

SC orders FIA to submit report on NICL case

** CJP appreciates parliamentary committees' efforts for recovery of looted public money*

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court, on Wednesday, sought Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) report on the National Insurance Company Limited (NICL) case that was submitted to the Parliamentary Committee on Commerce last week. The report disclosed that the looted amount in the NICL case was transferred to several accounts.

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJ) Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry directed FIA Investigating Officer Muazzam Jaah to appear before the court in person and submit his investigation report over NICL scandal, which he had presented in the parliamentary committee because the court was not informed about new findings of Rs 18 billion corruption in NICL case. The CJ appreciated the parliamentary committees' efforts for recovering the looted amount and observed that effective parliamentary committees reduce the burden of the courts.

A three-member bench of the Supreme Court, headed by the CJ and comprising Justice Ghulam Rabbani and Justice Sair Ali, heard the NICL scandal case. The court also gave another chance to FIA Director General Malik Muhammad Iqbal to repost the agency's former additional DG FIA Zafar Qureshi in NICL case, and observed that if he reinstates him he could be given relaxation in the contempt of the court proceedings, which were initiated against him over the transfer of Qureshi.

During the course of proceedings, CJ remarked that FIA DG Malik Muhammad Iqbal had undermined the authority of the court, adding that it is binding on him to implement the court's directions and no relaxation would be extended to him. "The DG is trying to nullify the court," he added.

The counsel for FIA DG, Advocate Makhdoom Ali Khan, told the court that his client had repeatedly written to the government for reinstatement of Zafar Qureshi and a summary has been finalised in this regard by Establishment Division, but the approving authority is not available in the capital to approve the summary. Over this, the CJ observed that the prime minister was in Islamabad to chair the meeting of defence committee of cabinet which was convened today (Wednesday). Makhdoom pleaded the court to give some time for the transfer of Zafar Qureshi and stated that FIA DG had left himself on the mercy of the court.