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PML-N Secures Additional Reserved Seat in KP Assembly

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The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has secured an additional reserved seat in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly after a July 16, 2025, ruling by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The decision came in response to an independent candidate's timely affiliation with PML-N, strengthening the party's position in the provincial assembly and sparking debate over electoral fairness.

The ECP's 15-page verdict, led by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, awarded PML-N the extra reserved seat after independent candidate Malik Tariq Awan from PK-103 joined the party on February 23, 2024, within the constitutional three-day window following the election notification, as stipulated under Articles 51(6)(e) and 106 of the Constitution. This adjustment aligned PML-N's count of general seats with that of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), entitling PML-N to an additional reserved seat for women or minorities.

Similar appeals from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians (PTI-P) and Awami National Party (ANP) were rejected by the ECP, which noted that recalculating seat quotas beyond the February 22, 2024 cutoff would lead to "unending controversies." The ruling followed a directive from the Peshawar High Court (PHC) to revisit seat allocations after PML-N argued it was unfairly allotted fewer reserved seats than JUI-F despite having the same number of general seats.

Currently, PML-N and JUI-F each hold nine reserved seats, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) holds five, while PTI-P and ANP hold one each. The allocation of a remaining minority seat between PML-N and JUI-F is still pending.

Critics have raised concerns about the allocation process, highlighting that PTI, despite winning 91 general seats, did not receive any reserved seats, while PML-N's five general seats translated into nine reserved seats. Some analysts argue that the ECP's ruling, which appears to benefit Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's PML-N, undermines the principles of democratic fairness, especially amid ongoing allegations of rigging in the 2024 elections.

With the opposition gaining momentum in KP currently holding 53 seats against PTI's 92 the ruling has the potential to intensify political tensions. Observers emphasize the need for greater transparency in electoral processes to restore public trust in Pakistan's democracy.