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Lahore Court Rejects Omar Ayub's Bail in May 9 Violence Cases

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A Lahore Anti-Terrorism Court dismissed bail pleas from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Omar Ayub in three cases linked to the May 9, 2023, riots, citing his non-appearance and prior conviction.

In a significant blow to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), an Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Lahore rejected interim bail applications for PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub on August 9, 2025, in three cases tied to the violent protests of May 9, 2023. The ruling, delivered by

Judge Manzar Ali Gill, stemmed from Ayub's failure to attend the hearing and his status as a convicted individual in related cases, as reported by Dawn.

The cases involve attacks on Jinnah House, Askari Tower, and Shadman Police Station during the unrest that followed the arrest of PTI founder Imran Khan. Ayub, a former National Assembly opposition leader, had previously secured temporary bail but did not appear in court, prompting the ATC to deny his one-day exemption request. His legal team argued that Ayub sought protective bail from the Peshawar High Court after a 10-year sentence was issued by a Faisalabad ATC for similar May 9 charges. Judge Gill, however, ruled that as a convict, Ayub must surrender before seeking further legal recourse, per Pakistan's anti-terrorism laws, according to The News International.

The May 9, 2023, protests saw PTI supporters clash with authorities, targeting state and military properties across Pakistan. Hundreds were charged, with significant convictions, including 108 PTI members, among them Ayub and Shibli Faraz, sentenced to up to 10 years in Faisalabad last month, as noted by Geo News. These verdicts led the Election Commission of Pakistan to strip Ayub and Faraz of their parliamentary roles, weakening PTI's leadership structure.

PTI has called these legal actions politically driven, aimed at crippling the opposition. Ayub's counsel emphasized his right to fair judicial access amid ongoing prosecutions. No immediate appeal plans were disclosed, but party sources suggest challenges in higher courts are likely. The rejection of Ayub's bail adds to PTI's woes, with Imran Khan detained since 2023 on multiple charges following his 2022 ouster, and other leaders like Bushra Bibi also imprisoned, fueling calls for protests.

This development could hamper PTI's ability to rally supporters ahead of potential elections, as legal battles constrain key figures. The party's narrative of targeted persecution resonates with its base, yet analysts warn that persistent judicial setbacks may erode its organizational momentum. With over 100 May 9-related cases nationwide, the legal repercussions continue to shape Pakistan's political dynamics, testing PTI's resilience. Efforts to reach Ayub's team for comment were unsuccessful.