



# FAFEN UPDATE ON ELECTION TRIBUNALS

## AROUND 26% NA, 42% PA PETITIONS DECIDED BY TRIBUNALS SO FAR

Between February 1 and April 20, 2025, the election tribunals decided 24 petitions related to General Elections (GE) 2024. This brings the total number of decided petitions to 136, which is 37 percent of the all the petitions being heard by the election tribunals across four provinces. FAFEN has been systematically tracking 372<sup>1</sup> petitions filed with 23 election tribunals after GE-2024. So far, 26 percent of challenges to results of National Assembly (NA) constituencies and 42 percent of Provincial Assemblies' (PA) constituencies have been decided.

Out of the 24 petitions decided, 21 were from Punjab, two from Balochistan and one each Sindh. In Punjab, two tribunals in Lahore decided eight cases, one in Rawalpindi decided seven, and one in Bahawalpur decided six. The two tribunals in Quetta disposed one case each, while a tribunal of Karachi disposed only one case. No petitions from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were decided during this period.

Despite an increase in the number of petitions decided in Punjab as compared to previous months, the overall pace of decisions slowed down. This may be because four tribunals remained largely dysfunctional during the reporting period, including two in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, one in Punjab, and the sole tribunal of Islamabad Capital Territory.

To date, Balochistan's three tribunals have collectively decided 43 (83 percent) of total 51 petitions filed for National and Provincial constituencies in the province. Punjab's eight tribunals have decided 66 (34 percent) of 192 petitions. Sindh's five tribunals have decided 18 (22 percent) of 83 petitions. KP's six tribunals have decided nine (21 percent) of 42 petitions.

Out of 124 petitions challenging the results of National Assembly constituencies, 33 (26 percent) have been decided so far. Of these, 19 were from Punjab, eight from Balochistan, four from Sindh, and two from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Out of 248 petitions challenging the results of Provincial Assembly constituencies, 103 (42 percent) have been decided. These include 47 from Punjab, 35 from Balochistan, 14 from Sindh, and seven from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### Status and Functioning of Election Tribunals

The Election Commission of Pakistan initially set up 15 election tribunals to hear petitions against the results of National and Provincial Assembly constituencies after the 2024 General Elections. These included six tribunals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, five in Sindh, three in Balochistan, and one in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The formation of tribunals in Punjab was delayed due to differences between the Lahore High Court and the Election Commission. The issue was resolved in September 2024 after a Supreme Court judgment allowed the ECP to form tribunals with serving or retired judges. Currently, there are eight tribunals in the province, notified in multiple phases.

The proceeding on petitions pending before four of these tribunals – two in KP, one each in Punjab and ICT – has stalled over recent months. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, one tribunal became inactive after its presiding judge recused himself from hearing all petitions pending before him when the ECP transferred one of the petitions to another tribunal due to objections raised about his impartiality. The second tribunal became non-functional after its judge was elevated to the Supreme Court. In Punjab, the judge of the Multan tribunal was transferred to the Islamabad High Court and appointed as its Acting Chief Justice. The proceedings on three petitions against the election outcome in ICT constituencies are halted since the ECP transferred these petitions to the Rawalpindi tribunal on request of the respondents in these constituencies. The matter is sub-judice since then as the Islamabad High Court has restrained the Rawalpindi Tribunal to proceed further in ICT-related petitions.

<sup>1</sup> FAFEN's previous update covered 371 petitions. An additional petition was filed with a Quetta tribunal in January 2025, which was dismissed for being time-barred as the Elections Act 2017 allows filing of petitions only within 45 days of notification of returned candidate.

Following table presents a regional distribution of the election petitions decided till date, disaggregated by the National and Provincial constituencies:

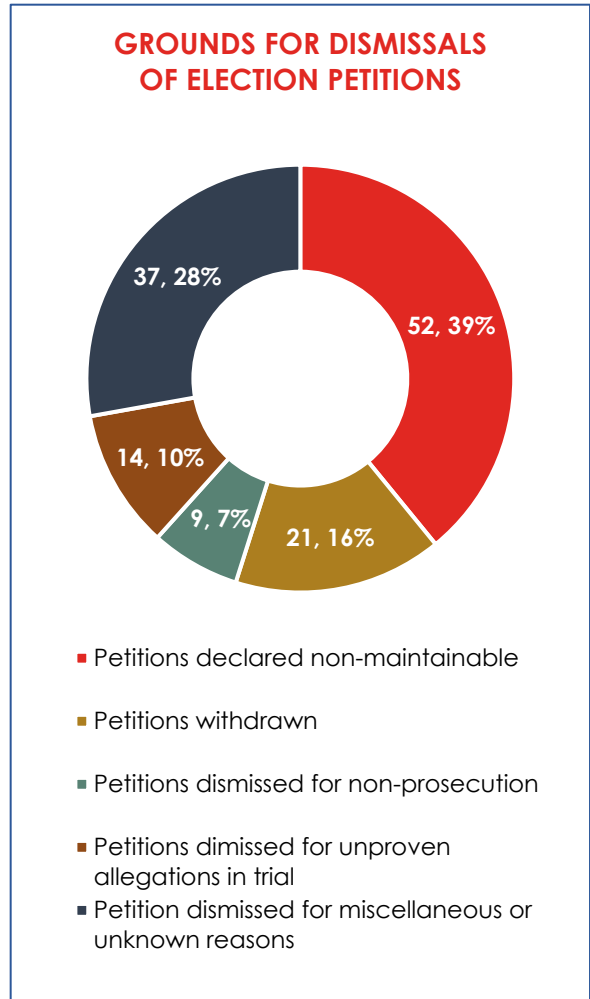
Region	Number of NA constituencies decided so far	Number of provincial constituencies decided so far
<b>Punjab</b>	19	47
<b>Sindh</b>	4	14
<b>KP</b>	2	7
<b>Balochistan</b>	8	35
<b>ICT</b>	0	NA
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>103</b>

Out of the 136 petitions decided so far, 133 were dismissed and three were accepted. Among the 133 dismissals, 52 were dismissed on the grounds of non-maintainability including 10 related to National Assembly constituencies and 42 to Provincial Assemblies' constituencies. Another 21 were dismissed because the allegations could not be proven during the trial. These 21 included two for National Assembly and 19 for Provincial Assemblies. Nine petitions were withdrawn including four for National Assembly and five for Provincial Assemblies. As many as 14 were dismissed due to non-prosecution including five related to National Assembly and nine to Provincial Assemblies. Moreover, three were dismissed for miscellaneous reasons, including the death or resignation of the returned candidate and non-compliance with court orders. FAFEN has yet to obtain copies of tribunal decisions for 34 dismissed petitions, so the reasons for dismissal in those cases remain unknown.

The three accepted petitions were related to constituencies of the Balochistan Assembly including PB-44 Quetta-VII, PB-45 Quetta-VIII and PB-36 Kalat. The tribunals ordered re-polling at 16 polling stations of PB-44, 15 polling stations of PB-45, and seven polling stations of PB-36. Re-polling in PB-45 was held on January 5, 2025, returning the previous winner of PPPP to the seat. Re-polling in the other two constituencies did not take place. The order for repoll was earlier stayed by the Balochistan High Court and later was reversed in an appeal before the Supreme Court, while the Election Commission has postponed re-polling in PB-36 twice due to the prevailing law and order situation.

Following table presents a tribunal-wise number of petitions filed and disposed of, which FAFEN has been able to track so far:

Tribunal	Number of Petitions Filed			Number of Petitions Disposed of Till Date		
	NA	PA	Total	NA	PA	Total
<b>Lahore-I</b>	11	24	35	7	11	18
<b>Karachi-II</b>	8	21	29	2	8	10
<b>Karachi-I</b>	16	12	28	1	2	3
<b>Quetta-I</b>	1	25	26	1	23	24
<b>Bahawalpur</b>	11	15	26	4	8	12



Tribunal	Number of Petitions Filed			Number of Petitions Disposed of Till Date		
	NA	PA	Total	NA	PA	Total
Lahore-II	11	14	25	0	1	1
Lahore-V	11	13	24	0	0	0
Multan	7	17	24	1	0	1
Rawalpindi	11	12	23	3	6	9
Lahore-III	4	15	19	3	14	17
Quetta-II	0	17	17	0	12	12
Lahore-IV	5	11	16	1	7	8
Hyderabad	4	7	11	1	2	3
Mingora	3	8	11	2	2	4
Quetta-III	9	0	9	7	0	7
Sukkur	0	8	8	0	1	1
Bannu	2	6	8	0	0	0
Larkana	3	4	7	0	1	1
Peshawar-I	1	6	7	0	0	0
Peshawar-II	1	5	6	0	0	0
Abbotabad	1	4	5	0	3	3
D.I. Khan	1	4	5	0	2	2
Islamabad	3	0	3	0	0	0
<b>Overall</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>136</b>

### Petitions' Disposal Rate, Disaggregated by Petitioners' Political Affiliation

The independent candidates supported by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) make the largest group of petitioners with 55 percent of total petitions filed by them, followed by Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) candidates (13 percent), Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) candidates (eight percent), unaffiliated independent candidates (seven percent) and Jamiat Ulma-e-Islam Pakistan (JUIP) candidates (six percent). As many as 16 other parties' candidates<sup>2</sup> cumulatively account for the remaining 11 percent of the petitions.

Around 56 percent petitions of independent candidates, 50 percent of PPPP candidates, 42 percent each of PML-N and JUI-F candidates, and 58 percent of those by other parties have been decided so far. The following table presents a party-wise breakdown of petitions filed and disposed of for the National Assembly and Provincial Assemblies.

Petitioner's Party	No. of Petitions Filed		No. of Petitions Disposed Off		Overall Rate of Disposal
	NA	PA	NA	PA	
<b>PTI-backed Independent</b>	86	120	16	206	26%
<b>PML-N</b>	15	33	5	48	42%
<b>Unaffiliated Independents</b>	6	19	3	25	56%
<b>PPPP</b>	5	23	3	28	50%
<b>JUIP</b>	4	20	1	24	42%
<b>Others</b>	8	33	5	19	58%

### Petitions Disposal Rate, Disaggregated by Defendant's Political Affiliation

The returned candidates belonging to PML-N make the largest group of defendants with 39 percent of the petitions challenging their victory, followed by PTI-backed candidates (16 percent), Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQMP) candidates and PPPP candidates (13 percent each), unaffiliated

<sup>2</sup> These other political parties include Grand Democratic Alliance, Haq Do Tehreek Balochistan, Jamhuri Watan Party, National Democratic Movement, National Party, Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party, Pashtoonkwa National Awami Party, Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, Awami National Party, Balochistan Awami Party, Balochistan National Party, Balochistan National Party Awami, Hazara Democratic Party, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, and Khadmeen-e-Sindh.

independents (six percent) and JUIP (five percent). As many as 11 other defendant parties' candidates<sup>3</sup> cumulatively account for the remaining eight percent petitions.

Around 58 percent petitions filed against unaffiliated independents, 45 percent against PTI-backed independents, 39 percent against JUIP candidates, 36 percent each against PML-N and PPPP candidates, 27 percent against MQM candidates, and 21 percent against other parties' candidates have been decided so far.

Respondent's Party	Number of Petitions Filed		Number of Petitions Disposed Off		Overall Rate of Disposal
	NA	PA	NA	PA	
<b>PMLN</b>	54	91	14	38	36%
<b>PTI-Backed Independent</b>	16	44	7	20	45%
<b>MQMP</b>	19	30	3	10	27%
<b>PPPP</b>	18	29	5	12	36%
<b>Independent</b>	5	19	4	10	58%
<b>JUIP</b>	5	13	0	7	39%
<b>Other Parties</b>	7	0	22	6	21%

### APPEALS BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT AGAINST DECISIONS OF ELECTION TRIBUNALS

Under Section 155(1) of the Elections Act, 2017, any individual aggrieved by the final decision of an election tribunal regarding an election petition challenging an Assembly election may file an appeal before the Supreme Court of Pakistan within 30 days of the decision.

As of this report, 54 decisions of election tribunals have been contested before the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Among these, three appeals were initiated by returned candidates against whom election petitions were accepted. Out of these appeals, the appeal by PPPP's returned candidate in PB-44 Quetta-VII was allowed by the Supreme Court, setting aside the election tribunal's ruling that had accepted the petition by National Party candidate. Another appeal, lodged by PPPP's returned candidate in PB-45 Quetta-VIII was dismissed by the apex court while upholding the decision of the election tribunal. The third appeal, filed by BAP's returned candidate in PB-36 Kalat remains pending adjudication.

Additionally, 51 appeals have been filed against the rejection of election petitions by respective election tribunals. Among these, four have been heard and dismissed by the Supreme Court. The remaining 47 appeals are still under adjudication. Of the 51 petitions filed against the dismissal of election petitions, 11 were lodged by losing candidates of National Assembly (NA) elections. Similarly, 40 were submitted by losing candidates of Provincial Assembly (PA) elections, including 24 from Balochistan, 12 from Punjab, and four from Sindh.

Among the 51 appeals filed against the rejection of election petitions, 22 have been filed by PTI-backed independent candidates, six by PPPP candidates, five by the PML-N candidates, four by JUIP candidates, three by independent candidates, and two each by the National Party (NP), Awami National Party (ANP), and Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP) candidates. Similarly, one each was filed by candidates from Hazara Democratic Party (HDP), Balochistan National Party (BNP), Balochistan National Party Awami (BNPA), Khadameen-e-Sindh (KS), and Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) candidates. In terms of the respondents, 25 appeals are filed against the winners of the PML-N, six against PPPP, five against independent candidates backed by the PTI, four each against the MQM-P, JUI-F, and unaffiliated independent candidates, two against the NP, and one against the winner of the BAP.

<sup>3</sup> These other parties include Pakistan Muslim League, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, Grand Democratic Alliance, National Party, Awami National Party, Balochistan Awami Party, Balochistan National Party, Balochistan National Party Awami, Jamat-e-Islami Pakistan, and Pakistan Muslim League Zia.