

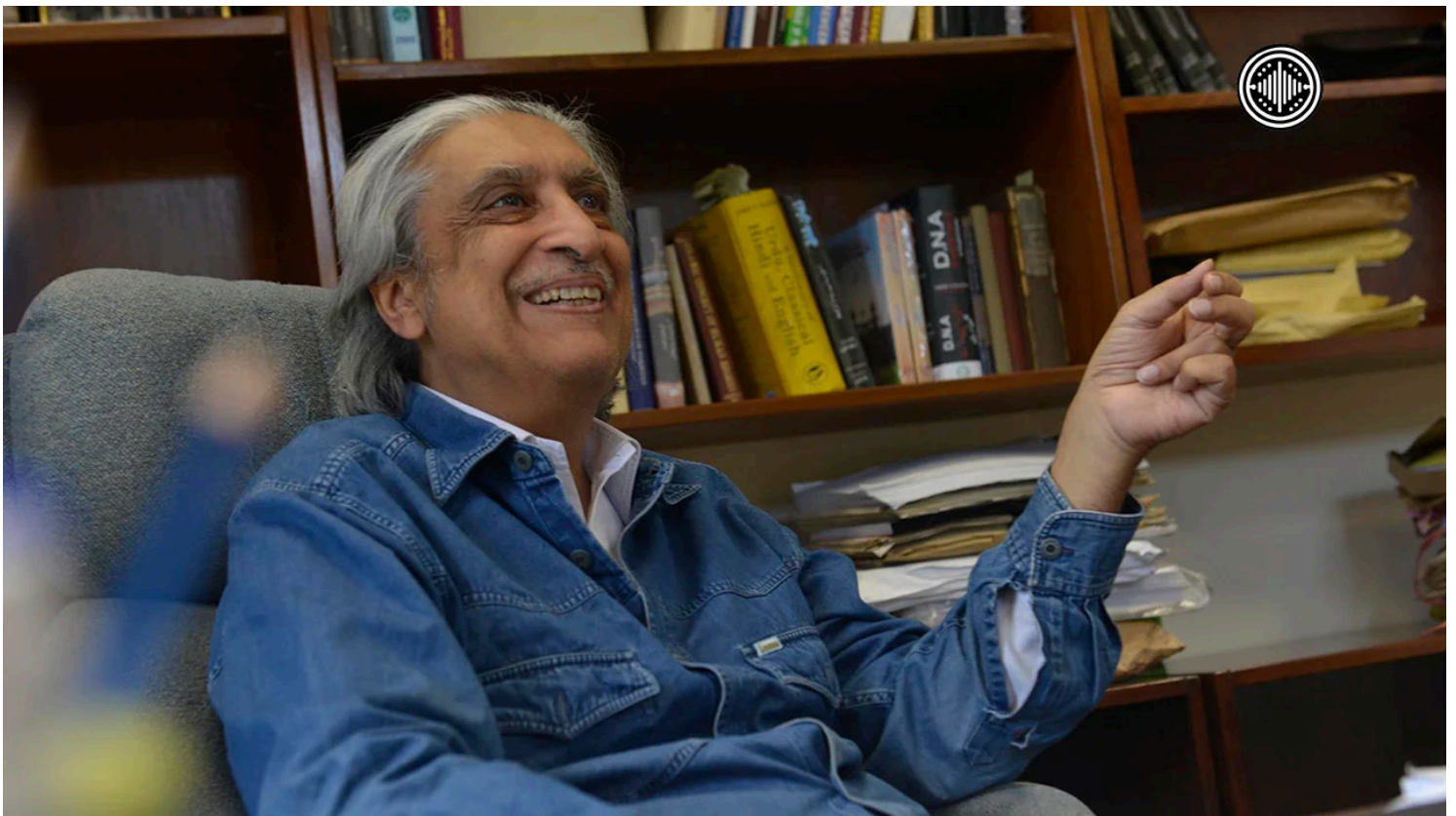
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## Ex-Chief Justice Targets Shehbaz Sharif in Contempt Case Over Military Courts Ruling

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Former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Jawad S. Khawaja has launched a contempt petition against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, accusing the government of ignoring a Supreme Court order on military courts. Filed on July 28, 2025, the petition claims the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) administration failed to enact legislative changes within 45 days, as mandated, to grant civilians convicted in military courts the right to appeal in a High Court. This clash highlights deep tensions between Pakistan's judiciary and executive, raising alarms about constitutional fidelity and civilian rights.

Khawaja's petition, filed through Advocate Khawaja Ahmad Hussain, underscores the Supreme Court's clear directive on May 7, 2025, which ordered the federal government to amend laws or introduce new legislation to ensure an independent appellate process for military court convictions. "This is a straightforward case. The Supreme Court directed the Federal Government to make necessary amendments/legislation to provide an independent appellate right to the High Court from decisions in court-martial proceedings within 45 days. This direction has not been complied with," the petition states, as reported by The Express Tribune. Khawaja argues that this inaction is a deliberate defiance of judicial authority, threatening the rule of law.

The use of military courts to try civilians has long been a flashpoint in Pakistan, with critics slamming their lack of transparency and fairness. The Supreme Court's order aimed to restore constitutional protections by ensuring High Court appeals, a move seen as critical to balancing military influence in civilian justice. Yet, the Sharif government's failure to act has fueled accusations of executive overreach and disregard for judicial mandates, further straining Pakistan's democratic framework.

This legal battle comes amid growing concerns over the PML-N's handling of institutional independence. Recent constitutional amendments, widely seen as curbing judicial power, have intensified scrutiny of Sharif's leadership. Khawaja's petition not only challenges the government's compliance but also signals a broader fight to preserve judicial sovereignty. As the Supreme Court prepares to hear the case, it could expose cracks in Pakistan's governance, with implications for the balance of power. Will Sharif's administration face accountability, or will this case deepen the divide between Pakistan's institutions?