

SC grants Imran Khan video link access in NAB case

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The Supreme Court (SC) has permitted imprisoned former Prime Minister Imran Khan to participate via video link in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) amendments case. The five-judge bench, led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, oversaw the hearing on the federal government's intra-court appeal (ICA) against the majority judgment declaring the amendments to the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) 2002 illegal. Justices Aminuddin Khan, Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Athar Minallah, and Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi were part of the larger bench.

The proceedings were live-streamed on the apex court's website. While the NAB prosecutor general and the Punjab government's lawyer aligned with the federal government's arguments,

the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) advocate general supported the nullification of the amendments.

Justice Aminuddin Khan emphasized NAB's involvement in political engineering and disclosed Imran Khan's request to appear in court personally.

The bench directed the attorney general to arrange an operational video link for Imran Khan's arguments. Justice Athar Minallah discussed the historical context of NAB ordinances, emphasizing their impact on the economy and fundamental rights. The bench raised concerns about NAB's effectiveness in curbing corruption and its implications for innocent individuals.

The apex court postponed the hearing to May 16, seeking details from NAB on the number of politicians proven innocent and imprisoned. Previously, Imran Khan challenged the amendments, arguing against their potential to facilitate white-collar crimes. The court had declared the amendments unconstitutional and ordered the reopening of corruption cases below Rs500 million against political leaders and public officeholders.

Top of Form