



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No.6: Session No. 77 of the Senate

6th Sitting Marked by Low Attendance

ISLAMABAD, January 24, 2012: The Senate met for four hours and three minutes during the sixth sitting of the ongoing 77th session.

The issue of Senator's low attendance persisted during this sitting as well. Only 11 Legislators were present at the start, while 12 were present when the sitting was adjourned.

The Quorum was visibly lacking at various stages of the sitting. However, it was not pointed out by any of the Legislators.

Twenty-three Points of Order were raised which consumed an hour and 30 minutes of the sitting time. However, none of the Points of Order attracted the Chair's formal ruling.

Ten out of thirty-two questions were responded by the relevant ministers.

The Leader of the House attended the sitting for an hour 30 minutes while the Leader of the Opposition was there an hour and 27 minutes.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for four hours and three minutes.
- The sitting started at 1645 hours instead of the scheduled starting time of 1600 hours. The House proceedings started 45 minutes late.
- The Deputy Chairman presided over the entire sitting.
- The Leader of the House attended the sitting for an hour 30 minutes while the Leader of the Opposition was there an hour and 27 minutes.
- The Parliamentary Leaders of the ANP, MQM, PMLF, PKMAP, NP, JI and the PMLN attended the sitting while the leaders of the JWP, BNPA, PPPS and the PML were absent.

After successfully observing proceedings of the National Assembly, the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) has started the observation of the provincial assemblies – Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan – and the Senate.

This daily factsheet is based on FAFEN's direct observation of the sixth sitting of 77th session of the Senate.

These reports are released on the day the sittings are held to provide media and other interested stakeholders vital statistics about the Assembly proceedings to encourage informed public discourse on its performance.



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- Eleven Senators (11%) were present at the start of the sitting while 12 (12%) were there when the sitting was adjourned. A maximum of 34 Members (34%) were present during one point of the sitting.
- Eleven Senators applied for leave to be absent.
- The House took a 26-minute break due to prayers.

Representation and Responsiveness

- The Calling Attention Notice about increase in the rate of illiteracy was not taken up.
- Thirty-two questions were listed for the Question Hour; ten were put up and responded to by the relevant ministers.
- A total of 24 supplementary questions were raised during the sitting.

Output

- The Private Power and Infrastructure Board Bill, 2011 was deferred.

Order and Institutionalization

- Twenty-three Points of Order were raised which consumed an hour and 30 minutes of the sitting time. However, none of the Points of Order attracted the Chair's formal ruling.
- JUIF and JI Members walked out of the House protesting against the drone attacks in Pakistan. The walkout lasted eight minutes

Transparency

- Orders of the Day were available to Legislators, observers and others.
- Information on Members' attendance was unavailable to observers and the public.
- The Quorum was visibly lacking at various stages during the sitting. However, this was not pointed out by any of the Senators.

The Daily Factsheet is based on direct observation of the Senate proceedings conducted by Center for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), a member organization of FAFEN