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**PAKISTAN'S LEADERSHIP VACUUM: CAN JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI ABSORB THE DISILLUSIONED PTI BASE?**

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**The Vacuum in Pakistan's Politics**

Pakistan's political landscape has long been dominated by  
personalities, populist slogans, and a relentless struggle for  
power (Fair, 2014; Wilder, 2011). Over the decades, grand  
promises were made, mass rallies were held, yet ordinary citizens  
rarely saw meaningful change. PTI once represented a fresh  
hope. Imran Khan's charisma and the vision of a corruption-free,  
welfare-oriented Islamic state mobilized millions of young  
Pakistanis (Rana, 2018). PTI became, for a time, the most  
popular political force in the country.

Today, the picture is different. Legal pressures, state  
interventions, and Imran Khan's imprisonment have created a  
leadership vacuum (Grare & Shafi, 2023). Workers who once  
regarded him as a savior are now left questioning: what next?  
Which platform can channel their energy and ideals effectively?

**Ideological Parallels**

Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) offers a compelling option. Both PTI and JI  
share key principles: anti-corruption, governance based on

Islamic values, and youth mobilization (Nasr, 2001; Waseem, 2015). PTI's vision of *Riyasat-e-Madina* aligns closely with JI's long-standing ideological framework. Both recognize the political potential of young citizens—PTI through energetic mass rallies, JI via its structured student wings that have nurtured political awareness for decades (Ahmad, 2017). For PTI supporters seeking direction, JI's organized structure provides an avenue to translate enthusiasm into meaningful political engagement.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of JI**

JI's strength lies in its nationwide network, disciplined organization, and ideological clarity. Unlike PTI's loosely structured movement, JI offers stability and a framework for long-term activism (Jamal, 2009). However, it has historically struggled to attract mass electoral support. Its messaging can appear rigid and overly theoretical, lacking the emotional appeal and charisma seen in PTI's rallies. Young voters are motivated not only by ideas but by energy, inspiration, and the visible presence of compelling leadership. Without adapting its communication style, JI risks remaining marginal despite its potential (Rizvi, 2018).

### **A Path to Modernization**

For JI to attract disillusioned PTI workers, strategic changes are essential:

**Accessible Messaging:** Move away from abstract ideological language. Speak plainly about employment, healthcare, education, and justice.

**Youth Engagement:** Include young leaders in decision-making processes to demonstrate that the party is dynamic and inclusive.

**Charismatic Leadership:** Present leaders who inspire confidence and loyalty, not just ideological conformity.

**Modern Campaigning:** Combine social media, creative outreach, and emotionally engaging events to replicate the energy that drew young voters to PTI.

### **A Moment of Opportunity**

PTI workers are at a critical crossroads. Their energy and activism cannot be allowed to dissipate into frustration or apathy. For JI, the opportunity is equally clear: a chance to modernize, connect with citizens, and demonstrate that principled politics can also resonate broadly. If both paths align—youthful energy from PTI and structured, principled organization from JI—Pakistan's political landscape could experience a meaningful realignment.

### **Conclusion**

The disoriented PTI worker may find in JI not merely an alternative, but a structured platform to pursue justice, reform, and citizen-centered governance. Similarly, JI has the chance to demonstrate that disciplined ideology, when combined with modern engagement strategies, can inspire a broader following. This convergence of ideals and strategy could mark the beginning of a more responsive, structured, and reform-oriented era in Pakistani politics.

### **Editorial Statement:**

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