

28 March 2024.

SUPREME COURT OF PAKISTAN

PRESS RELEASE

The Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) received a letter dated 25 March 2024 from six judges of the Islamabad High Court on 26 March 2024. Considering the gravity of the allegations levelled in the said letter, the CJP called a meeting on the same day with the Chief Justice and all the Judges of the Islamabad High Court after Iftar at 8 pm at the CJP's residence. The concerns of all the Judges were heard individually in a meeting that lasted for over 2 and a half hours.

The following day, 27 March 2024, the CJP met with the Attorney-General and the Law Minister, and thereafter the CJP along with the Senior Puisne Judge met with the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association and the senior most member of the Pakistan Bar Council present in Islamabad. A Full Court Meeting of all the Judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan was called under the chairmanship of the CJP at 4 pm the same day. The Full Court deliberated over the issues raised in the letter sent by the six Judges of the Islamabad High Court. A consensus was developed amongst the majority of the members of the Full Court that in view of the gravity of the situation, the CJP may hold a meeting with the Prime Minister of Pakistan on the issues raised in the said letter and the meeting was adjourned.

The Prime Minister, accompanied by the Law Minister and Attorney-General, met with the CJP, Senior Puisne Judge and Registrar of the Supreme Court at the Supreme Court at 2 pm today, 28 March 2024. The meeting lasted for about an hour and a half. The CJP clearly stated that interference by the Executive in the affairs and judicial workings of Judges will not be tolerated and under no circumstances can independence of the judiciary be allowed to be compromised. He and the Senior Puisne Judge stated that independence of judiciary is a foundational pillar that upholds the rule of law and a strong democracy.

During the meeting a proposal was made to constitute an Inquiry Commission under the Pakistan Commissions of Inquiry Act, 2017 which should be headed by a retired Judge of impeccable integrity to inquire into the matter. The Prime Minister undertook that a meeting of the Federal Cabinet will be called to seek their approval for the constitution of the said Commission. The Prime Minister fully endorsed the views expressed by the CJP and Senior Puisne Judge and further assured them that he will be taking other appropriate measures to ensure an independent judiciary, including issuance of directions to the relevant departments, and initiating legislation in accordance with paragraph 53 of *Suo Moto No. 7/2017 (the Faizabad Dharna judgment)*. Thereafter, in continuation of the last meeting, the CJP again called a Full Court meeting and briefed the Judges on what had transpired at the meeting with the Prime Minister.

Public Relations Officer