

# Pakistan: Supreme Court hears case of Mehar Abdul Sattar of Okara Military Farms

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## **Remove chains, stop inhuman treatment of Megar Abdul Sattar, Supreme Court Pakistan**

Mehar Abdul Sattar is general secretary of Anjman Mozareen Punjab and also Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee, a peasant leader demanding land rights at Okara Military Farms. He is in jail since April 2016, 36 false police cases have been registered against him. In March 2017, he was shifted to Sahiwal High Security prison to torture him at the maximum.

Against this Asma Jehanghir former president of Supreme Court Bar Association and the most vocal human right advocate in Pakistan went to Supreme Court after Lahore High Court rejected our plea to bring back to an ordinary jail from Sahiwal High Security prison.

Today the case was heard by Chief Justice Supreme Court of Pakistan justice Saqib Nisar and Umer Atta Bendial, another senior SC judge.

Asma Jehanghir narrated the case history and said that only crime of Mehar Abdul Sattar is demanding land rights at Okara Military Farms.

He was shifted to High security jail meant for convicted terrorists and religious terrorists. This was just to punish and victimise him. He is 24 hours in chains. Inhuman treatment of a peasant leader is totally unacceptable.

She said that without a judicial order, an under trial prisoner can not be shifted to another jail. In this case, Home secretary ordered to shift him and later they went to the court for permission. An administrative order is against the prison rule, she remarked.

The advocates from the administration said that we had security issues to bring him from Okara to Sahiwal Court, on this Asma replied that he is not Osama Bin Laden but just a peasant leader.

The administration's advocates said that when Mehar Abdul Sattar appears in a court, hundreds of peasants come to see him, that makes more security issues. On hearing this, Asma Jehanghir replied that yes when rich leaders appear in courts, no one objects how many followers come to the court but a leader of the poor is not treated the same.

Justice Umer Atta Bandial remarked after looking at the list of the cases against him that he seems to be a Socialist. On this Asma Jehanghir pointed towards me and said there are more Socialists here.

Asma Jehanghir said that the court must order to produce him here and see yourself bad he was treated. He has lost almost half of his weight.

Chief Justice Saqib Nisar said that we want to look in detail on which rule and procedure an under trial prisoner is shifted to Sahiwal High Security Jail. While adjourning the case for more hearing in September, he ordered to remove the chains immediately, allowed Sattar's wife and sister to meet

him on fifteen days basis. Also allowed Asma Jehanghir and Abid Saqi to meet Mehar Sattar in jail. However they did not shift him to Central Jail Sahiwal immediately as requested by our advocate. The case would now be heard in Islamabad during September.

**Report by Farooq Tariq**

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