

Govt says judges' dissenting notes cast doubt on SC reserved seats case verdict

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ISLAMBAD:

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, has raised concerns over the recent Supreme Court decision involving the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the allocation of reserved seats. During a press conference in Lahore, Tarar highlighted the dissenting opinions of two Supreme Court judges, Justice Aminuddin Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan, which have cast doubts on the majority verdict. Tarar criticized the Supreme Court's delay in issuing a comprehensive written decision, asking, "Why have the remaining judges not released their written opinions yet?" He noted that the dissenting judges have suggested that implementing the decision might require suspending certain constitutional articles, a move he deemed problematic. The minister elaborated on the implications of the dissenting notes, questioning the potential for

“floor-crossing” if members of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) were to occupy PTI seats. “Is this not a violation of Articles 62 and 63?” Tarar asked, referring to the constitutional provisions that outline qualifications for parliamentarians. He also expressed apprehension about the decision setting a precedent for future political manoeuvres, where members could freely switch party affiliations. “The dissenting notes have put a big question mark on the majority decision,” Tarar stated, emphasizing the need for clarity on the constitutional and legal issues raised by the judges. Tarar warned that suspending constitutional articles to facilitate the decision could undermine Pakistan’s legal framework. “If the impression of unilateral relief from the Supreme Court’s decision persists, it will damage the constitution and the rule of law,” he argued, highlighting the potential legal and constitutional fallout. The information minister called for a thorough examination of the dissenting judges’ concerns, stressing that a failure to address these issues could lead to legalized floor-crossing and effectively nullify Articles 62 and 63. “The rule of law must be upheld, and any legal ambiguities must be resolved to maintain constitutional integrity,” Tarar concluded.