

5.2. Major judicial and constitutional reforms

The 26th constitutional amendment, passed in October 2024, and the 27th amendment of November 2025, have significantly changed the judiciary's structure and way of functioning.[1089] The 26th amendment to the Constitution removed the Supreme Court's jurisdiction to hear cases through action taken of its own accord (*suo motu*),[1090] restricted the term of the Supreme Court's chief justice to three years,[1091] and granted the government a role in appointing the chief justice.[1092]

The 27th amendment to the Constitution, signed into law by President Asif Ali Zardari on 13 November 2025 after it had been adopted in both houses of the federal legislature,[1093] provides for the creation of a new Federal Constitutional Court. The new court has taken over many previous functions of the Supreme Court,[1094] including jurisdiction to adjudicate on constitutional matters,[1095] and has been granted powers to override Supreme Court decisions.[1096] The Supreme Court's role has in turn been reduced to handling non-constitutional civil and criminal cases.[1097] The new amendment also strengthened the government's influence over the appointment of judges.[1098] Besides the chief justice and other judges of the Federal Constitutional Court, those of the Supreme Court are now also appointed by the country's President[1099] and the Judicial Commission of Pakistan which not only includes judges of the highest courts, but also MPs and senior executive officials.[1100]

The 27th amendment also grants, save exceptions, lifelong immunity to the country's President.[1101] Moreover it rewrote Article 243 of the Constitution to create the new supreme military position of Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), a post designed to be held automatically by the sitting chief of the Pakistani Army.[1102] For more detailed information on implications of the 27th amendment on the armed forces, see section 3.1.1. Pakistan Army.

In November 2025, a federal representative stated that consultations were ongoing within the cabinet regarding a 28th Constitutional Amendment Bill. It was said that the bill would focus on local bodies, health, and the National Finance Commission (NFC),[1103] addressing longstanding tensions between the federal and provincial governments over fiscal powers.[1104]

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