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Imran Khan-Bushra Bibi Iddat Nikkah case verdict to be announced by July 12

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Islamabad district and sessions court Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka has emphasised that the verdict in Imran Khan-Bushra Bibi Nikkah Iddat case will be announced by July 12. The district and sessions court on Wednesday adjourned the hearing on appeals against the conviction of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder Imran Khan and his wife, Bushra Bibi in the Nikkah Iddat case

until July 8. Earlier, an Islamabad court on June 27 had rejected pleas seeking the suspension of sentences handed down to PTI founding chairman Imran and his wife Bushra Bibi in the iddat (mandatory waiting period for Muslim women between two marriages) case. Today, the additional district and sessions Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka presided over the hearing. PTI's counsel Salman Akram Raja. Yesterday, Raja had partially argued against the rejection of the suspension of the sentence. At the outset of the hearing, Advocate Raja commenced his arguments as he cited Section 7 of the Muslim Family Law. To which Judge Majoka asked, "Are you saying that Section 7 does not apply in this case?" Raja referenced various judicial decisions on Muslim law, arguing that family law is part of personal law and falls under the jurisdiction of the Shariat Court. He contended that, according to the previous rulings by the country's apex court, a divorce becomes effective even if the Union Council procedure is not completed. Judge Majoka observed that in one case, a woman claimed maintenance despite the lack of a Section 7 notice, and the court granted her the right to maintenance. Raja argued that a woman could marry without a Union Council certificate and that invalidating thousands of marriages annually would create numerous inheritance issues. He cited the Allahdad case, where the court ruled that the Iddat (waiting period) restarts upon the husband's death. Various interpretations of the Iddat period were discussed, including the acceptance of 39 days and three menstrual cycles. Judge Majoka

questioned whether the trial court should have accepted these references or sought evidence. Raja responded that if the references were not accepted, the court should have requested evidence. He further argued that the trial court overlooked the Shariat appellate bench of the SC and that the focus should be on the legitimacy of the Nikkah ceremony, not the accusation of adultery. Raja concluded his arguments saying everything in this case was dependent on Latif's testimony. The statements of all witnesses, including Khawar Maneka and Latif, are based on lies, he alleged.

PTI's Raja completed his arguments, while Barrister Salman Safdar was summoned to provide counterarguments. Safdar requested that his arguments be scheduled for Monday as he was unavailable the next day. He assured the court that he would conclude his arguments within two hours. Judge Majoka reiterated that the court must deliver its decision by July 12. The complainant Khawar Maneka's counsel, Zahid Asif, expressed interest in hearing Safdar's arguments.

Chairman PTI Barrister Gohar claimed that the Nikkah case against Imran Khan was a first-of-its-kind, designed to politically victimise and exert pressure on him. "A personal nature case was created to bring Khan Sahib into compromising situations, but he has remained strong despite the involvement of a woman in this case," Gohar maintained. The chairman mentioned that the IHC directed a decision on this case by the 10 of the month adding that today the party's counsel led by Salman Akram Raja completed its arguments. "The hearing is adjourned until Monday, and we

hope for relief in this case,” he noted. The party’s counsel Raja also talked to the media, he stated, “We presented detailed arguments on the main appeals and submitted past decisions from the Shariah Court, SC, and high court to this court.” “This case pries into a woman’s private life, which should not be brought before the court. Even Islamic teachings do not permit this,” Raja said. On February 3, Imran and Bushra Bibi were sentenced in the Iddat Nikkah case. Twenty days later, the appeal against the verdict was filed in the sessions court. Judge Arjumand heard the appeal and was expected to announce his ruling on May 29, when he requested the IHC to send the case to another judge. On June 9, Bushra Bibi filed a petition in the IHC seeking the suspension of her conviction and sentencing in the Iddat case. On June 14, the IHC ordered the additional sessions court of Islamabad to decide the appeals of PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra against their conviction in the Iddat Nikkah case in one month. On June 11, the court questioned the validity of a judge’s recusal from the case, suggesting that the reason for withdrawal might not be justified. Later, the IHC transferred the case to ADSJ Muhammad Afzal Majuka. Imran and Bibi challenged the transfer of the appeal in the IHC through lawyer Salman Akram Raja. However, the registrar’s office raised the objection that the appeal was pending before the session court.