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## Qaiser Admits PTI Mistake on Bajwa Extension

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Former National Assembly speaker and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Qaiser has acknowledged that granting an extension to former army chief General (retd) Qamar Javed Bajwa was a mistake. Speaking at a press conference alongside leaders of Tehreek-e-Tahaffuz-e-Ain Pakistan on Sunday, Qaiser expressed regret over the decision and issued an apology.

Qaiser further alleged that Pakistan is currently operating under “de facto martial law,” describing the existing system as “neither constitutional nor legal.” He raised concerns

about a possible 27th constitutional amendment, which he said is being discussed quietly. The PTI leader warned that the lawyers' movement would mobilize in opposition, and pledged to use all available platforms, inside and outside Parliament, to challenge the development.

Addressing rumors about his potential appointment as opposition leader, Qaiser dismissed these reports and stated that he expects PTI's Omar Ayub to return soon and assume the role.

Qaiser also urged that all cases against PTI founder Imran Khan be evaluated on their merit. He criticized the disqualification of opposition members in both houses of Parliament, calling it a "farce." Highlighting the privileges lawmakers enjoy worldwide, Qaiser questioned why assembly members are barred from visiting imprisoned colleagues.

The former speaker accused government authorities of pressuring decision-makers and warned that the country is heading toward "severe anarchy." He asserted that if the cases are fairly adjudicated, there would be no grounds for conviction.

General Bajwa was initially appointed as the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 2016, with his tenure extended by PTI chairman Imran Khan in 2019. Bajwa served in this role for six years, during which time the PTI government was eventually dismissed following a vote of no-confidence.

Responding to Qaiser's statements, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar described the press conference as "misleading and contrary to facts." He highlighted recent positive economic indicators, including record remittances reaching \$38 billion, a current account surplus of \$2.1 billion, rising exports, and a booming stock market.

Tarar noted that international rating agencies have upgraded Pakistan's economic outlook, reflecting government progress. He suggested the opposition's true concern lies with the ongoing legal proceedings related to the May 9 incidents. The minister emphasized that sentences in these cases were handed down.