

# OpenVoiceNews Pakistan

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

## Government's Demand for Written Pledge from Opposition Risks Derailing Punjab Assembly Talks

July 17, 2025

– Categories: General News



The federal government's demand for a formal, written commitment from opposition lawmakers in the Punjab Assembly has sparked growing concerns of a political stalemate, with talks between both sides teetering on the edge of collapse.

According to information cited by *The Express Tribune*, the government has presented a list of conditions to the opposition, primarily targeting the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party's

Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs). These conditions include a ban on foul language, disruptive slogans, and what the government deems violations of “human rights,” alongside a strict requirement to enforce Rule 223 of the *Rules of Procedure of the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab 1997*. The rule generally pertains to maintaining order during sessions.

Insiders revealed that PTI lawmakers had not yet fully debated the proposal, largely due to their involvement in a recently launched political campaign. A decision is expected in an upcoming parliamentary party meeting. However, early indications suggest that most PTI legislators are firmly against submitting a written pledge, especially under conditions they view as heavily skewed in favor of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League–Nawaz (PML–N), led in Punjab by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz.

This development comes as 26 PTI MPAs face potential disciplinary action following their protest during a speech by the chief minister. The protests, while rowdy, are seen by many in the opposition as legitimate political expression rather than a breach of parliamentary decorum.

Opposition sources argue that the demand for a signed document is not a genuine effort to restore order but a thinly veiled attempt to silence dissent and consolidate control. One source, requesting anonymity, said, “This is less about maintaining order and more about forcing lawmakers into submission. It’s an attack on the opposition’s constitutional right to challenge the government.”

The PTI reportedly aims to persuade the government’s negotiation committee to drop the written commitment requirement, warning that the talks cannot progress under such unilateral terms. “They’re asking us to guarantee silence while their leadership takes the floor. That’s not negotiation, that’s censorship,” another senior party figure noted.

This standoff is symptomatic of broader tensions between the center-left ruling coalition and the center-right opposition. PTI supporters view the government’s tactics as emblematic of a wider campaign to muzzle criticism, particularly as the PML–N-led administration continues to face scrutiny over its legitimacy and performance.

If unresolved, the issue could deepen parliamentary dysfunction in Punjab, where political dialogue is already limited. For any meaningful reconciliation to occur, both sides would need to return to the basics of parliamentary democracy, debate, not dictate.

As the opposition prepares its official response, the government's insistence on preconditions, especially in writing, risks being seen not as a measure for accountability but as an overreach with potentially long-term consequences for democratic engagement in the province.