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PTI Leaders, Family Blocked from Imran Khan as Protests Erupt

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Police barred Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders and Imran Khan's family from meeting him at Adiala Jail, escalating tensions amid protests and disqualifications.

On August 5, 2025, Rawalpindi police prevented several senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders and family members of former Prime Minister Imran Khan from meeting him at Adiala Jail, where he has been detained since August 5, 2023, marking two years of incarceration. The crackdown coincided with nationwide protests by PTI supporters, sparked by the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) disqualification of nine PTI lawmakers, including Opposition Leaders Omar Ayub Khan and Senator Shibli Faraz, over convictions linked to the May 9, 2023, riots. The blockades, enforced under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), banning public gatherings, saw over 4,000

security personnel and Punjab Rangers deployed around the jail, with roads sealed using containers.

PTI leaders, including Ali Muhammad Khan, Mahmood Khan Achakzai, Salman Akram Raja, Latif Khosa, and Shandana Gulzar Khan, were stopped at checkpoints, some held for over 30 minutes near a private housing society. Khan's sister, Aleema Khan, speaking at Chakri Interchange, vowed to stay until granted access, alleging that Khan's sons were denied visas to visit Pakistan. She condemned the government's actions as an assault on democratic rights. PTI's Punjab wing reported over 300 arrests, including six Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) like Moin Qureshi and Farukh Javed Moon, with police accused of raiding leaders' homes without warrants.

The ECP's disqualification, based on an Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) ruling in Faisalabad, cited Article 63(1)(h) of the Constitution, which bars convicted individuals from holding office. PTI's Sheikh Waqas Akram called the move a "politically motivated" attack on democracy, vowing continued protests for Khan's release. The government, led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, defended the security measures, citing public safety. Information Minister Attaullah Tarar accused PTI of destabilizing the state, referencing the May 9 riots that targeted military installations. As PTI rallies, led by figures like Shaukat Basra in Lahore, gain momentum, the standoff highlights deepening political divides, with Khan's supporters framing the crackdown as state oppression.