

Pakistan's A.Q. Khan wants to be free

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan, who passed nuclear secrets to North Korea, Libya and Iran, has claimed he is being illegally detained in his home. In an interview with the Urdu language newspaper Nawa-i-Waqt, his first since his detention four years ago, Khan, 72, said he hoped the country's new government would lift the restrictions on his movement, the Press Trust of India reported Wednesday. Khan, who had headed Pakistan's nuclear program, has been confined to his home since his 2004 confession about leaking the nuclear secrets. "My health is deteriorating and the claims of the government about my physical well-being do not carry weight," Khan was quoted as saying. He said because of his "solitary confinement" his lower limbs are losing vitality and "I am suffering from extreme lethargy." Khan, who had a brief hospital stay last month, called his detention for security reasons a "lame excuse by the government." "I was roaming around the world freely at times when in 1979 numerous fake cases had been registered against me in Holland and I faced no security threat," he said. After Khan's discharge from hospital last month, a cardiologist was quoted as saying his heart was healthy and functioning normally. Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf hasn't allowed outside experts to interview Khan.

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