

Inspector General Sindh Police

4th December 2016

Dear Sir,

Tents and private armies

Private armies and 'militias' are explicitly prohibited by Article 256 of the Constitution of Pakistan. Ironically, the ruling elite and the police have never believed in this law. There is hardly a street in the posh areas of Karachi where one cannot see private 'militias' and armies living in tents, cabins and containers, outside the residences of arrogant, mindless and pampered Pakistanis. These illegal 'militias' encroach public spaces, occupy portions of public roads and terrorise neighborhoods. The local police and the Housing Authorities conveniently look the other way.

On 24th November 2016, the Supreme Court of Pakistan directed the Defence Housing Authority to take across-the-board action against tents set up by security guards outside the residences of high-profile people residing in DHA. It is now for the DHA to ensure that the orders of the Supreme Court are firmly implemented and all tents and other structures outside the residences of lawless residents are immediately removed.

An equally important aspect of this criminality is the complicity of the Sindh police to have allowed these private armies to exist, grow and illegally occupy public spaces. The Sindh Police which has the policing responsibility for DHA should have itself rounded up all such private militias. But it did not. It ought to be a matter of concern and shame that the Supreme Court of a country has to deal with matters as small as the removal of thugs and tents.

The DHA and the Sindh Police are requested to ruthlessly implement the orders of the Supreme Court. Those who cannot exist without the presence of private militias and tents outside their homes may be offered accommodation in high security precincts such as the Central Prison at Karachi. Why must the ordinary citizens be subjected to living in war-like zones in company of militants and their private armies.

Sincerely

Naeem Sadiq

For

Citizens Against Weapons

