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## Imran Khan waged war against state: ATC judge

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LAHORE:

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan had assigned the task of attacking the military installations, government properties and police officials to build pressure for his release, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) judge said in his order on Thursday. ATC Judge Khalid Arshad issued a detailed order of the dismissal of Imran's bail plea in a case registered against him over May 9, 2023 violence, including attack on the Jinnah House. The judge through a short order on July 9 had dismissed Imran's bail plea. The order stated that the statements of two prosecution witnesses revealed that Imran not only instigated the people but also gave the task of the attacks and arson, to create anarchy and law and order situation merely to pressurise the military establishment and the then government for his release. It added that the petitioner's counsel Barrister Salman Safdar raised queries about the genuineness of the cases. He pointed out that neither the names of those

officials were disclosed, nor even mentioned in the first information report (FIR), who saw the petitioner, Imran, and other party leaders hatching conspiracy. Barrister Salman Safdar also questioned why those officials avoided revealing this conspiracy before their high-ups if it was really a conspiracy. The detailed order stated that after perusing the record, the two prosecution witnesses recorded their statements under Section 161 CrPC, contending that petitioner Imran Khan held a meeting at Zaman Park with 15 senior PTI leaders on May 7, 2023 at 5:15pm to 6:00pm and told them that he had apprehension of him being arrested on May 9, 2023 in Islamabad. On his arrest, they all, in leadership of Dr Yasmeen Rashid, would gather PTI workers and attack the military installations, government properties and the police officials to create pressure on the government and armed institutions for his release, Imran had instructed. On that, the co-accused replied that he [Imran] was their redline, and they would jam the roads, instigating the PTI workers, according to the order. Moreover, the order continued, the petitioner on May 9, 2023 at the time of leaving for Islamabad also sent a video message "if I'm arrested, the condition of the country will worsen like that of Sri Lanka". Another clip of the petitioner Imran was also broadcast the whole day through the official twitter account of the PTI on social media on May 9, 2023 to instigate the PTI workers to come out in protest and calling it "Real Jihad for Real Freedom, Haqeeqi Azadi". The order stated that actually the case of prosecution against the petitioner was

that he hatched the alleged criminal conspiracy, which was agreed by the top PTI leadership and the same was conveyed through modern devices, especially online, to the protesters who in result of the alleged instigation, launched attack, entered forcibly in Jinnah House and set it on fire, waging war against the state, intending to overawe the government. The recovery of alleged articles used for recording of video messages of instigation was to be affected from the petitioner. The alleged malice of political victimisation pleaded on behalf of the petitioner against the official complainant was not appearing to prudent mind, the order stated. A peaceful demonstrator becomes terrorist, when he hatched criminal conspiracy, disseminate it and shared common object with other accused, who begin armed attack, attempt to damage or damage the state properties like Jinnah House, intending to jam government machinery, as per Section 6 of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 and hence he lost his normal rights of a law abiding citizen. The order further stated that investigation must not be interrupted as it would curtail the collection of the prosecution evidence. An extraordinary concession of pre-arrest bail was meant for innocent person and not the petitioner who hatched, materialised the alleged criminal conspiracy along with the senior PTI leadership and protestors, having the common object to wage war against the state to topple the government. Finally, the ATC judge dismissed the bail plea of petitioner Imran Khan.