

Imran Khan once again admits to calling for ‘peaceful’ GHQ protest

Published on July 29, 2024

Document Date: Sun, May 03 2026 04:18:23 am

Category: ,English, Latest - ,Pakistan -

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Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman, Imran Khan, has confirmed and clarified his call for a protest outside the General Headquarters (GHQ) during an informal conversation with journalists at Adiala Jail on Monday. Khan stood by his statement about calling for a peaceful protest outside GHQ prior to the events of May 9. He stated, “My statement about the protest outside GHQ was presented as if I confessed or committed a crime on May 9. I made three vlogs and mentioned it 12 times in police investigations.” He alleged that there were plans to kill him outside the Judicial Complex on March 18, with evidence in his possession. “I instructed the party to hold a peaceful protest outside GHQ and cantonments if the army and Rangers arrested me,” Khan added. When questioned about the violence on May 9, Khan responded, “The protest wasn’t peaceful because it was pre-planned. CCTV footage is not being released because our people are

not in it, and it would prove our innocence.” Khan announced his intention to go to court over the missing CCTV footage and to file a case against the Rangers for his alleged abduction from the High Court premises. He questioned who ordered the Rangers to arrest him and who commanded the attack on the party chairman. Khan criticised the government’s crackdown on social media, citing the arrest of 75-year-old cancer patient Raof Hasan. He called for a judicial commission to ensure a transparent investigation. “The government fears PTI and wants to dismantle it through the military,” Khan claimed, criticising the recent budget and stating it had tarnished the government’s credibility. Khan defended social media as the voice of the democratic public, urging against labelling it as ‘digital terrorism’. “Without criticism, institutions will be destroyed,” he warned. When reminded of his own laws penalising criticism of the military during his tenure, Khan differentiated between criticism and defamation, asserting that no journalists had fled or been killed under his government. He acknowledged that even former president Pervez Musharraf’s era was more liberal. Khan affirmed that all institutions, including national security agencies, should be open to criticism. He highlighted the support judges receive on social media for ruling in PTI’s favour. He stressed that the military belongs to Pakistan, not any political party, and its alignment with the current government could harm its credibility, economy, and democracy. In response to another question, Khan blamed the establishment for

obstructing PTI in the elections and facilitating the swift dismissal of corruption cases against Nawaz Sharif. Regarding future protests, Khan announced a major rally in Swabi on August 5, positioning it as a demonstration of PTI's public power and a strategic move to avoid unrest.