



## **Senate: Sitting Marked by Low Attendance**

ISLAMABAD, March 07, 2013: The Senate, which met for an hour and eight minutes in the 12<sup>th</sup> sitting of the 91<sup>st</sup> session, was marked by low attendance as only nine members were present at the outset and 16 at the time of adjournment.

The Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics, Planning and Development and Privatization presented its report on the Rulers of Acceding States (Abolition of Privy Purses and Privileges) (Amendment) Bill 2013.

The MQM members staged a walkout regarding delay in the provision of aid to Abbas Town blast victims.

The Chairman presided over the entire sitting. The Leader of the House and the parliamentary leaders of MQM, ANP, JUIF, and PMLF (single member party) attended the sitting. The Leader of the Opposition was not present.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

### **Members' Participation in House Proceedings**

- The Senate met for an hour and eight minutes.
- The sitting started at 1710 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1630 hours, witnessing a delay of 40 minutes.
- The Chairman chaired the entire sitting.
- The Leader of the House attended the sitting whereas the Leader of the Opposition was not present.
- The parliamentary leaders of MQM, ANP, JUIF, and PMLF were present whereas those of PML, BNPA, and NP were absent.
- Only nine senators were present at the outset while 16 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum, 24 senators were present at one point of the sitting.
- One minority senator attended the proceedings.
- Six senators applied for leave.

### **Representation and Responsiveness**

- Only two of 21 starred questions on the agenda were taken up and responded to by the relevant ministry. Additionally, five supplementary questions were asked.
- A calling attention notice about the sufferings of Pakistani students in Chinese universities due to non payment of subsidy by the government was dropped because of the absence of the mover.



## Free and Fair Election Network

### Output

- A report on the Rulers of Acceding States (Abolition of Privy Purses and Privileges) (Amendment) Bill, 2013 was presented by the Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics, Planning and Development and Privatization.

### Order and Institutionalization

- Seven points of order consumed 20 minutes of the sitting time.
- The MQM members staged a 10-minute walkout over delay in the provision of aid to Abbas Town blast victims.

### 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*