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Rochdale Grooming Gang Ringleaders Closer to Deportation After Key Progress with Pakistan

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A long-awaited breakthrough may soon see two of the Rochdale grooming gang's most notorious figures deported from the United Kingdom. Pakistani officials have confirmed that Qari Abdul Rauf and Adil Khan could be returned to Pakistan within months, following years of delays and diplomatic impasses.

Rauf and Khan, both convicted for their roles in the sexual exploitation of underage girls in Rochdale, have remained in Britain despite a deportation order issued nearly a decade ago. However, a senior source within the Pakistani government now suggests that the country's Interior Ministry is in the final stages of approving their return. Once clearance is granted, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry will take over to complete the process.

The impasse had long centred on legal manoeuvres and political hesitancy. Notably, both men renounced their Pakistani citizenship in an apparent bid to obstruct removal proceedings, claiming "statelessness" to dodge deportation. Despite this, recent developments suggest Islamabad is prepared to overlook that obstacle—though not without conditions.

Sources indicate that Pakistan's cooperation came following the lifting of the United Kingdom's ban on Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), a matter tied to broader diplomatic negotiations. It is understood that Islamabad used the deportation of Rauf and Khan as leverage to restore PIA flights to the UK.

Immigration law specialist Osama Malik described the situation as "legally complex," given the men's decision to surrender their citizenship. He also warned of a potential precedent that may be set for future cases involving dual-national offenders. "It is hoped that Pakistan will receive something significant in return," Malik noted, hinting at expectations of increased British aid or investment.

The case has drawn renewed attention after reports surfaced of Rauf constructing a new home in Pakistan, all while continuing to claim £285,000 in taxpayer-funded legal aid. Despite his past conviction, Rauf is currently employed as a delivery driver in Rochdale.

The grooming gang scandal remains a painful chapter in British legal history, and the

failure to remove offenders like Rauf and Khan has been widely criticised. With negotiations now advancing, many will be watching to see if the government can finally deliver on promises of justice and accountability.

GB News has reached out to the Foreign Office for a statement on the matter.