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PTI Leaders Challenge Disqualification in Peshawar High Court

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Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Omar Ayub, Shibli Faraz, and Zartaj Gul have filed petitions in the Peshawar High Court (PHC) to contest their disqualifications and 10-year sentences linked to the May 9, 2023, riots.

Senior leaders of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), including National Assembly Opposition Leader Omar Ayub Khan, Senate Opposition Leader Shibli Faraz, and Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Zartaj Gul, have approached the Peshawar High Court (PHC) to challenge their disqualifications and convictions stemming from the May 9, 2023, riots,

as reported by ARY News. The riots, sparked by the arrest of PTI founder Imran Khan, involved violent protests targeting military installations and public buildings. A special Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Faisalabad sentenced 108 PTI members, including Ayub, Faraz, and Gul, to 10 years in prison on July 31, 2025, while acquitting 77 others, per The Express Tribune.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) subsequently disqualified nine PTI lawmakers, including Ayub, Faraz, and Gul, under Article 63(1)(h) of the Constitution, which bars individuals convicted of crimes involving moral turpitude from holding office for five years post-release, according to Business Recorder. The PHC granted protective bail to Faraz and Gul until August 11, 2025, directing them to appeal their convictions at the Lahore High Court (LHC), and issued a stay order halting further ECP actions against Ayub and Faraz, per Dawn. PTI's legal team, led by Bashir Khan Wazir, argued that the ECP's decision was unlawful, as it bypassed the National Assembly Speaker's referral, violating due process, as stated in The Frontier Post.

Omar Ayub, speaking outside the PHC, called the ATC's verdict "bogus" and vowed to fight both the convictions and disqualifications, per Geo.tv. The case highlights ongoing tensions between PTI and state institutions, with the party facing significant legal hurdles since Khan's 2022 ouster. The PHC's ruling offers temporary relief, but the leaders' appeals at the LHC will determine their political future.