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Punjab Minister Labels PTI Fascist, Alleges Destabilization Plot

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Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari condemned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) as a fascist group intent on destabilizing Pakistan, citing their role in past unrest and recent protest plans.

On August 4, 2025, Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari sharply criticized the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), branding it a fascist organization rather than a legitimate political party during a press conference in Lahore. She accused PTI of orchestrating chaos to undermine national stability, particularly highlighting their involvement in the May 9, 2023, riots, which she described as unforgivable, stating, “Such acts must not be forgotten, or they will recur.” Bokhari pointed to PTI’s withdrawal from by-elections in

Sambrial and Muridke, suggesting it stemmed from fear of public rejection, as reported by The Express Tribune.

Bokhari questioned PTI's political legitimacy, alleging they engage in guerrilla-style conspiracies against the state, and asked, "Can a group waging war against Pakistan be called a political party?" She emphasized that only the Supreme Court has the authority to ban a political party but argued that progress requires eliminating PTI's disruptive influence. The minister also mocked PTI's history of failed protests, noting that calls for demonstrations on November 26, 2024, and post-Ashura in 2025 collapsed, per Daily Times. She further highlighted PTI's planned August 5 protest, coinciding with Youm-e-Istehsal, as a deliberate attempt to overshadow national solidarity with Kashmir, according to Minute Mirror.

The minister praised Punjab's development under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, contrasting it with PTI's alleged mismanagement in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where she claimed Rs354 billion in local government funds were misappropriated, per The Nation. Bokhari also addressed economic progress, noting Chief Minister Nawaz's zero-tolerance policy on sugar hoarding, with arrests and seizures underway to stabilize prices, as reported by Pakistan Observer. She asserted that PTI's actions, including past anti-American rhetoric now shifting to reliance on foreign figures like Donald Trump, reflect their inconsistency, per Minute Mirror.

Bokhari's remarks come amid heightened tensions, with PTI planning protests on August 5 to mark two years of Imran Khan's imprisonment. The government's firm stance, backed by Punjab's crackdown on illegal activities, underscores its commitment to maintaining order and advancing national interests, as stated by Bokhari during the press conference.