

Domain Name Dispute Resolution Center (DNDRC)

Arbitration and Mediation Center

COMPLAINT PANEL DECISION

Case No. 2025-0027

Also in PDF C2025-0027

1. The Complainant

The Complainant is Independent Media Corporation Pvt. Ltd., having its office at Printing House, I.I Chundrigar Road, Karachi-74200. The Complainant has initiated the Complaint vide their authorized representative, Asif Lateef, with their address at Jang Geo Media Group, Akhbar Manzil, I.I. Chundrigar Road, Karachi-74200

2. The Domain Name and Respondent

The domain name upon which the Complaint is based is <geonews.pk>, hereinafter referred to as the Disputed Domain Name [“the DDN”].

PKNIC has informed DNDRC that the DDN is registered by Tanveer Sultan, with the contact address at Lambi Larry, Banda Singlian, Abbotabad, and that the email address provided at the time of registration of the DDN is googleurdu@yahoo.com.

3. Procedural History

DNDRC was informed of the Complaint against the Respondent in accordance with the PKNIC - Internet Domain Registration Policy upon receiving notification from the Complainant, on 10 September 2025. DNDRC completed an administrative review of the Complaint and communicated the same to the Complainant on 12 September 2025.

Upon the Complainant’s fulfillment of the procedural obligations on 16 September 2025, DNDRC formally requested the Respondent’s registration details from PKNIC on 26 September 2025. PKNIC provided the requested details on 26 September 2025.

DNDRC issued a formal notification of the dispute to the Respondent on 26 September 2025, enclosing a copy of the Complaint and a Response Form, informing the Respondent that failure to

submit a Response within 10 days would result in the dispute proceeding ex parte. The Respondent filed the Response Form on 09 October 2025.

The Complaint, along with all relevant material, was referred to the appointed arbitrator for review and decision on 14 October 2025. The arbitrator completed the review and issued a decision on 20 October 2025. DNDRC, following the completion of the procedural obligations, transmitted the decision to the concerned parties on 21 October 2025.

Applying Paragraph 4(a) of the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the Rules), DNDRC appointed Mr. Muhamad Amaan Latif as the sole Arbitrator who has verified that the Complaint satisfies the formal requirements of the Policy and the Rules.

Factual Background

4. Parties Contentions

(a) Complainant

The Complainant's brief contentions are reproduced below:

Geo News - Geo News is Pakistan's premier 24/7 Urdu-language news television channel, recognized nationally and internationally for its credibility, reach, and influence. It delivers breaking news, political analysis, and current affairs programming to millions of viewers in Pakistan and across the global Pakistani diaspora. As the flagship electronic media brand of Jang Geo Media Group, Geo News is synonymous with trusted journalism and mass appeal. (Annexure-1 b)

Therefore, the Complainant seeks the following remedy:

In accordance with Paragraph 4(i) of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP), as adopted by PKNIC and administered by DNDRC, the Complainant respectfully requests that the Panel order the transfer of the disputed domain name - geonews.pk - to the Complainant.

(b) Respondent

I am writing in response to the domain dispute notice regarding my domain geonews.pk, which was registered under my name. I believe there has been a misunderstanding regarding the domain ownership and the grounds for this legal claim.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to a fair resolution. And you can call me at my mobile number +92314400486 for more clarification.

And one more thing geo.tv some official has contacted me to buy the domain too few time back when there tv was blocked in Pakistan during Imran Khan's govenment.

If they want the domain then they should buy it from me, or leave it, I'll develop site on it when got free relating global (geo) news.

5. Jurisdiction

The Panel's jurisdiction over this dispute between the Complainant and the Respondent is established by virtue of the Internet Domain Registration Policy version 4.4 (2019-08-19) and the Rules.

The Respondent applied for and was granted registration of the DDN on the basis of these regulations, and has submitted to, the PKNIC - Internet Domain Registration Policy version 4.4 (2019-08-19) and the Rules and correspondingly to the arbitral jurisdiction of the DNDRC and its arbitration decisions.

6. Discussion and Findings

In the landmark case of *Standard Chartered PLC v. Hosting Campus Domain* (case no. C2007-0001) available on the DNDRC website (http://www.dndrc.com/cases_resolved/pdf/c20070001.pdf), the Panel laid down the following four heads under which to analyze cases, under the Internet Domain Registration Policy version 4.4 (2019-08-19) and the UDRP:

- 1. Illegality, unlawfulness or otherwise invalidity of the Application & Registration (a criteria in terms of the PKNIC - Internet Domain Registration Policy June 20, 2006 version 4.1 in addition to the criteria of the UDRP)*
- 2. Identical or confusing similarity to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights (a UDRP criteria)*
- 3. Legitimate interest in Domain Name (a UDRP criteria)*

4. *Registration and use in bad faith (a UDRP criteria)*

The decision of the dispute shall be addressed with respect to the following aspects:

- i. Illegality, unlawfulness or otherwise invalidity with respect to the Application & Registration (a PKNIC - Internet Domain Registration Policy version 4.4 (2019-0819) criteria).
- ii. Identical or confusing similarity with a trademark or service in which the Complainant has rights (a UDRP criteria).
- iii. Legitimate interest in the domain name (a UDRP criteria).
- iv. Registration and use of the domain name in bad faith (a UDRP criteria).

I. Illegality, unlawfulness or otherwise invalidity of the Application & Registration

The PKNIC - Internet Domain Registration Policy version 4.4 (2019-08-19) states that it creates an exception for, and thus excludes the registration of a domain name that:

- a. infringes upon a registered tradename,*
- b. is not bona fide as recognized by international best practice,*
- c. in the opinion of PKNIC, a contravention of the latest version of the Pakistan Penal Code Act, 1860 (including offences of defamation & blasphemy)/ Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997/any applicable criminal law,*
- d. has been declared by a Criminal Court of appropriate jurisdiction to have contravened the latest version of Pakistan Penal Code Act, 1860 (including offences of defamation & blasphemy)/Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997/any applicable criminal law), or*
- e. in the opinion of PKNIC is not appropriate for registration.*

As per the PKNIC - Internet Domain Registration Policy version 4.4 (2019-08-19),

If a party claims that a domain name already registered with PKNIC violates their registered tradename, an obvious derivation of their registered company name is not bona fide as recognized by international best practice, and is a contravention in the opinion of PKNIC to be a contravention of the latest version of the Pakistan Penal Code Act, 1860 (including offences of defamation & blasphemy)/ Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997/any applicable criminal law, PKNIC reserves the right to cancel, or transfer the domain to the claiming party as per the ICANN's Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy [UDRP] (with PKNIC amendments) or as per the orders of a court judgment in Pakistan.

Therefore, for the purpose of assessing illegality, unlawfulness or otherwise invalidity of the Application & Registration of the DDN, the application and registration of the DDN shall be assessed in consideration of the following criteria:

- i. Whether the DDN infringes upon a registered trade name / trademark?
- ii. Whether the application and/or registration of the DDN is bona fide?
- iii. Whether the application and/or registration of the DDN contravenes the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 (the “Penal Code”) or any applicable criminal law?

The Complainant has made the following submissions:

The Complainant, Jang Geo Media Group's Independent Media Corporation (Pvt.) Ltd., is the owner of the well-known broadcasting brand Geo News, Pakistan's premier 24/7 Urdu-language television news channel. Since its launch, Geo News has built an unrivaled reputation in Pakistan and among the global Pakistani diaspora for its credibility, wide reach, and influence. The Complainant owns registered rights and significant goodwill in the trademark "Geo News," which is extensively used across television, digital platforms, and social media.

The respondent has made the following submissions:

Furthermore, the domain name geonews.pk does not infringe upon any trademark of Geo News or any other entity. The term “Geo News” has been widely used for global news content, and I have chosen this name with the clear intention to refer to global news, specifically from an earth sciences perspective, without reference to Geo News the media company.

For the purposes of this criterion, it must be established that the Complainant has trademark rights. In this regard, the Panel takes note of the Complainant's submission that it is the owner of the well-known broadcasting brand Geo News, Pakistan's premier 24/7 Urdu-language television news channel and the Complainant has rights and significant goodwill in the trademark "Geo News," which is extensively used across television, digital platforms, and social media.

The Respondent, for its part, contends that the DDN does not infringe on any trademark because the term “Geo News” has been widely used for global news content. The Respondent asserts it chose the name to refer to global news from an earth sciences perspective, not the Complainant's media company.

In this regard, the Panel takes note of the documents submitted by the Complainant, specifically (Annex-1). This documentation shows that the Complainant is the owner of a registered trademark for "GEO" (No. 196193) in Class 38, with a registration date of May 26, 2004. The Panel also notes the renewal certificate, which renewed this mark for a period of ten years with effect from May 26, 2014. This renewal appears to have expired on May 26, 2024.

The Complainant, however, does not rely solely on this registration. The Complainant argues that it possesses significant goodwill and common law trademark rights in the mark "Geo News". It asserts that the mark has become distinctive of its services as Pakistan's premier 24/7 Urdu-language television news channel, building an "unrivaled reputation" and "influence" through extensive use

To establish unregistered or common law trademark rights under the UDRP, a complainant must demonstrate that its mark has acquired distinctiveness or "secondary meaning" as a source identifier. As outlined in the WIPO Overview 3.0, section 1.3, this requires relevant evidence concerning factors such as duration of use, advertising, sales, and public recognition. Conclusory allegations of common law rights are generally insufficient.

The Panel observes that while the Complainant's registration for the "GEO" (Annex-1) supports a long history of use and brand association dating back to at least 2004. More importantly, the Complainant has made strong assertions regarding its public recognition, which the Panel finds credible. "Geo News" is widely and publicly known in Pakistan as a leading news broadcaster, and its reputation has been established over many years. Through this extensive and continuous use, the mark "Geo News" has transcended any descriptive meaning and now serves as a strong source identifier for the Complainant's services.

The Respondent, for its part, attacks the distinctiveness of the mark, claiming the term "Geo News" is widely used for "global news" and that its intent was to refer to "global news, specifically from an earth sciences perspective". This argument is unpersuasive as the Respondent provides no evidence of this alleged widespread use. In contrast, the Complainant's use is specific, well-known, and overwhelmingly associated with its media brand in Pakistan. The Respondent's explanation of an "earth sciences" perspective appears to be a pretext and does not defeat the secondary meaning established by the Complainant.

The Panel is satisfied that the Complainant has established sufficient common law trademark rights in the "Geo News" mark for the purpose of standing under the Policy therefore the Respondent's registration of the DDN would contravene the PKNIC policy.

However, for the sake of discussion, the Panel will consider the remaining three UDRP criteria.

II. Identical or confusing similarity to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights

The Complainant has made the following submissions:

The disputed domain name, geonews.pk, is identical and confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark "Geo News." The domain incorporates the Complainant's mark in its entirety, with only the addition of the country code .pk. Under established UDRP precedent, such incorporation creates confusing similarity and is likely to mislead internet users into believing that the disputed domain name is associated with, endorsed by, or operated under the authority of the Complainant.

The Respondent has not submitted a response.

The Complainant contends that the DDN is identical and confusingly similar to its trademark "Geo News." The Complainant argues that the DDN incorporates the mark in its entirety, with the only difference being the addition of the country code top-level domain (ccTLD) ".pk." The Complainant submits that under established UDRP precedent, this addition is insufficient to prevent a finding of confusing similarity and that Internet users are highly likely to believe the DDN is affiliated with the Complainant.

To assess confusing similarity, the Panel refers to Paragraph 1.7 of the WIPO Overview 3.0, which provides that the first element of the UDRP serves as a standing requirement and involves a straightforward comparison between the mark in which the Complainant has rights and the DDN. It is well established that where a domain name incorporates the entirety of a trademark, confusing similarity is generally found for the purposes of the UDRP.

Applying this test, the Panel finds that the Complainant's mark "Geo News" is clearly recognizable and incorporated in its entirety in the DDN. The dominant component of the DDN is the term "geonews," which is identical to the Complainant's mark.

Furthermore, in line with Section 1.11.1 of the WIPO Overview 3.0, the country-code top-level domain (ccTLD) ".pk" is a technical requirement for registration and is disregarded when assessing similarity under the first element.

Therefore, the Panel finds that the DDN is identical to the Complainant's trademark.

III. Legitimate interests in a domain name

As per paragraph 4(c), the UDRP requires the Respondent's claim to be of legitimate interest and shall be:

"proved based on all evidence presented" that "shall demonstrate" the Respondent's "rights or legitimate interests to the domain name for purposes of Paragraph 4(a)(ii)."

Paragraph 4(c) states that:

"(i) before any notice to you of the dispute, your use of, or demonstrable preparations to use, the domain name or a name corresponding to the domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services; or

(ii) you (as an individual, business, or other organization) have been commonly known by the domain name, even if you have acquired no trademark or service mark rights; or

(iii) you are making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the domain name, without intent for commercial gain to misleadingly divert consumers or to tarnish the trademark or service mark at issue."

The Complainant has made the following submissions:

The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name. The Complainant has never licensed, permitted, or otherwise authorized the Respondent to use the mark "Geo News" in any manner. There is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by this name or that the Respondent is using the domain for a bona fide offering of goods or services. To the contrary, the disputed domain name is currently parked with Sedo, a well-known domain marketplace. This demonstrates that the Respondent is attempting to profit from the Complainant's established trademark by offering the domain for sale, which cannot constitute a legitimate use.

The Respondent has made the following submissions:

First and foremost, I would like to clarify that geo.tv is the official website of Geo News, a prominent news organization, while geonews.pk was not registered in reference to Geo News or any similar entity. I purchased the domain geonews.pk from another domain owner who

registered it on June 21, 2006. The domain was acquired with the intent to represent Global Earth News â€œ not any existing trademark or brand associated with Geo News.

It is important to note that geonews.pk was a legitimate domain registered at the time with full compliance with the .pk domain registration policies. If Geo News, or its parent company, claims trademark rights over the name, I respectfully ask why PKNIC approved and registered this domain when it would seemingly conflict with a trademark claim. The domain was registered in good faith based on available registration rules at the time.

Pursuant to Section 2.1 of the WIPO Overview 3.0, a complainant is required to establish a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests. Once such a prima facie case is made, the burden of production shifts to the respondent to present evidence demonstrating its rights or legitimate interests. If the respondent fails to do so, the complainant is generally deemed to have satisfied the second element.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has successfully established a prima facie case. The Complainant has confirmed that it has no relationship with the Respondent and has not granted any authorization for the use of its "Geo News" mark. The nature of the DDN, which incorporates the Complainant's mark in its entirety, does not suggest that the Respondent would be commonly known by it.

The Panel also considers the Respondent's rebuttal. The Respondent's core arguments are that the DDN was intended to represent "Global Earth News" and that its registration by PKNIC confers legitimacy. The Panel will first address the argument regarding the PKNIC registration. The administrative approval of a domain name by a registrar is not, in itself, a determination of trademark rights or a defense under the UDRP and a registrar's acceptance of a registration does not confer any rights or legitimate interests upon the Respondent via a third-party trademark.

The Panel also notes the Respondent's primary assertion that the DDN was intended for "Global Earth News". To establish rights or legitimate interests on this basis, the Respondent must provide evidence of use or demonstrable preparations for use in connection with this claimed name. A respondent's mere assertion of an acronymic or alternative meaning, without any supporting evidence, is generally insufficient to rebut a complainant's prima facie case, especially when the DDN incorporates a well-known trademark.

The Respondent has provided no evidence whatsoever of any such legitimate use neither have they demonstrated any preparations to use the DDN for a website related to "Global Earth News".

Instead, the evidence suggests that the DDN is parked and offered for sale on a domain marketplace which the Respondent has failed to rebut.

The Respondent, therefore, has failed to provide any evidence that it meets any of the circumstances outlined in Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy as they have not shown use in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services, that they are commonly known by the DDN, or that they are making a legitimate noncommercial or fair use.

In view of the Respondent's failure to rebut the Complainant's prima facie case with a credible claim, the Panel finds that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the DDN.

IV. Registration and use in bad faith

The Complainant has made the following submissions:

The disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The Complainant's mark "Geo News" is widely recognized and is synonymous with television news broadcasting in Pakistan. It is inconceivable that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant's mark at the time of registration. By parking the domain with Sedo, the Respondent has evidenced an intent to sell, rent, or otherwise transfer the domain registration for valuable consideration in excess of documented out-of-pocket costs, which is clear evidence of bad faith under Paragraph 4(bXi) of the UDRP. Moreover, the use of the Complainant's famous trademark in a parked domain further disrupts the Complainant's ability to reneet its brand within the .pk domain space and risks diverting or confusing internet users.

Accordingly, the Complainant submits that all three clements of the Policy are met:

- 1. The disputed domain name is Identical and confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark "Geo News."*
- 2. The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the domain name.*
- 3. The domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith, as demonstrated by its listing on Sedo for sale and its targeting of a famous trademark.*

The Respondent has made the following submissions:

If the complainant Geo News seeks the geonews.pk domain for its own use, I am open to negotiations for its sale. Given its long-term registration and the substantial value it holds, I would consider a fair compensation of 10 Lac PKR for its transfer.

In conclusion, I trust that this will clarify the misunderstanding surrounding the domain registration. I request that you review the case with these facts in mind and recognize the legitimacy of my claim over geonews.pk. I also urge that PKNIC reassess the grounds on which this domain was disputed, especially considering that it was registered long before the current claim was made.

The Complainant asserts that the Respondent registered and is using the DDN in bad faith. The Complainant argues that its "Geo News" mark is widely recognized and synonymous with television news broadcasting in Pakistan, making it unacceptable that the Respondent was unaware of its rights at the time of registration. It contends that the Respondent's action of parking the domain with Sedo demonstrates an intent to sell the domain for valuable consideration, which is clear evidence of bad faith under Paragraph 4(b)(i) of the Policy. The Complainant also submits that this use disrupts its brand and risks confusing internet users.

In response, the Respondent does not deny an intent to sell. Instead, the Respondent explicitly states: "If the complainant Geo News seeks the geonews.pk domain for its own use, I am open to negotiations for its sale." The Respondent proposes "a fair compensation of 10 Lac PKR" for its transfer, citing its "long-term registration and the substantial value it holds." The Respondent also requests that PKNIC reassess the dispute.

For the purpose of this criterion, the Panel must determine whether the DDN was registered and is being used in bad faith pursuant to Paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy.

With respect to registration, the central test is whether the Respondent was aware of the Complainant's mark and registered the DDN to target the Complainant. The Panel acknowledges the popularity and prominence of the Complainant in Pakistan and finds it highly improbable that the Respondent would be unaware of the Complainant's trademark and its strong association with that DDN within the country. The Panel therefore finds that the Respondent targeted the Complainant's trademark at the time of acquisition.

The Panel also finds the Respondent's own submission to be dispositive. Paragraph 4(b)(i) of the Policy identifies as evidence of bad faith:

(i) circumstances indicating that you have registered or you have acquired the domain name primarily for the purpose of selling, renting, or otherwise transferring the domain name registration to the complainant who is the owner of the trademark

or service mark or to a competitor of that complainant, for valuable consideration in excess of your documented out-of-pocket costs directly related to the domain name;

The Respondent's explicit offer to sell the DDN to the Complainant for 10 Lac PKR is a clear admission that falls squarely within the conduct described in Paragraph 4(b)(i). This sum is substantially in excess of any credible out-of-pocket costs for domain registration and demonstrates that the DDN was acquired and is being held for the primary purpose of selling it to the Complainant (See WIPO Overview Section 3.1.1).

This finding is further supported by the evidence that the DDN is parked on Sedo, a commercial domain marketplace. This is not a *bona fide* use of the domain; rather, it is an action taken in furtherance of the Respondent's clear intent to profit from the DDN's association with the Complainant's well-known mark.

By registering and holding the DDN, the Respondent prevents the Complainant, the clear and obvious entity associated with the name, from reflecting its mark in the corresponding DDN. This act of "blocking" a trademark owner from its natural domain name is a recognized indicator of bad faith under Paragraph 4(b)(ii) of the Policy.

The Respondent's request that PKNIC "reassess the grounds" for the dispute is irrelevant to this Panel's determination under the UDRP.

Considering the above, particularly the Respondent's explicit offer to sell the DDN to the Complainant for a significant sum combined with the Respondent's knowledge of the Complainant's mark and parking of the DDN, the Panel concludes that the Respondent registered and is using the DDN in bad faith.

7. Decision

Upon reviewing the contentions and supporting evidence submitted by both Parties, the Panel finds that the Complainant has successfully established all elements required under the PKNIC - Internet Domain Registration Policy and the UDRP. The Panel finds that the Complainant has demonstrated registered and common law trademark rights in the name "Geo News". The Respondent has not demonstrated any corresponding rights or legitimate interests in the DDN. The Panel concludes that the Respondent's registration and passive holding of the DDN, <geonews.pk>, infringes on the Complainant's rights and was done in bad faith.

Taking all the discussion above into consideration, the Panel concludes and decides that:

1. The Respondent's registration of the DDN contravenes the PKNIC - Internet Domain Registration Policy version 4.4 (2019-08-19);
2. The DDN is identical to the registered trademark of the Complainant;
3. The Respondent has no legitimate interest in the DDN;
4. The DDN was registered and is being used in bad faith.

Pursuant to Section 4 of the Policy, the Panel therefore directs that the registration of the DDN <geonews.pk> be transferred to the Complainant, as requested, within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of this decision, either by email or through its publication on the official website www.dndrc.com/cases_resolved/, whichever is earlier. The Complainant shall also remain entitled to approach PKNIC directly for enforcement of this decision.

Arbitrator: Muhammad Amaan Latif

Sole Panelist

Date: 20 October 2025