians and the common people of Pakistan.

Earlier, this decision was conveyed to PML-N leader Chaudhry Nisar by Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani who along with Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani played very important role in the final solution of the two-year old problem.

The historic decision was taken in a meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Gilani and COAS Gen Kayani. The long march led by PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif despite strict measures to block it contributed immensely to the decision taken by the government.

The role played by the Army chief guaranteed the continuation of democracy in the country. This step has also enhanced the image of the armed forces among the people.

Politicians and lawyers' leaders acknowledged the vital role played by the media in educating the people that led to the restoration of the deposed chief justice of Pakistan. Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif and lawyers' leader Ali Ahmad Kurd particularly lauded the role of Geo TV in this regard.

Before announcing the historic development, the prime minister contacted Mian Nawaz Sharif and Chaudhry Nisar and informed them about the government's decision.

Chaudhry Nisar told Geo News that Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani phoned him that he was going to announce the restoration of the deposed Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry within a few minutes.

He said the prime minister had also phoned Mian Nawaz Sharif and informed him about the decision. Chaudhry Nisar said that Mian Shahbaz Sharif was present with him and they had told Mian Nawaz Sharif to stay at Kamoke till the speech of the prime minister and after the announcement they would decide about the long march and their future strategy.

Imran Khan while talking to Kamran Khan said that they would welcome the restoration of the deposed chief justice, but they wanted the November 2 judiciary. He said if the judiciary was reverted to its November 2 position they would celebrate it. However, he added, they would take the decision about their reaction after meeting at the Kachery Chowk on Monday.

According to Geo News, President Asif Ali Zardari also phoned Balochistan Chief Minister Aslam Raisani, MQM chief Altaf Hussain and JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and took them into confidence over the government's decisions to defuse the political temperature and the restoration of deposed Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry.