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## Govt voices concern after SC's verdict on PTI-SIC reserved seats

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The federal government on Monday expressed concerns regarding a Supreme Court order that suspended the allocation of reserved seats to other parties by the Peshawar High Court (PHC) and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). A three-judge bench, led by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, granted leave to appeal and adjourned the matter till June 3. The bench unanimously suspended the ECP's decision for the re-allocation of reserved seats to other political parties. The PHC through its earlier verdict dashed the PTI's hopes of getting reserved seats as it dismissed the Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) petition challenging the ECP's ruling that denied reserved seats to the party. PTI-backed independent candidates had found a new home in the SIC after the party lost its election symbol as a result of the ruling in the intra-party election case. This is the first time the PTI has managed to secure relief from the apex court during the tenure of CJP Qazi Faez Isa. "This is a

matter of constitutional interpretation; it would have been appropriate if larger bench issued directives,” Tarar said in a statement. He said that the top court should have exercised caution in its interim order, saying that the final decision of the PHC will stand. The federal minister remarked that under the Practice and Procedure Act of the Supreme Court, it was appropriate and preferable for a five-member larger bench to hear such matters. “According to Article 67, the eligibility of a member’s legislation is not questioned; it is hoped that the final decision of the Peshawar High Court will prevail,” he concluded.