

Pakistan's ex-PM Sharif says he will seek a coalition government after trailing jailed rival Khan

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP) — Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif changed tack Friday and said he would seek to form a coalition government after his party trailed independent candidates backed by his imprisoned rival, Imran Khan, in parliamentary election results.

Sharif told supporters he was sending his brother and former premier, Shehbaz Sharif, to meet the leaders of other parties and invite them to join a coalition.

Sharif spoke after results showed candidates backed by Khan, also a former prime minister, leading in the election, a surprise given claims by Khan's supporters and a national rights body that the balloting was manipulated against him.

A former cricket star turned Islamist politician with a significant grassroots following, Khan was disqualified from running in Thursday's election because of criminal convictions. He contends his sentences and a slew of legal cases pending against him were politically motivated.

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