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## Another judge declines Supreme Court ad-hoc judge role

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The third former Supreme Court Judge Mazhar Alam declined the offer to serve as an ad-hoc judge, after two esteemed former judges Justice (R) Maqbool Baqar and Justice (R) Mazhar Alam Mian Khail excused themselves from taking up the position, citing personal reasons and dissatisfaction with the subsequent social media campaign. The appointments of ad-hoc judges began earlier this month when Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa proposed four retired judges, including Alam, Baqar, and Mian Khail, to address a backlog of over 54,000 pending cases in the SC. The appointment faced criticism from various quarters, including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), which plans to challenge the decision in the Supreme Judicial Council. Barrister Gohar said that the appointment of ad hoc judges was mala fide. "Four judges are being appointed at the same time during the vacations with a view to bringing in like-minded judges," Gohar said. "We are sending

this issue to the Supreme Judicial Council,” he added. PTI has accused the appointments of being politically motivated and opposed any ad-hoc judges from hearing their cases. However, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar defended the appointments, stating that the Constitution permits the appointment of ad-hoc judges and suggested that any legal concerns, such as the invocation of Article 6 against PTI leaders, could be debated in Parliament.