

# London businessman on ECL, unable to leave Pakistan



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LONDON: A well-connected Pakistani businessman from London has been placed on the Exit Control List (ECL) by the government and he has been unable to leave Pakistan in nearly four months.

Fahad Sultan deals in properties around London's expensive Park Lane area and enjoys friendship with senior figures in Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI), Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP). He has been dealing in the property sector for many years. Several influential figures in the government have attempted to get his name removed from the list but the effort has yielded no results so far.

The News has seen a document which shows that Fahad Sultan has not been able to leave Pakistan since December last year after arriving in Karachi for a scheduled visit of two weeks. It's understood that his name was presented in the last cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan where Sultan's name was placed for removal from the ECL but no decision was made in the end.

"His name has come up twice for removal from the ECL but no decision was made," said a source aware and familiar with the case. A source in the Interior Ministry said: "His name was placed on the ECL because he has questions to answer. It was decided that his movement should be restricted to Pakistan as his name has come up with various payments made from Pakistan to buy properties in London."

A PML-N leader who had been a minister had alleged a few weeks ago that Fahad Sultan was a front man of a PTI leader but the allegation was rejected and termed a mere lie. Fahad Sultan didn't comment on allegations made by the PML-N leader.

The 42-year-old wealthy British Pakistani national operates from his office in a swanky area, off Park Lane, near Hyde Park Corner. The area is known as a centre for wheeling and dealing of expensive properties. Several influential Pakistanis have properties in the same area. He owns a restaurant on Edgware Road, frequented by Arabs. He has been advising businessmen and politicians on buying and selling in London and at the same time he has been investing his own money as well monies of others. He also has involved in renovation of properties around central London.

When approached by this correspondent, Fahad Sultan confirmed that his name is on the ECL making it impossible for him to leave Pakistan. Fahad Sultan, who originates from Karachi but has been doing business in London for more than 15 years, said his ECL issue relates to "misunderstanding based on perceptions".

A source close to Fahad Sultan told this reporter that the London businessman has been treated unfairly and his name should not have been placed on the ECL. “He has done nothing wrong and there is no case against him. False stories about Fahad Sultan have been created but there is no evidence of any illegality against him.”