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## Rawalpindi Imposes Ban on Gatherings Ahead of PTI Protest

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The Rawalpindi civil administration has enforced Section 144 across the district from August 4 to August 10 in response to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) scheduled protest today, August 5. The move comes as heightened tensions surround Adiala Jail, where former Prime Minister and PTI founder Imran Khan has been detained for nearly two years.

A notification issued by Deputy Commissioner Hassan Waqar Cheema outlined strict prohibitions, including a ban on public gatherings, political rallies, pillion riding on

motorcycles, display of weapons, and the use of loudspeakers. Authorities have cited concerns over maintaining public order and security, especially near Adiala Jail.

To secure the area, Adiala Road will be fully sealed using shipping containers, and a red alert has been declared. Punjab Rangers, alongside Rawalpindi Police, will conduct joint patrols around the jail perimeter. Additionally, anti-riot units armed with tear gas and batons are being stationed at key checkpoints.

Traffic will be rerouted away from sensitive zones, with diversions set from Kacheri to Adiala and from the Chakri Motorway Interchange. Any attempts to dismantle official blockades will result in legal consequences, the administration warned.

In a video message released on Sunday, senior PTI leader and former National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser announced that protests would be held nationwide on August 5. He described the protest as the “beginning of a movement” and criticized the government for what he called the “unjust” imprisonment of Imran Khan since August 5, 2023.

Qaiser also expressed dissatisfaction with the judiciary, stating that the public’s confidence in the legal system has eroded, especially following the 26th Constitutional Amendment. He accused the judiciary of operating under the influence of the current administration, warning that the nation’s future depends on the restoration of justice and impartiality.

He further criticized the military operations in the formerly Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), claiming they have failed to deliver peace and stability. Qaiser declared opposition to any further military actions, emphasizing the need for security without oppression.

Calling for a peaceful resistance, he reiterated PTI’s demand for fair trials and legal due process. “This is not just PTI’s cause, it is a national struggle for justice, merit, and equal rights,” he said.

As protests unfold, the situation in Rawalpindi remains tense, with heavy security deployments and restricted movement throughout the city.