



Truth Matters, We Verify

TLP PROTEST

October 7 to 14

INCIDENT REPORT 2025

Published on:
Sunday, October 19, 2025

Fake News Watchdog

Email: info@fakenewswatchdog.org | **Web:** www.fakenewswatchdog.org



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About Us

Fake News Watchdog (FNW) is a global initiative dedicated to identifying, analyzing, and countering the spread of misinformation and disinformation in today's digital world. We stand at the forefront of the fight for truth, empowering individuals, media professionals, academic institutions, and civil society to navigate the increasingly complex information landscape with confidence and clarity.

Our Mission

Our mission is to detect and debunk false narratives, monitor disinformation trends, and strengthen public resilience through media literacy. Leveraging artificial intelligence, advanced fact-checking tools, and rigorous research methodologies, we work to uphold the principles of transparency, credibility, and informed public discourse.

Our Vision

We envision a world where access to accurate, verified information is a fundamental right, and where communities are equipped to question, verify, and challenge misleading content. A well-informed society is the cornerstone of democracy, and we are committed to fostering a culture where truth triumphs over manipulation.

What We Do

- **Fact-Checking Services:** Verifying claims circulating in media, politics, and public discourse.
- **Reputation Management:** Monitoring digital platforms for false or misleading content about our clients and delivering timely, evidence-based rebuttals to protect their public image and credibility.
- **Research & Trends Analysis:** Studying patterns in disinformation to inform public policy and education.
- **Educational Outreach:** Promoting media literacy through training, resources, and awareness campaigns.
- **Global Collaboration:** Partnering with international organizations, journalists, researchers, and digital rights advocates to build a united front against fake news.

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A Message from Our Team

At Fake News Watchdog, our mission is rooted in the belief that truth is not just a principle but a cornerstone of a thriving society. In an age where disinformation spreads faster than ever, the responsibility to uphold integrity in information is one we share collectively.

This report serves as both a reflection of the challenges we face and a call to action. It dives deep into the anatomy of disinformation, examining its sources, impact, and the societal vulnerabilities it exploits. By bringing these incidents to light, we aim to empower individuals, institutions, and policymakers with the insights necessary to recognize, combat, and prevent the spread of falsehoods.

Our work is not possible without the contributions of vigilant fact-checkers, dedicated researchers, and the trust of those who believe in a better-informed world. Together, we can build an ecosystem where truth has the power to outpace lies, fostering trust and accountability in every corner of society.

We hope this report inspires meaningful dialogue and decisive action. Thank you for standing with us in this crucial fight against misinformation.

Best wishes,

Prof. Rehan Hasan (Patrong-in-Chief)

Dr. Asad Ali Shah (Co-Founder)

Muhammad Nasir Butt (Co-Founder)

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This white paper is intended for informational, academic, educational, media, and policy-making purposes. It explores the evolution and strategic redirection of India's space program from a development-focused initiative to one increasingly shaped by defense priorities.

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Executive Summary

Between October 7 and 14, 2025, Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) launched a nationwide protest movement labeled the “Gaza March,” positioning it as a religious duty to demonstrate solidarity with Palestinians. The movement rapidly escalated into one of the most volatile law-and-order crises of the year marked by violent clashes, information blackouts, conflicting casualty figures, and a narrative warfare battle between TLP and the state.

From the onset, the protests were accompanied by severe disruptions, including the deployment of shipping containers, mobile internet shutdowns, road blockades, early school closures, and mass arrests across Punjab and Karachi. While official government statements reported limited casualties, TLP continually claimed exponentially higher civilian deaths and injuries, leveraging social media channels to amplify unverified visuals and emotionally charged narratives.

By October 13, the crisis peaked during a violent dispersal operation in Muridke, where vehicles were reportedly set ablaze and conflicting claims emerged about TLP chief Saad Rizvi being shot, a claim the government denied, fueling further chaos. The absence of independent media verification, due to real-time blackout conditions, intensified the scale of misinformation and unverifiable allegations.

The government framed its response as a national security imperative, warning of diplomatic risk and potential foreign policy fallout, while TLP asserted moral ownership of the Palestinian cause and accused the state of betraying Muslim solidarity. The information environment quickly devolved into a credibility crisis, with no trusted central authority providing conclusive figures or facts.

This report reconstructs the protest chronology and examines the escalating narrative conflict, while documenting only what can be attributed, verified, or responsibly classified as unverified in line with international crisis reporting protocols.

Methodology

This incident report was compiled using a **multi-source triangulation framework** designed to document disinformation dynamics during the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) protests between **October 7–14, 2025**. The methodology prioritized **accuracy, independence, and chronological reconstruction** under conditions of media blackout and information disorder.

1. Data Collection Sources

- **Primary monitoring of social media platforms**, including X (Twitter), Facebook, and WhatsApp public forwards used by both TLP and government-affiliated networks.
- **Official statements** from Punjab Police, provincial/federal ministers, and law enforcement spokespersons.
- **Mainstream news coverage**, including national TV bulletins and print/online publications.
- **Eyewitness video evidence**, geolocated and time-matched when possible.
- **Fact-checking archives and previous FNW intelligence repositories**.

2. Verification & Credibility Assessment Protocol

Each claim was subjected to a three-layer vetting model:

- **Source Reliability Scan** — origin authentication, history of accuracy, affiliation analysis.
- **Cross-Source Confirmation** — report accepted only once matched against at least two unrelated data streams.
- **Narrative Discrepancy Mapping** — comparison of *official vs TLP vs neutral observers* to document contested facts rather than force premature conclusions.

3. Chronology Reconstruction

Events were sequenced in **24-hour time windows**, prioritizing the emergence of claims rather than their later political reinterpretation. **Conflicting casualty figures were preserved as-is**, clearly attributing ownership to source, rather than standardized or flattened.

4. Classification of Claims

Claims were categorized as:

- **Verified (Confirmed by independent/multi-party evidence)**
- **Unverified (credible but pending official confirmation)**
- **Fabricated/Manipulated (digitally altered, AI-generated, or disproven)**

5. Ethical & Security Considerations

No unverifiable claims were presented as fact. Sensitive allegations — especially involving fatalities, morgue removals, or hostage negotiations — were **flagged with verification difficulty and next-step audit requirements** rather than speculative judgment.

Chronology of the TLP Protests

October 7, 2025: Announcement of the Gaza March by TLP Leadership

TLP chief Saad Hussain Rizvi announced plans for a nationwide "Gaza March" to protest against the U.S.-brokered ceasefire in Gaza, accusing the Pakistani government and military of supporting Israel and the U.S. The march was set to culminate in a sit-in outside the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, with initial gatherings planned in Lahore starting October 10.

October 9-10, 2025: Initial Clashes in Lahore; Protests Begin

October 9 (Evening): TLP supporters began assembling in Lahore, setting up camps near the party's headquarters on Multan Road. Authorities deployed shipping containers to block routes to Islamabad, prompting early skirmishes with police. October

10 (Morning-After Jumu'ah Prayers): The march officially launched from Lahore, led by Saad Rizvi. Thousands of protesters, armed with sticks and stones, attempted to advance toward Islamabad but were stopped at barricades. Clashes erupted near the U.S. Consulate and Ravi Bridge, with police using tear gas and batons. Protesters retaliated by pelting stones, setting fire to a road tax collection point, and damaging vehicles. Mobile internet was suspended in affected areas, schools and colleges closed early, and major roads were paralyzed.

The Incident: Initial clashes between Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) protesters, marching toward Islamabad from Lahore, and law enforcement (Police/Rangers) over the last 2 days.

The Discrepancy: Conflicting casualty reports emerged immediately, with no independent media access due to the blackout.

Official Count: "Punjab Police confirmed 2 deaths, including 1 police officer and 1 civilian, and reported dozens of law enforcement personnel were injured."

TLP Claim: "TLP leadership claimed a higher toll, alleging that at least 2 of its supporters were killed and over 50 were seriously injured since the operation began

Crucial Context: Due to the absence of independent verification or official transparency regarding the civilian death toll, all casualty figures remain contested and are based on highly attributed sources.

October 11, 2025: Escalation in Shahdara and Muridke Overnight Encampment

Protests intensified as TLP supporters pushed through Shahdara in Lahore, clashing with police near additional barricades. By evening, protesters reached Muridke (near Lahore) and set up an overnight camp, vowing to continue the march. Authorities reinforced blockades with over 1,200 paramilitary personnel, while TLP distributed videos of Rizvi calling for negotiations. Sporadic violence continued, with protesters hurling petrol bombs and stones.

The Incident: Continued clashes between TLP protesters, now encamped in Muridke after advancing from Lahore, and law enforcement over the last 3 days, as the march aimed for Islamabad.

The Discrepancy: Casualty reports diverged further, with TLP amplifying claims via social media amid the internet curbs.

Official Count: "Government/Punjab Police confirmed at least 2 additional deaths (total ~4), including 1 police officer and 3 civilians, and reported 50+ law enforcement personnel were injured."

TLP Claim: "TLP leadership claimed a much higher toll, alleging that at least 10+ of its supporters were killed and over 50 were seriously injured since the operation began."

Crucial Context: Due to the absence of independent verification or official transparency regarding the civilian death toll, all casualty figures remain contested and are based on highly attributed sources.

October 12, 2025: Standoff in Muridke; Failed Negotiations

TLP attempted to dismantle shipping container barricades in Lahore and Muridke, leading to baton charges and tear gas deployment. Over 100 TLP activists were arrested in Karachi and Lahore for related unrest. Rizvi urged security forces to halt firing in a pre-recorded video, but negotiations collapsed. Protesters chanted anti-government slogans, accusing the army of betraying Palestinians. Islamabad was fortified with barriers, and mobile services remained disrupted.

The Incident: Heightened standoff and clashes between TLP protesters in Muridke/Lahore and law enforcement (Police/Rangers) over the last 4 days, with attempts to breach routes to Islamabad.

The Discrepancy: Reports from X handles and media clips showed unverified videos of injuries, fueling discrepancies.

Official Count: "Punjab Police confirmed minimal additional deaths (total ~4), including 1 police officer and ~3 civilians, and reported over 50 law enforcement personnel were injured."

TLP Claim: "TLP leadership claimed a much higher toll, alleging that at least 11 of its supporters were killed and over 100 were seriously injured since the operation began."

Crucial Context: Due to the absence of independent verification or official transparency regarding the civilian death toll, all casualty figures remain contested and are based on highly attributed sources.

October 13, 2025: Deadly Crackdown in Muridke; Rizvi Reportedly Shot

Dawn operation by Punjab Police and Rangers in Muridke to disperse the encampment turned violent, lasting over three hours. Protesters allegedly opened fire, used petrol bombs, and set 40+ vehicles ablaze, including Rizvi's truck. Police responded with gunfire, dispersing the crowd. Conflicting reports emerged of Saad Rizvi being shot three times (denied by officials). An FIR was filed under anti-terrorism laws against TLP leaders. Over 100 arrests followed, with charred vehicles littering streets.

The Incident: Peak clashes between Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) protesters, marching toward Islamabad (Muridke/Lahore), and law enforcement (Police/Rangers) over the last week, culminating in a major dispersal operation.

The Discrepancy: Casualty figures exploded in claims, with X videos showing chaos but no verified counts; hospital sources reported low admissions.

Official Count: Punjab Police confirmed 5 deaths, including 1 police officer and 4 civilians (3 protesters, 1 bystander), and reported 48-50 law enforcement personnel were injured.

TLP Claim: TLP leadership claimed a much higher toll, alleging that at least 250 of its supporters were killed and over 1,500 were seriously injured since the operation began.

Crucial Context: Due to the absence of independent verification or official transparency regarding the civilian death toll, all casualty figures remain contested and are based on highly attributed sources.

October 14, 2025: Aftermath and Ongoing Tensions

Scattered protests continued in Lahore and Rawalpindi, with unverified X videos showing pursuits and alleged shootings. Authorities launched searches for TLP leaders, including Rizvi (reportedly in hiding or under arrest). Internet blackouts persisted, and routes to Islamabad remained sealed. TLP vowed to resume the march, while the government labeled it a "mercenary plot." No major new clashes were reported, but the situation stayed volatile.

The Incident: Lingering fallout from clashes between TLP protesters and law enforcement over the last week, with residual unrest in Lahore.

The Discrepancy: Hyperbolic claims circulated on X, including videos of alleged civilian shootings, widening the gap in reports.

Official Count: "Government/Punjab Police confirmed no new deaths (total 5), including 1 police officer and 4 civilians, and reported additional minor injuries to law enforcement."

TLP Claim: "TLP leadership claimed a much higher toll, alleging that at least 350 of its supporters were killed and over 2,200 were seriously injured since the operation began."

Crucial Context: Due to the absence of independent verification or official transparency regarding the civilian death toll, all casualty figures remain contested and are based on highly attributed sources.

Handling Unverified Allegations

The Core Challenge in Prolonged Public Protests

In large-scale public protests that span multiple days and spread across different cities, one of the most critical challenges for journalists, researchers, and communication managers is handling unverified allegations. When events unfold rapidly and involve numerous actors' government agencies, protest organizers, citizens, and social media users, information becomes fragmented, emotionally charged, and often distorted. The primary difficulty lies in gathering and consolidating all available information into a single, verifiable timeline. In such situations, news, claims, and counterclaims flow simultaneously from multiple directions. Without a coordinated mechanism to collect and sort updates chronologically, the overall narrative becomes chaotic. This lack of order allows misinformation and exaggeration to take root, shaping public perception in misleading ways.

A comparative look at other contexts, such as the conflict in Gaza, shows that consistent reporting structures, where recognized authorities regularly release data, help maintain credibility. Despite political tensions, the health authorities there managed to provide casualty figures with minimal discrepancy, establishing a relatively trusted information base. In contrast, in Pakistan's protest scenarios, the challenge is magnified by the absence of a centralized communication framework. Both government spokespersons and protest leaders often issue conflicting statistics and

statements, sometimes within hours of each other. Social media amplifies these claims without adequate verification, turning speculation into “fact” through repetition. As a result, exaggerated numbers, manipulated visuals, and unverified eyewitness accounts circulate widely, blurring the line between truth and narrative.

This information disorder not only affects media reporting but also undermines public trust. When citizens cannot distinguish between verified information and political spin, credibility erodes for all institutions involved, media, government, and civil society alike. To handle unverified allegations effectively, there is a pressing need for a unified verification hub during major protests. This could involve independent journalists, data analysts, and official communicators collaboratively documenting incidents, cross-verifying claims, and updating a shared timeline. Such a model would help minimize confusion, prevent misinformation from spreading unchecked, and ultimately strengthen public confidence in transparent reporting during crises.

Allegations of Hospital Arrests and Abduction

Reporting the Claim: "Several TLP sources and eyewitnesses allege that injured protesters were arrested while receiving medical treatment at hospitals in Muridke and Lahore."

Verification Difficulty: Note the difficulty in verifying these incidents due to the security presence and lack of hospital cooperation. State that the arrests fall under the context of the over 170 people detained under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO).

Seeking Counter-Response: Law enforcement and hospital administrators, including officials at THQ Hospital Muridke, have not issued specific statements denying arrests within medical facilities, but Punjab Police reports emphasize that injured individuals, including both TLP supporters and civilians, were shifted to nearby hospitals for treatment amid the clashes, with no mention of detentions occurring inside wards.

Claims of Bodies Removed from Morgues

Reporting the Claim: "Perhaps the most serious unverified claim involves allegations from TLP workers that 'dead bodies were taken away from the hospital morgue,' making an accurate final death toll impossible to verify by independent media."

Journalistic Responsibility: Emphasize that these claims are currently unsubstantiated by independent medical or legal experts.

Verification Path (The Next Step): Note the specific challenge: "Confirmation of this allegation would require access to hospital records and morgue registers, which authorities have not released."

Handing Over Bodies Conditional on No-Case Agreements

Reporting the Claim: "TLP-affiliated lawyers and family members allege that authorities are withholding the bodies of deceased protesters from victim families unless they sign agreements pledging not to file any legal cases against the government or law enforcement agencies."

Verification Difficulty: These reports stem from petitions filed in the Lahore High Court seeking the return of bodies and medical aid for the injured, but no independent confirmation from families or legal documents has surfaced amid restricted access to affected areas. dawn.com

Seeking Counter-Response: Punjab government officials have not directly addressed these specific allegations, though the provincial cabinet's push for a federal ban on TLP includes references to ongoing FIRs against the group for violence, without commenting on body release protocols.

Treatment of Thousands of Injured in Private Facilities Without Medico-Legal Coverage

Claim: "TLP sources claim that thousands of injured supporters were treated in private hospitals and clinics across Punjab without medico-legal examinations or formal reporting, potentially to evade official scrutiny."

Journalistic Responsibility: Emphasize that while Pakistan's private hospitals are generally not authorized to handle medico-legal cases without clearance from public facilities, these claims lack substantiation from health authorities or independent health monitors.

Verification Path (The Next Step): Confirmation would require audits of private clinic records and coordination with the Punjab Health Department, which has reported shifting over 150 injured (including TLP workers and civilians) from THQ Muridke to

Lahore facilities like Mayo Hospital, but no aggregated data on private treatments exists publicly.

Thousands of TLP Followers Not Returned Home Due to Fear or Un-notified Arrests

Claim: "TLP leadership alleges that thousands of its followers have not returned home, either out of fear of arrest or because they were detained by police without notification to the judicial system or formal trials."

Verification Difficulty: Amid the chaos of the Muridke dispersal and nationwide arrests exceeding 170, tracking individual cases is hindered by internet blackouts and restricted movement in Punjab; TLP's own estimates of "missing" supporters remain unverified against police detention logs.

Seeking Counter-Response: Punjab Police have confirmed over 100 arrests post-Muridke operation under anti-terrorism laws and MPO, with FIRs filed against TLP leaders, but no statements address un notified detentions or "missing" persons; the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan has called for transparency in such cases without specific rebuttals from authorities.

Government Claim on Law Enforcement Injuries

Claim: "The government claims over 1,600 personnel of law enforcement agencies were injured due to the clashes with protesters." • **Verification Difficulty:** Official figures from Punjab Police and Rangers have cumulatively reported dozens to around 50-112 injuries per major clash incident (e.g., 48-50 in Muridke, 112 in Lahore), but no aggregated provincial total exceeding 1,600 has been publicly confirmed or detailed in breakdowns; TLP disputes these as exaggerated amid their higher civilian casualty claims.

Verification Difficulty: Due to the multi-day span of protests and lack of a centralized injury ledger released by authorities, the 1,600 figure appears unsubstantiated in available reports and may encompass minor injuries or nationwide paramilitary deployments; independent verification remains elusive without forensic or hospital audits.

Narrative War and the Hidden Agenda

Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan's Narrative

From the perspective of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), the “Gaza March” was a moral and religious duty, an expression of solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians and a condemnation of what they view as Pakistan’s silent complicity in the U.S.-backed Israeli aggression. TLP Chief Saad Hussain Rizvi announced the march as a peaceful demonstration of public sentiment, aimed at pressuring both the Pakistani government and the international community to take a firm stand against Israel’s actions in Gaza.

According to TLP leaders, the U.S.-brokered ceasefire was not a step toward peace but an attempt to protect Israeli interests while leaving the Palestinian population under continued siege. They accused Pakistan’s leadership, including the military establishment, of betraying the cause of the Muslim Ummah by maintaining diplomatic caution and avoiding direct condemnation of Israel and its allies.

The march, in TLP’s view, symbolized a grassroots uprising of conscience, led by ordinary citizens rather than political elites. Starting in Lahore, the movement quickly spread to other cities as thousands of supporters joined in solidarity. Protesters carried Palestinian flags, recited religious slogans, and called for the government to sever all indirect ties with the U.S. and Western states perceived to support Israeli actions.

TLP claims that the government’s heavy-handed response, including road blockades, use of tear gas, and mass arrests turned a peaceful protest into a violent confrontation. They allege that security forces opened fire on unarmed demonstrators, resulting in civilian deaths and hundreds of injuries. The group further argues that state media distorted the reality of the situation, labeling participants as extremists or disruptors, while ignoring their humanitarian message.

In their narrative, the crackdown represents state repression of Islamic voices that challenge foreign influence in Pakistan’s policy decisions. TLP maintains that the protests were not politically motivated but faith-driven, rooted in solidarity with Gaza and in defense of Pakistan’s sovereignty and moral stance. The party insists that dialogue, not suppression, could have prevented the violence and restored public confidence in the government’s commitment to justice for Muslims worldwide.

Government's Narrative

From the government's perspective, the "Gaza March" organized by Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) represented a serious threat to public order, diplomatic relations, and national security. While acknowledging citizens' right to peaceful protest, officials argue that TLP's actions exceeded the bounds of lawful expression and risked plunging the country into chaos.

The government contends that the timing and tone of the march were politically charged, exploiting the Gaza crisis to advance domestic agendas rather than genuine humanitarian concerns. Authorities claim that the call for a march toward the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad raised legitimate security concerns. Such actions, they argue, could have provoked international incidents, endangered diplomatic staff, and violated Pakistan's international obligations under the Vienna Convention.

Officials further emphasize that the state has consistently expressed support for the Palestinian people at international forums, including the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). They view TLP's accusations of "supporting Israel and the U.S." as misleading and inflammatory, designed to stir public emotion rather than promote constructive discourse.

The government maintains that it sought dialogue with TLP leaders to prevent escalation, but the group allegedly refused to adhere to agreed protest routes and deadlines. Security agencies were thus compelled to act when demonstrators attempted to block highways, occupy sensitive zones, and damage public property. Authorities report that several police officers were injured during clashes initiated by aggressive protesters, and vehicles, including ambulances, were attacked.

In the government's view, law enforcement measures including arrests and the use of crowd-control methods were necessary to prevent the situation from spiraling further. Officials reject claims of excessive force, asserting that most injuries occurred during stampedes and stone-pelting by demonstrators.

The government highlights that TLP has a history of violent agitation, making preventive detention and dispersal essential to maintain civic peace. They frame the state's response not as suppression of religious sentiment but as a constitutional obligation to protect lives, property, and international credibility.

The government's narrative stresses the need for institutional dialogue and lawful activism, warning that politically motivated religious protests risk undermining Pakistan's internal stability, economic recovery, and global reputation. They assert that while the Palestinian cause deserves solidarity, it must not be used to incite unrest or challenge state authority.

Independent Observations and Analytical Questions Surrounding the “Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan March”

The “Gaza March” announced by Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) and the subsequent state response have stirred widespread debate across media, policy, and academic circles. While the immediate focus centered on the intensity of protests, casualties, and arrests, independent observers urge a deeper exploration of the **political context, institutional behavior, and communication patterns** that defined the crisis.

1. Continuity or Deviation from TLP’s Historical Pattern

TLP’s previous mobilizations, especially those concerning religious sensitivity or foreign policy, have followed a recognizable pattern: rapid mass mobilization, confrontation, paralysis of civic order, and eventual negotiation or state action. Researchers are examining whether the “TLP March” aligns with this trajectory or signals an evolution in the group’s ideology, organizational discipline, and public messaging. Determining whether the protest marks continuity or a strategic shift will help assess TLP’s long-term political positioning.

2. Funding and Patronage Dynamics

A persistent area of inquiry concerns the funding sources and patronage networks that sustain TLP’s capacity to mobilize large crowds. Given the scale of logistics and coordination across cities, observers question whether TLP’s resource base has become self-reliant or still depends on informal networks within the religious, business, or political spheres. Any evolution in funding mechanisms could reflect changes in Pakistan’s broader political financing and power-brokerage patterns.

3. Timing and Political Context

Analysts point to the timing of the protests, coinciding with critical dialogues and institutional negotiations within Pakistan as potentially significant. Historically, moments of political recalibration have often overlapped with TLP-led mobilizations. Some view this as strategic orchestration by hidden actors seeking leverage or disruption. Investigating whether such timing is coincidental or deliberate could reveal how protest movements are used as instruments of political maneuvering.

4. Diversion from Internal Governmental Issues

Another interpretation frames the unrest as a diversionary event, redirecting public

focus from internal challenges or elite conflicts. When governments face governance crises, fiscal strain, or civil-military tensions, large-scale public unrest can shift the narrative. Mapping internal government developments alongside protest escalation may help identify whether such diversions are opportunistic or planned.

5. Assertion of State Authority

Many independent observers see the government's decisive response as an intentional demonstration of strength. The heavy-handed suppression of protests, including mass detentions and road blockades, might have been designed to restore the image of a strong state after years of perceived leniency toward religious mobilization. Such actions echo Pakistan's broader struggle between maintaining civil order and preserving democratic freedoms.

6. Mysterious Silence from the Provincial Government

An unusual feature of this episode was the prolonged silence of the provincial government. Historically vocal and quick to comment on law-and-order situations, the Punjab administration—where the protests first erupted—remained subdued until the situation came under control. This absence of visible political leadership during the height of tension has raised questions about internal coordination, political calculation, or deliberate restraint. Only after the protest was contained did provincial authorities announce their intent to ban TLP and categorize it as a terrorist organization, signaling a post-crisis hardline posture. Researchers view this silence as an indicator of possible disconnects between provincial and federal strategies during crises.

7. Government's Resilience and International Posture

The government's post-crisis narrative emphasized resilience and alignment with international commitments. Officials portrayed their actions as evidence of Pakistan's determination to combat extremism and uphold global norms against violent mobilization. Comparisons have been drawn to the Lal Masjid operation during General Musharraf's tenure, where the state sought to demonstrate resolve against religious militancy. This framing suggests a dual motivation: domestic control and international signaling, both crucial for maintaining Pakistan's diplomatic credibility amid global scrutiny.

Controversial Statement by PML-N's Atta Tarar

Claim: A viral Facebook post attributed the following quote to PML-N leader Atta Tarar: "If police kill 200 TLP (Tehreek-e-Labbaik) workers, what's the issue? Israel is a good country; we can get money from there."



Reality Check

- **Source Check:** The claim originates from a viral Facebook post, which is a common vector for political misinformation.
- **Evidence Search:** A comprehensive search of Atta Tarar's public communications (speeches, interviews, media appearances) found no official record or credible evidence of him making this statement.
- **Format Integrity:** The post relies on an image with a quote, which is identified as a digitally fabricated quote.

Findings: FALSE. The statement is not genuine. It is a fabricated piece of misinformation circulating on social media aimed at discrediting the political figure.

Police Allegedly Dumping TLP Worker's Body

Claim: A post on X (Twitter) claimed that police officers dumped the body of a TLP worker into a canal, with an attached video showing a crowd near a water channel.



Waqar Khan 
@Waqarkhan123

Follow

 [Translate post](#)

لبیک کے شہید کارکن کو پولیس والے نالے میں
پھینک کر فرار ہو گئے



10:04 AM · 13 Oct 25 · 131K Views

3,047 Reposts **28** Quotes

Reality Check

- **Official Confirmation:** Local authorities and credible official sources have not confirmed that this incident took place as described.
- **Visual Evidence (Video):** The video itself is unclear regarding its precise context and location. While it shows a crowd near a water channel, this visual evidence **does not independently verify** the specific action (police dumping a body) or the identity of the deceased (a TLP worker).
- **Credibility:** The claim relies solely on a social media post from an individual user, which is a low-credibility source for such a serious allegation.

Finding: UNVERIFIED / MISLEADING. The central allegation is not supported by any credible, official, or contextual evidence. The post should be treated as unverified and potentially misleading information.

Fabricated Quote Attributed to PML-N's Attaullah Tarar

Claim: A highly provocative and offensive quote was widely shared on X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook, allegedly from senior PML-N leader Attaullah Tarar. The quote suggested that Tarar threatened TLP chief Saad Rizvi, stating: "If Saad Rizvi doesn't end the sit-in, his wife will be stripped and paraded on the road." The image carrying this statement featured the logo of the "Azaad Digital" media outlet.



Reality Check:

- **No Official Source:** No authentic or verified news organization, including major Pakistani or international media, ever reported this statement.
- **Party Denial:** Neither Attaullah Tarar's official accounts nor the PML-N party leadership issued or endorsed any such words.

- **Doctored Graphic:** The "Azaad Digital" outlet identified in the viral image confirms that it never published the quote, strongly suggesting the graphic was digitally doctored or created entirely as fake content.

Findings: The claim is unequivocally False and Fabricated.

TLP Chief Saad Rizvi: Death Claims Unconfirmed

Claim: Multiple social media posts circulated claiming that TLP leader Saad Rizvi had been **martyred (shot dead)** during the recent clashes with security forces. One viral post on X asserted: "TLP chief Saad Rizvi shot dead by Pakistan police. This will lead to great concern."



Reality Check.

- **No Confirmation of Death:** As of now, neither TLP's official central leadership, Rizvi's family, nor any credible government authority has confirmed reports of his martyrdom.
- **Unverified Injuries:** While some unverified reports suggested Rizvi sustained injuries, his precise location and condition remained speculative at the time of the social media surge.

- **Official Stance:** Law enforcement officials, including DIG Kamran, publicly stated that "security agencies have traced the locations where Rizvi was present and he will soon be brought to justice," indicating that authorities believed him to be alive and at large.

Findings: Claims of Rizvi's death are currently Unverified and lack official confirmation.

Casualty Numbers: No Official Confirmation for 282 Deaths

Claim: Widespread reports on social media platforms asserted a catastrophic death toll during security forces' operation against the TLP, claiming approximately 282 people were killed and over 1,900 others were injured.



Reality Check.

- **Lack of Verification:** The high figures of 282 deaths and 1,900+ injuries have not been verified by any major, credible news outlet or independent official authority.
- **No Government Statement:** Government officials have not released any statements or figures supporting these numbers, and no official confirmation is available.

- **Death Toll Still Unknown:** While independent confirmation of the overall death toll from the clashes remains unavailable, the specific figures circulating on social media lack the necessary official or independent corroboration. *[Official media reports noted the death toll to be significantly lower, though often conflicting and disputed.]*

Findings: These specific casualty figures are Unsubstantiated.

Death Rumors Surround Syed Ahmad Shah Bukhari

Claim: A post shared on Facebook claimed: "Syed Ahmad Shah Bukhari has been martyred, and the central leadership has confirmed the news."



Reality Check

- **No Official Confirmation:** There has been no official statement issued by the TLP's central leadership or any credible government source confirming the death of Syed Ahmad Shah Bukhari.
- **Status Unknown:** Reports circulating on social media about his condition or whereabouts remain unverified, making the claim of martyrdom unreliable.

Findings: The report of Syed Ahmad Shah Bukhari's martyrdom is Unverified. His whereabouts is also unknown

Unverified Claims on Police Casualties and Permanent Disability

<https://x.com/shazbkhanzdaGEO/status/1978178549551960550>

The Claim: During an appearance on Geo TV's *Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Saath*, Lahore Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Faisal Kamran claimed that 60 policemen were permanently disabled due to attacks by TLP protesters.



Shahzeb Khanzada ✓

@shazbkhanzdaGEO

یہ پروپیگنڈہ ہے کہ TLP پر امن ہے۔ انکے احتجاجوں میں آج تک 60 پولیس اہلکار مستقل معذور ہو چکے۔
TLP نے پولیس کو خوفزدہ کر رکھا تھا۔ اہلکاروں کو لگتا تھا اگر انکے ہاتھ لگ گئے تو یہ تشدد کا نشانہ
بنائیں گے اور پھر انہیں معافی مل جائے گی۔ اگر TLP کی ہلاکتیں ہوں تو ویڈیوز کہاں ہیں؟ DIG آپریشنز لاہور

Translate post



From **Geo News Urdu** ✓

12:18 PM · Oct 14, 2025 · 74.5K Views

Reality Check

- **Evidence Deficit:** The figure of 60 permanently disabled officers was cited in the program without providing accompanying verified data. No list of the officers, photographic evidence of their permanent injuries, or specific locations and dates of the attacks resulting in permanent disability were publicly provided.
- **Contradictory Official Data:** While official statements acknowledged multiple police fatalities and injuries, and government figures later cited more than 50 personnel left permanently disabled, these figures were often presented without the necessary granular data, such as medical reports or details of the permanently affected officers.

Findings: While the martyrdom of a police inspector has been publicly acknowledged, the specific claim of 60 permanent disabilities lacks sufficient evidence and verifiable proof from the police department to be confirmed. This claim remains Unsubstantiated due to a lack of verifiable details.

Disputed Figures on Injured Policemen

The Claim: Information Minister for Punjab, Ms. Azma Bukhari, claimed during a press briefing that **1,648 policemen were injured** during clashes with TLP protesters.



Reality Check:

- **Vague Reporting:** The Minister provided the specific number of 1,648 personnel who were injured, but this report was highly vague.
 - No comprehensive list detailing the names and ranks of the 1,648 officers were provided.
 - No details were offered regarding the hospitals where these officers were treated, the dates of treatment, or the nature of the injuries (e.g., minor stone pelting injuries versus serious firearm wounds).
- **Media Amplification:** While many television channels and newspapers widely reported this figure, they generally did so without actively questioning or demanding detailed verification of the number from the provincial government.

Findings: The claim of 1,648 injured personnel, though officially stated, remains unverified due to the government's failure to provide essential supporting data required for independent confirmation. The high figure of 1,648 injuries is Lacking in Detail and Verification.

Conclusion

The October 2025 TLP protests exposed not only a severe breakdown in law-and-order management, but also a deeper crisis of information credibility in Pakistan's public sphere. With no independent verification mechanisms, competing narratives from the state and TLP filled the vacuum — each leveraging emotion, ideology, and digital amplification to assert dominance. This incident reinforces the need for structured crisis communication, centralized fact-verification frameworks, and real-time transparency protocols to prevent misinformation from escalating public unrest. The events of this week were not just a security challenge — they were an information warfare stress test for Pakistan's governance, media, and civil society. The lessons learned now will determine whether future crises are contained with clarity or hijacked by narrative chaos.

Recommendations / Way Forward

To prevent future protest crises from descending into narrative chaos, Pakistan urgently requires institutionalized reforms in information governance and crisis communication. FNW recommends the following:

1. Establish a Unified Crisis Information Command (UCIC)

A central, non-partisan crisis communication hub — integrating government, media, and digital monitoring institutions — to issue time-stamped, verified updates every 2–3 hours during national emergencies.

2. Deploy Real-Time Verification & Claim Classification System

A structured protocol categorizing emerging claims as:

Verified – Under Verification – Unverified – Fake/Fabricated

to prevent misinformation from gaining legitimacy before facts are established.

3. Enforce Mandatory Media Coordination Protocols

Mainstream broadcast and digital media must adopt a single-source verification rule, preventing the parallel broadcasting of contradictory, politically charged figures during high-volatility events.

4. Launch a Digital Fact-Tracking Platform for Citizens

FNW proposes a public-facing live tracker to counter narrative warfare — providing real-time myth-busting, updated in collaboration with rights observers and licensed research bodies.

5. Develop a Pre-Protest Negotiation & Transparency Framework

Before allowing mass mobilizations, the state must enforce written protest route agreements, public safety guarantees, and compliance checkpoints, minimizing uncontrolled escalations.

