

Intra-Sunni polemical indifferences: Revamping the Barewli hermeneutics of Eshq-e-Rasool and Tehreek-e-Labbaik (TLP) Electoral Politics in Pakistan

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Abstract

Little has been written about Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), and what has been written, it introduced TLP as a social movement or a popular Islamist party (led by Khadim Hussian Rizwi) which grabbed vote over the issue of Hurmat-e-Rasool (Honor of the Prophet) and became third largest vote taking party in Punjab (General election 2018). Until now, most of the academicians had studied TLP with political lens, which could not decipher the intra-Sunni theological variances and polemical disputes over the nature of sacrosanct status of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Unlike the Salafi, Ahl-e-Hadith and Deobandi beliefs, Quranic translations, hermeneutics, and polemic discussions made by Barewli clerics portray Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), a superhuman which possess supernatural qualities of Hazir-o-Nazir (omnipresent and witness), Ilm-i-Ghaib (knowledge of unseen), Mukhtar-e-Kul (powerful), Nur-i-khuda (God's light) and a long list of contested ideas. This research is an attempt to answer the questions how TLP leadership highlighted Barewli sectarian interpretations of Prophet's quality of Hazir-o-Nazir (omnipresence and witnessing) to gain political mileage during election campaign and how did they present vote, as a new expression of Ishq-e-Rasool (Love for Prophet) among the Ashiqan-e-Rasool (Lovers of Prophet) in Pakistan.

Keywords: Sunni polemics, Barelwiyat, Ishq-e-Rasool, Vote, TLP Politics, Pakistan

Introduction

History of theological indifferences turned into violent conflicts between Shia and Sunni expands over than a millennium (Zaman 701). This mutual rift is deeply rooted not only in the history of Islam but in Indian Subcontinent as well. Due to the old rivalries and incidents occurred in recent past (Iranian Revolution and Cold War); most of the academicians had focused on Shia-Sunni conflict. Relatively less scholarship has produced over intra-Sunni divide. Approximately one third of Muslim population resides in South Asia, 80 percent of which are Sunnis (Gugler 341) and rest of the Muslim follow Shias Islam. In the case of Pakistan, a huge chunk of Muslim population adheres to Barewli-Sufi Islam 50-60 percent in contrast with Deobandi 15-20 percent, Shia's 15-20 percent and Salafi/Ahl-e-Hadith 5 percent (Syed et al. 218). Sunni Islam in Pakistan comprises of Sufi-Barewli, Deobandi and Ah-e-Hadith. They agreed upon a vast number of theological beliefs, however, simultaneously, they have indifferences over understanding and interpretation of Tawhid (Oneness of Allah), Tawassul (intercession), Darud (salutation upon the Prophet), Tasawuf (Sufism) and veneration of the Auliya (Saints). Likewise, they not only disagree but also declare each other impure/lesser Muslims over the issue of superhuman attributes of Prophet Muhammad

(PBUH) which includes omnipresent and witness and Knowledge of unseen (Stig et al. 281) etc.

Intra-Sunni conflicts arouses over the issue of the possibility of Imkan-i-Nazir (possibility of an equal to the Prophet) in early 18th century between Shah Ismail Shaheed and Maulana Fazl-i-haq Khairabad (Ahmed 142). Later, during British rule in India, this gap became significantly wide and pugnacious that the three distinctive groups of Sunni Ulama thought of themselves as rivals both intellectually and socially and British officials had to interfere for arbitration between Ahl-e-Hadith and Hanfi (Metcalf 98). This state of conflict makes them ever ready to produce religious Fatwa (edicts) to declare each other lesser, corrupt, and impure Muslim. Tendency of declaring other sects impure; is entrenched in the idea of striving and practicing the True Islam (Akbarzadeh and Saeed 54). Thomas K Gugler rightly portrayed the post partition intra-Sunni competing landscape by coining the term Sunnaization of Pakistan, which resulted in a constant quest for religious domination, acquiring more members and monopoly over religious and official resources (Gugler 341). Traditionally, Ulama and clerics used the mediums of Waaz (sermons) to disseminate their religio-sectarian cum political ideas at the popular level. However, in recent past two decades, Ulama in Pakistan have changed the traditional modes used for proselytization and shifted on electronic technology (videos, CDs, DVDs, official YouTube Channels, Facebook and Twitter accounts, WhatsApp groups and television channels). This shift not only increased the space of Ulama but it also ensured a frequent interaction with their specific (sectarian) audience (The National Bureau of Asian Research). Keeping in view the effectiveness of technological modes, Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) leadership extensively used internet (TLP YouTube official Channel) and other electronic modes of communications during campaign to increase manpower, fetching their loyalties and convincing more voters for their newly born party (Basit 8). This paper is an attempt to pen down varied intra-Sunni translations/interpretations over the Prophetic attributes of omnipresent and witness in detail and how their varied interpretations of above mentioned of aqeeda (creed) form different kinds of religiosities (social and political) in Pakistan. Furthermore, how TLP repeatedly narrated Barewli interpretations related to omnipresent and witnessing in their political campaign and tried to alter the traditional explanations and presented vote as a new expression of Ishq-e-Rasool.

Intra Muslim polemic debates over the Prophetic attributes of Omnipresent and witnessing and making sense of Pakistani politics

Barelwi clerics and their sectarian interpretations present the Prophet Muhammad not only a bashar (human) but he also possesses Nur-i-khuda (light of God)" (Syed et al.76). As per Barelwi teachings, God created Prophet's light before the creation of the universe, resultantly; he lies beyond the limit of time and space. Furthermore, they believe that Prophet Muhammad was created out of God's light, this universe came into existence out of this light and every creation is dependent upon Nur-i-Muhammadi. Similarly, in the context of hazir-o-nazir, Barelvi Ulemas are of the view that Prophet Muhammad is omnipresent by God's will, he is hazir (present everywhere) and nazir (witnessing) every single act all around the world. Barelwis are the ardent believer of this interpretation and according to Mufti Muhammad Ameen, those who denying the Prophet's superhuman qualities (hazir-o-nazir) reduce the lofty status of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and are committing Kufr (denial of the truth) (Amin 54). He further explained hazir-o-nazir in following words, "God has lifted all the restriction and removed all distances from the Prophet (PBUH). Everything from up (sky) to down

(earth) is presented/visible to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Nothing is far and concealed from him and Prophet is observing/watching everything like handcuff.

Barelwi Ulama presents many verses of the Holy Quran to qualify their stance such as, “O Prophet! We have sent you as a witness (shahid), and a deliverer of good news, and a warner” (The Qur’an 33:45). This verse contains an important word shahid and Barelvi Ulama understood shahid in the meaning of hazir-o-nazir. They had a view that shahid is derived from either the Arabic word shahood or mushahada and if it is derived from shahood, it carries the meaning of hazir (to be present) and if it is derived from mushahada, then it contains the meaning of nazir (the observer). (Amin 33). In this respect, there is another verse of the Holy Quran, “And (Allah) made the messenger witness (shaheed) over you”. (The Qur’an 2:143). Barelvi Ulama translate the meaning of shaheed as watching whereas Deobandi and Ahl-i-Hadith Ulama translate shaheed and shahid as witness. Mufti Muhammad Ameen, commented on this verse in such words, “according to this verse we must accept that the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) is watching every ummati (follower), therefore he will be a witness on the Day of Judgment.” (Amin 13). Imam Ahmad Raza Barelvi translated verse 45 of Surah Al-Ahzab in such a way, “O Prophet of the unseen! Indeed, we sent you as hazir and nazir.” (The Qur’an 33:45). Likewise, Syed Muhammad Naeem-ud-Deen Muradabadi interpreted this verse in such words, "The translation of shahid as hazir and nazir is the best translation, hazir (to be present) and nazir (the observer) could be through (basar) eyes or by (baseerat) heart. In addition, a witness is called shahid because he narrates what he observes. Being the last messenger of the Almighty, Prophet is sent for all the creations until the Day of Judgment. Prophet is the witness (shahid) of all the creations and observes their deeds, actions, conditions, confirmation, denial, guidance, and misguidance, etc." (Naeem-ud-Din 783).

Contrary to Barelwi Ulama, Deoband and Ahl-e-Hadith scholars consider Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the most sacred human being on earth; however, they deny the superhuman attributes of hazir-o-nazir in his personality and translate the words, shahid, and shaheed as the informant. Mufti Muhammad Shafi Usmani (Deobandi cleric) translated and interpreted the same above-mentioned verse of Surah Al-Ahzab in such words; “O Prophet! We sent you as the informant.” (Shafi Ra 123). In the interpretation, Mufti Muhammad Shafi explains shahid in a way that Prophet will testify his ummah (followers). He further narrates; the word shahid can be interpreted in a way that Prophet will testify good and bad deeds of his ummah. In the same manner, Maulana Muhammad Junaghari (Ahl-e-Hadith cleric) translated verse no. 45 of Surah Al-Ahzab as, “O Prophet! Indeed, we are, who sent you (as the messenger) as the witness.” (Junagarhi 1183)

Maulana Salah-ud-Din Yusuf (Ahl-e-Hadith cleric) interpreted Maulana Junaghari's words, tried to negated Barelwi interpretation of hazir-o-nazir, and brought Ahl-e-Hadith point of view over this matter. In his view, "Barelwi Ulama had wrongly interpreted the hazir-o-nazir as shahid, and mutilated the spiritual essence of the Holy Quran". Maulana Salah-ud-Din Yusuf tried to explain this matter in such a way, "Prophet will recognize the organs of his followers (shining because of ablution) and will give testimony of other Prophets that they had conveyed the message of Almighty Allah (to their followers). Prophet will make this testimony on the bases of the authentic knowledge given by Allah. Moreover, testimony does not mean that the Prophet had been watching all the Prophets"(Junagarhi 1183).

Political snapshot of 2017 By-Election in NA-120 and emergence of TLP in Politics

The by-election for Lahore's National Assembly constituency (NA)-120 held on 17 September 2017 over the disqualification of Mian Nawaz Shareef in Panama corruption case. PML-N top tier leadership, its voter's countrywide and their political rivals like PTI and PPP also acknowledged PML-N's political and electoral strength in NA-120. Despite of the stronghold over NA-120, disqualification brought one of the greatest Pakistan history's infamies over Shareef family, which includes former President of PML (N) and three times elected Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Nawaz Shareef, his daughter Mariyam Nawaz, Nawaz's younger brother and two times Chief Minister of Punjab, Mian Shehbaz Shareef and his son Hamza Shehbaz. Shareef family wanted to win the contest at any cost and late Kulsoom Nawaz filed her papers to contest the by-election for her home constituency.

Earlier, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Shareef won five consecutive elections from NA-120, which includes 1985, 1988, 1990, 1993 and 1997 ("In Context: NA-120 Lahore By-Election | IPCS"). However, disqualified dramatically changed the political scenario for PLM-N this time. Almost, 44 candidates contested the election; however, the two arch (political) rivals were PML-N candidate Kulsoom Nawaz and PTI candidate Dr Yasmin Rashid. Along with it, emergence of Milli Muslim Leage and Tehreekh e Labbaik Pakistan on the political landscape made things tough for rest of the established parties. Before the by-election at NA-120, TLP's core committee met under the leadership of Khadim Hussain Rzwi at Masjid Rehmat ul lil Alameen in Lahore and decided to take part in the practical politics of Pakistan by nominating Shiekh Azhar Hussain as the candidate for by election. TLP leadership had a view that participation in by election will prove as a prelude for winning the next 2018 General Election.

The inception statement made by TLP leadership revealed the fact that TLP was looking at 2018 General election. Although, they had announced the candidate for by elections, however, it was never their priority to win by elections. Most of the speeches delivered at different religious congregations, political meetings and interviews conducted by print and electric media are loaded with a dominant desire of grabbing power by winning 2018 General election. To acquire more political mileage and support, TLP leadership introduced Barelwi interpretation of Prophet superhuman attribute of *hazir-o-nazir* in their campaign. Traditionally, Barewli expressed *Ishq-e-Rasool* (love of Prophet) by organizing annual event of *milad-un-Nabi* (birthday of Prophet Muhammad), wearing green imamah (turban), travelling to the tomb of Prophet in Medina, embellishing chest with *nalain* (badge associated with Prophet Shoe), organizing *mahafil-e-Naat*, conducting *milad* processions etc. TLP leadership reinterpreted the meanings of Barelwi *Ishq-e-Rasool* and presented vote as a new form of expression for *Ishq-e-Rasool*. At the time of General Election, TLP portrayed "casting vote for TLP" as an expression to demonstrate *Ishaq-e-Rasool* which got quick currency among the Barewli voters in Pakistan and provided them a lifetime opportunity to become *Ashiqan-e-Rasool* (lovers of Prophet). Here is the detailed analysis how TLP integrated *hazir-o-nazir* in Election campaign and how they pursued Barewli voters to vote for TLP.

TLP integrating *hazir-o-nazir* in Election campaign

" From today until 2018 election, we will obey Prophet at any cost Remember, when you cast vote, none of the political leadership including PML (N), PPP or PTI can see you but

Husnain's Grandfather (Prophet) will be looking at you. He will be observing you which party are you supporting while casting vote: murders of Ghazi Mumtaz Qadri (PML-N), Satin Salman Taseer's party (PPP, one you is sitting in London and abusing Pakistan (MQM), supporting the party which is spreading vulgarity and women dance in Pakistan (PTI) or the followers of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (TLP)". ("Farooq Ul Hassan New Naat Lutf e Sajan Dam Ba Dam" 00:15–01:21)

In the same manner, Farooq-ul-Hassan convinced his listeners to dissuade their pledge with other political parties and being Ghulam-e-Rasool (servant of Prophet) prove their loyalties for Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by casting vote for TLP candidate in Lodhran city (Punjab).

"Oh people, do not get inspired of Jahangir Tareen and his assists (PTI leader and businessman) and do not be afraid of unscrupulous person like Siddique Baloch (PML-N candidate). Convey them a clear message that neither their power nor wealth can buy Ashiqan-e-Rasool; we have already done our deal with Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). All those who have already made commitments with other political parties, I came here to remind you your commitment with Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). I want to remind you on Election Day, PPP, PML (N), PTI and their leadership cannot watch you, however, Muhammad (PBUH) will be watching you while casting vote. Similarly, these leaders will not save you in grave, but Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) will visit and save you in grave." "New Byan Allama Farooq Ul Hassan [Election 2018]."

Throughout the speeches, Farooq ul Hassan (TLP leader) wisely maneuvered his sermons within the frame of Ishq-e-Rasool and Ashiqan-e-Rasool. Firstly, he made their mind to spend lives in accordance with Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) teaching. Secondly, he took pledge from his listeners to support the party of Ashiqan-e-Rasool in coming 2018 election and realized them that TLP is the true representative of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Thirdly, he kept maligning rest of the mainstream political parties like PML-N, PPP and PTI, and lastly, he used Barelwi theological interpretation of hazir-o-nazir as a political tool to acquire more votes in election. Here are Farooq-ul-Hassan's words, "when you will cast vote, none of the political leadership including PML-N, PPP or PTI can see you, but Husnain's Grandfather (Prophet) will be looking at you" ("Farooq Ul Hassan New Naat Lutf e Sajan Dam Ba Dam" 00:25–01:01). It is interesting to note that Barewli theological interpretations of 'witnessing' as 'viewer' not only stimulate Barewli religiosity to vote for TLP but also fulfill their utmost desire of being noticed by Prophet Muhammad and become certified Ashiqan-e-Rasool. Moreover, 'witnessing' incapacitates Barelwis liberty of casting vote other than TLP which they once had while casting vote against PML (N), PPP, PTI or other political parties. Being a Barewli polemic, Farooq ul Hassan knew Barewli (religious) aspirations well, that is why he repeatedly interpreted 'witnessing' as 'viewer' and attached Ishq-e-Rasool with vote to secure more political weightage for TLP in coming Elections.

Likewise, TLP head Khadim Hussain Rizwi's repeatedly articulated Barewli interpretations of hazir-o-nazir as viewer for the diligent assimilation of TLP among the Barewli voters in By-Election 2017. In this speech, Khadim Hussain Rizwi denounced those supporters who came to meet him, express their deep love and affiliation with him, but do nothing for TLP in the constituency. Unlike other political parties, neither he incentivized nor made any pledge of bounty after winning the election. Knowing the religious pulse of Barewli supporters, he just added Barewli interpretation of hazir-o-nazir (witnessing) in his political campaign. This

addition injected a new spirit among his workers. After adding witnessing in his speech, he assigned his listeners with the task of perusing voters to cast their votes for TLP.

"Mere Slogans and lip service won't work; I do not want to interact with such Namazi (devout) who does not spare time to visit the constituency and convince the people to cast their vote for TLP. Our lives and belongings are for Prophet Muhammad. One who just verbally own our mission does not dare to meet me. Go out, strive in the name of deen and remember one thing, for who you are working (Prophet Muhammad) is watching at you". ("Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi Important Message about NA-120 | Must Watch" 00:12–02:21).

Before by elections in NA-120 there were rumors that either TLP will collaborate and become ally of any national level political party or will release their candidate in the favor of PML (N). Khadim Hussain Riwwi shunned such speculations and uncertainties with the help of nazir-o-nazir (witnessing). Unlike other political parties he did not need to bring political facts to nullify such suppositions, rather, contrarily, he made his argument on the base of Barewli theological interpretations and cleared the TLP stance in constituency.

"Many people are disseminating disinformation on social media that TLP will withdraw its candidate against PML (N) in by election. Oh fools, there were dozens of better deals and critical moments to bargain and cease our mission of Khatam-e-Nabuwwat and Namoos-e-Risalat. I never took heed of their instructions over the issue of Mumtaz Qadri, in result; they tortured and arrested me numerous times. As you are aware of the fact due to the paralysis, I cannot walk, once police constables were dragging me towards van and I started smiling. Officials inquired me why I am smiling, I replied, for whom you are arresting me cannot watch you, however, for whom I am working (Prophet, is watching me". ("Khadim Hussain Rizvi Or PML (N) - Election NA-120" 05:15–07:01).

Despite of being a newly born political party, TLP not only influenced the voters but also vanquished national political parties like Pakistan Political Party and Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan by securing third position in by election of NA-120. Keeping the political vitality of hazir-o-nazir (witnessing), vote and Ishq-e-Rasool in mind, TLP leadership along with other Barewli clerics kept using Barewli interpretations during political campaign throughout the country. Here are the few prominent speeches of Khadim Hussain Rizwi in which he influenced Barewli voters and motivated them to become real Ashiqan-e-Rasool by casting vote for TLP.

Explaining *hazir-o-nazir* during political campaign at Attock (Punjab)

While addressing huge number of acolytes at Attock (district of Punjab) he again narrated his worse experience with police. In Attock's political meeting, Khadim Hussain pictured Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) superhuman attribute of omnipresence with additional Barewli explanations. He presented Imam Hajar Al-Asqalani's interpretation in such words, "It does not matter whether Prophet is alive or left this world, Prophet is watching the acts/deeds of his followers" ("Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi | Election Campaign Attock Jalsa" 02:15–03:21). Khadim Hussain explained Imam Asqalani's explanation in the preview of his political gathering, "O People, Prophet knows our intentions, He knows why I am visiting Attock, and similarly, Prophet is well aware of your intentions". ("Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi | Election Campaign Attock Jalsa" 02:15–03:21)

Furthermore, he charged his audience by presenting the logic that on the Day of Judgment; every single act will carry a weight. You have joined this meeting for Allah and Muhammad's sake; surely, Allah will accept your participation and award you with a better reward. Later on, Khadim Hussain described the horror of the Day of Judgment, "When no one will bother about others and Mothers will not recognize their children, that day Prophet will cry for you. Today, you consult your father, mother, and Uncles over casting vote, but remember, On the Day of Judgment, its only Prophet Muhammad who will save you. Do not consult anyone and cast vote for real servants of the Prophet (TLP)". ("Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi | Election Campaign Attock Jalsa" 02:15–03:21)

Parchi (Vote) as an expression of Ghumali-e-Rasool

During his country tour, Khadim Hussain Rizwi addressed a huge audience in Larkana (Sindh). During his speech, he interpreted parchi (vote) as an expression of Ishq-e-Rasool in such words, "You are aware of the fact that due to paralysis, I cannot sit or walk properly, this physical illness worsens my stay in captivity. During captivity, when I got tired because of the hardships, I used to remind myself that I am Ashiq-e-Rasool and my only hope in jail was Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)". ("Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi Speech in Jinnah Bagh Larkana" 03:00–04:01) ". Khadim Hussain Rizwi asked his listeners that every Barewli reads the couplets of Naat in which he/she pledges to sacrifice life for Prophet Muhammad, however, our pledges are mere lip service. He recited the couplets of Naat and asked his listeners and potential voters to analyze their Ishq-e-Rasool;

Ghulam hain Ghulam Hain Rasool ke Ghulam Hian

Ghulami-e-Rasool Main Maut Bi Qabool Hai

Joh Ho Na Ishq-e-Mustafa Toh Zindagi Fazool Hai

Ghulam Hain Ghulam Hain Rasool ke Ghulam Hian

After reciting these couplets Khadim Hussain Rizwi addressed his audience in such words, "O people, you cannot caste a parchi (vote) for Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), I advise you not to make lofty claims like sacrificing lives in Ishq-e-Rasool. Oh people, this is the right time to express Ishq-e-Rasool, leave homes, close shops and business, take vehicles and work in constituency for Ashiqan-e-Rasool (TLP)". ("Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi Speech in Jinnah Bagh Larkana" 03:00–04:01) Similarly, during his tour to Karachi, Khadim Hussain Rizwi, laid stress on vote's relation (practical illustration) with Ishq-e-Rasool.

"Name of your political party is associated with Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Labbaiq means Prophet I am here, and I am at your service. You have raised the slogan of Labbaiq hundreds of time in this meeting and certainly, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is replying to your calls/slogans . . . I had already shared the zeal and fervor of a young boy in NA-120 constituency. I asked him for vote and he replied, Oh Mualana, you are asking for just a single parchi, I assure you, my vote and life both are for Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Oh people of Karachi, parchi (vote) has not worth, if today you cast your vote for TLP, surely, on the Day of Judgment you will be among the Ashiqan-e-Rasool". ("Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi Speech at Mazar e Quid Karachi Jalsa | Deen e Mubeen" 03:15– 05:21).

In the same manner, along with hazir-o-nazir (witnessing), vote and Ishq-e-Rasool, Khadim Hussain and other TLP leadership, inspired their listeners to vote for TLP by punctuating

bunches of ahadith, which coupled vote with thawab (reward) and promise of the great rewards for the TLP voters on the Day of Judgment. TLP leadership presented a hadith which carries the content that each single act will carry weight on the Day of Judgment. If a Muslim breeds a Horse for Jihad, its manure will carry weight on the Day of Judgment. TLP leadership assure their audience and potential voters in a manner that if horse manure will carry weight, surely, their parchi for TLP and Islam will carry a huge reward on the Day of Judgment.

Conclusion

Prior to TLP, most of the Sufi orders, Barewli interlocutors and Dawat-e-Islami avoid steadfast sectarian (Barewli) politics in Pakistan. Although since its inception Dawat-e-Islami and its leadership is striving to transform individual's life in accordance to the Prophetic model and becoming an obedient ghulam. Dawat-e-Islami, through its literature like Madni azkar and Dawat-o-Tabligh (missionary programs) had placed Ishq-e-Rasool on top priority; moreover, it laid stress on earning more and more thawab by acting upon Sunnah. Along with the Dawat-e-Islami's processes of sunnaization, Barewli Ulema regularly initiate polemic debates, issue fatwas (edicts), produce handy pamphlets, articles, books and deliver regular YouTube lectures to denounce their sectarian opponents on the bases of their sectarian interpretation of Islam. This fiery attitude further translate among their followers as they vigorously connect each other on community level, collecting chanda (donation) for arranging annual event of milad al-nabi and other religious gatherings on the contested topics to exhibit Ishq-e-Rasool in urban and rural parts of the country. Therefore, it is evident that the kind of religious environment created by Dawat-e-Islami/Barewli scholars set the stage for TLP, which successfully twisted the traditional expression of Ishq-e-Rasool and replaced it with the casting of vote for TLP. Installation of the sectarian interpretation of prophetic super human attributes of khair-o-nazir (witnessing), along with the integration of 'vote' as an expression of Ishq-e-Rasool, placed TLP on the citadel of political arena and maslaki wabastagi (sectarian affinity) among its Barewli voters in Pakistan.

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