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**TRANSPARENCY Nisar denies PML-N deal with military**

Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan strongly refuted claims that his party wishes to derail the democratic process in the country. Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, the leader of the opposition in the National Assembly, has strongly refuted claims that his party wished to derail the democratic process. Although he accepted that democracy was fragile in the country, he affirmed his party's opposition to an army takeover, adding that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) would be the first hurdle in the way of any undemocratic movement.

Nisar was speaking to the media after attending a seminar titled "Accountability and performance of Public Accounts Committee (PAC)," organized by Transparency International Pakistan (TIP).

Responding to a question on whether his the PML-N's "Go Zardari Go" movement had been given the go-ahead by the military establishment, Nisar said that, although the current political climate was conducive to a military takeover, such a move would be harmful for both the army and the country. He emphasised that his party would never let such a coup happen.

Nisar explained that his party's movement was not targeted at anyone in particular.

"Poor governance, inflation, the power crisis, unemployment, rampant corruption in state institutions and the miseries of the people" were the reasons behind the party's recent agitation, he said.

Nisar added that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government had failed to deliver – and therefore had relinquished their right to rule.

Earlier, TIP Chairman Sohail Muzaffar urged the government to sign an agreement with the Swiss government so that the alleged \$100 billion held by Pakistanis in Swiss banks can be taxed, as it is by other countries. "According to a conservative estimate, we can get \$20 billion which can be used for payments of our debts," he added.

He also urged the PAC, which recovered a record Rs115 billion in the last three years, to be vigilant with regard to the memorandums of understanding signed by the government with other countries.

Addressing the seminar, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan acknowledged and appreciated the support of the government that led the PAC to clear a large backlog. However, he also said that "22,000 paras (audits) are waiting for implementation, which is to be done by the government." Nisar

hinted at an impediment – which he did not name – faced by the PAC, saying “there are some bottlenecks in the way of PAC which is all set to look into the accounts of the incumbent government.” Reviving his earlier threat of resigning the PAC chairmanship, Nisar said: “I will not be part of a PAC which is reduced to nothing.” By flouting decisions of the Supreme Court, he argued further, the government has severely clipped the institution’s wings.

Riaz Hussain Pirzada, a member of the committee, said that there would be no corruption if foreign aid and the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) are brought under the umbrella of the PAC.

NoorulHaqQadri, another member of the committee, commended the role of the PAC and said that if the PAC is supported by the government and other public institutions, there would be no need for the NAB.

Zahid Hamid of the PML-N, who is also a member of the PAC, said that the committee had disposed of 22,000 audit paras and had compiled 10 audit reports. He said that PAC is not an accountability body and cannot initiate cases against those who are found guilty. However, he added, the body has recommended disciplinary action against more than 200 people, including army officials.