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## Journalists' petition against TV channel owners: Lawyers request Supreme Court to shift proceedings from Quetta

August 29, 2012 Web Desk

LAHORE: Senior lawyers have requested the Supreme Court not to hold proceedings on a petition filed by journalists against TV channel owners, and the distribution of money and plots among journalists by property tycoon Malik Riaz, in the Quetta Registry of the apex court because of security reasons.

The apex court had issued notices to 58 private channels and summoned reply from them until September 6. According to reports, the next hearing of the case is being scheduled for the Quetta Registry.

Mian Asad Mahmood Advocate, a People's Lawyer's Forum leader, said the court should not hold proceedings against media owners at the Quetta Registry because of the worsening law and order. "The principal seat at Islamabad is the most appropriate place for the hearing of the case," he suggested.

Mahmood viewed that any unpleasant act of terrorism might harm the media industry, busy in creating awareness among the society. "The instant petition of the journalists, who are also leading anchor persons, does not highlight security issues. The petition has not pointed out any weakness regarding law and order in the country; therefore, its hearing at the Quetta Registry is inappropriate," he added.

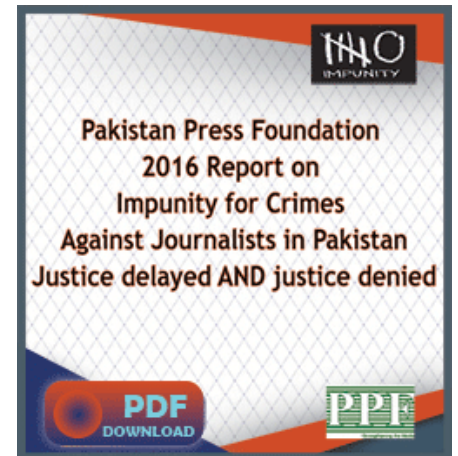
Advocate Amir said the journalists' petition was about code of conduct for the media, thus its hearing should be held in Islamabad. "Putting the life of media owners in danger is not advisable. If any unpleasant incident happens, who would be responsible," he asked.

Amir suggested that the apex court should hold proceedings on the petition either in Islamabad or Lahore. He further said Islamabad and Lahore were safer than Quetta for such a huge gathering of representatives of the media industry and security arrangements could also be easily made in the two cities.

Also, the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday sought reply from the Lahore Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) chairman on the budget allocated for the computerised assessment system project.

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Justice Ayesha A Malik also directed the respondent to file details showing total budget allocations for the project and schedule of payments made to the contracting firm.

The Lahore BISE Employees Association through its President Aslam Gujar and others filed the petition through their counsel and submitted that a huge amount had been paid to the contracting company despite the fact that it was stated before the court that no payment would be made until it was determined that the system was error free.

The court recorded initial arguments, sought reply from the Lahore BISE chairman and deferred the hearing until August 31 to hear the respondent's objections on the petition. The petitioners submitted that the National Institutional Facilitation Technologies (NIFT) had been awarded the contract for the computerised assessment system project for all examinations (Class 9, 10, 11 and 12) conducted by the eight Punjab BISEs.

The petitioner alleged that the contract was awarded against PPRA rules; therefore, it should be set aside. The court also issued a fresh notice to the contacting company, NIFT, for August 31.

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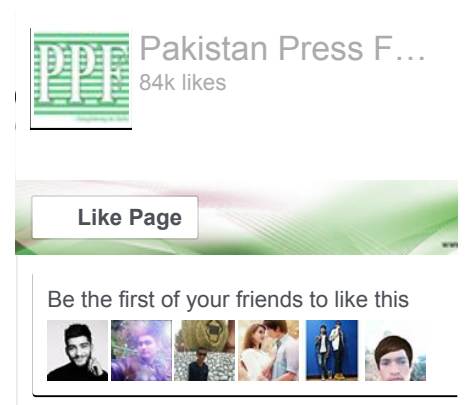
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