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Pakistan Supreme Court Ousts Prime Minister Gilani

By Jason Ditz

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The multi-year dispute between the ruling Pakistani Peoples Party (PPP) and the nation's Supreme Court, which began when the court declared that members of the ruling party did not have legal immunity from past crimes, [has come to at least a temporary conclusion today with the announcement that the court has removed Prime Minister Yousef Raza Gilani for refusing to implement the ruling.](#)

Gilani's ouster came [most directly from his refusal to cooperate in a corruption case against President Asif Ali Zardari. The court had given him several ultimatums](#) beforehand, and Gilani had spurned them all, insisting that Zardari, as the head of state, was above the law, and that he, as prime minister, did not have to answer to the court.

Even after the ruling Gilani's aides were spurning it, saying it was meaningless and that Gilani retained his position. When the Electoral Commission concurred, however, it was clear that Gilani's term in office was over.

A meeting is now being held at President Zardari's house, with the subject being who will replace Gilani as the new PM. The early word was that Foreign Minister Hina Khar might have the inside track, but it is really impossible to tell at this point. One thing is for sure, the next PM will have his/her work count out for them, facing the exact same calls to cooperate in the Zardari probe.