



Senate Debated Karachi Bomb Blast; Bill Passed

ISLAMABAD, March 04, 2013: The Senators, in the 9th sitting of the ongoing 91st session, condemned the Karachi bomb blast by 21 points of order. Abolition of Discretionary Quotas in Housing Schemes Bill 2012 was unanimously passed while the other bill, the Regulation of Foreign Contribution Bill 2013, was introduced and referred to the standing committee.

Starting 54 minutes late, the sitting was marked by low attendance. Only 11 senators were present at the outset, eight at the time of adjournment whereas a maximum of 32 senators were present at one point of sitting.

The MQM members staged a walkout over Karachi blast while the JUIF members walked off the House over Karachi blast and the killing of a journalist in Baluchistan.

The Chairman chaired the sitting for an hour and 17 minutes while the remaining proceedings were chaired by the Deputy Chairman.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for three hours and 24 minutes. There was a prayer break of 32 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1654 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1600 hours, witnessing a delay of 54 minutes.
- The Chairman chaired the sitting for an hour and 17 minutes while the remaining proceedings were chaired by the Deputy Chairman.
- The Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition attended the sitting.
- The parliamentary leaders of MQM, ANP, JUIF, NP, and PMLF were present whereas those of PML, and BNPA were absent.
- Only 11 senators were present at the outset while eight were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 32 senators were present at one point of sitting.
- The quorum was visibly lacking at various stages of the sitting. However, it was not pointed out by any member.
- Two minority senators attended the sitting.

Representation and Responsiveness

- There was no Question Hour on today's agenda as it was a Private Members' Day.



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- Abolition of Discretionary Quotas in Housing Schemes Bill 2012 was unanimously passed.
- The Regulation of Foreign Contribution Bill 2013 was introduced and referred to the standing committee.
- The house also passed amendments in the sub-rule (1) of rule 165 of Senate rules.

Order and Institutionalization

- Twenty-one points of order consumed two hours and 50 minutes (83%) of the sitting time.
- Two walkouts were observed during the sitting. The JUIF senators staged a 20-minute walk out over Karachi blast and killing of a journalist in Baluchistan. The MQM members also staged a 20-minute walk out over bomb blast in Karachi.

Transparency

- Orders of the Day was available to legislators, observers and others.
- Information on senators' attendance was unavailable to observers and the public.

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