

RECENT CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN PAKISTAN: MUNIR DAR



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Toronto, Canada. (Munir Dar). The sudden Supreme Court order has surprised some circles and others. Following the court's order, political maneuvering has intensified.

The government has finalized its strategy to present a constitutional amendment bill for judicial reforms in Parliament and has lined up support for its approval.

The ruling coalition has ignored the court's clarification, and the constitutional amendment bill is expected to be presented today.

The National Assembly session with a six-point agenda will be held today, Sunday, at 11:30 AM.

Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif hosted a dinner on Saturday night in honour of members of the PML-N and allied parties.

He instructed members to ensure their attendance in Parliament. Efforts are ongoing to persuade Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif met with the JUI-F chief on Saturday to seek support for the bill, but the meeting was not fruitful.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman stated that he could not support the bill in its current form. A PTI delegation also met with the JUI-F chief to discuss the proposed constitutional amendment.

Late at night, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, along with Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, visited the JUI-F chief's residence and met with Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

Constitutional experts have stated that until the Election Commission's review petition is decided, the implementation of the court's decision is unlikely despite the clarification.

Government experts believe that the July 12 decision has become ineffective due to the amendment to the Election Act.

Details indicate that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif hosted a dinner on

Saturday night at the Prime Minister's Office in honour of PML-N and allied party members of Parliament to take them into confidence.

The Prime Minister informed Parliament that the government intends to bring the constitutional amendment to Parliament today.



Members of the MQM, Baluchistan Awami Party, National Party, and Muslim League Zia attended the dinner along with PML-N members. The PPP hosted a separate dinner.

The Prime Minister instructed members not to leave Islamabad and to ensure their attendance at the Parliament session.

The Prime Minister and Law Minister Senator Azam Nazir Tarar took allied parties into confidence regarding the proposed constitutional amendment.

The Law Minister stated that legislation is the prerogative of Parliament, which cannot be taken away. The Prime Minister thanked all allies for their cooperation.

Participants were briefed on the current political situation in the country. In his dinner address, the Prime Minister said that Parliament is the supreme institution of the country.

He stated that it is necessary to legislate in the national and public interest to maintain the sanctity of Parliament. National issues should be resolved only through Parliament.

He said that attempts have been made to drag constitutional institutions and non-political figures into politics.

Leaders of allied parties expressed full confidence in Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif. Allies assured complete

cooperation on the constitutional amendment.

Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar also briefed participants on the legislation. After cabinet approval, legislation will be carried out in the National Assembly.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission appears to be bound to implement the Supreme Court's decision (July 12, 2024) following the court's clarification.

The Supreme Court clarified to the Election Commission that it was not correct to question the matter of signing the party certificate after the Election Commission itself recognized Barrister Gohar Khan as Chairman and Umar Ayub as Secretary General.

Sources indicate that the Election Commission filed a review petition on the decision to reserve seats on July 18, 2024.



Experts believe that until the Election Commission's review petition is decided, the implementation of the decision is unlikely despite the clarification.

In this regard, the new law of Parliament must also be considered, which amended the Election Act 2017 to allow independent candidates to join a party only once.

This law prevented 41 members of the Sunni Etihad Council from joining PTI.

However, following the Supreme Court's clarification, those members who submitted PTI certificates will be considered part of PTI.

Experts said that the implementation of the Supreme Court's decision will only be possible after the final decision on the Election Commission's review petition.

Additionally, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, along with his government team, met with Maulana Fazlur Rehman at his residence in Islamabad on Friday night.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, and Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar accompanied him.

Reports indicate that the meeting with Maulana Fazlur Rehman was not fruitful this time either. Maulana Fazlur Rehman reiterated his previous stance to the Prime Minister, stating that they could not support the bill in its current form.

He mentioned that their leaders and elders have reservations about the details of the bill that have come to light so far.

However, if the draft of the amendment is provided, then it can be discussed.

Meanwhile, a PTI delegation also met with Maulana Fazlur Rehman. The delegation included Barrister Gohar, Umar Ayub, Asad Qaiser, and Sahibzada Hamid Raza.

The delegation discussed the proposed constitutional amendment with the JUI-F chief and informed him of the opposition's stance.

It is clear that the government lacks the numerical majority of 8 members for constitutional amendments, and both the opposition and the government are striving to gain Maulana Fazlur Rehman's support.

On the other hand, the draft of constitutional amendments prepared by experts was handed over to the leadership of the ruling coalition on Saturday evening. The draft was finalized in a four-hour closed-door meeting.

Today, the constitutional amendment will be presented as a "table bill," which will be the 26th amendment to the constitution. The ruling coalition has ignored the court's clarification.

THE END