



Free and Fair Election Network

Senate: Sitting Marked by Low Attendance

ISLAMABAD, March 12, 2013: Starting 69 minutes late, the 15th sitting of the ongoing Senate's 91st session was marked by low attendance of Senators as only one senator was present at the outset while 13 were there at the time of adjournment.

The Upper House passed the Federal Ombudsmen Institutional Reforms Bill 2013 and the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill 2013.

A calling attention notice regarding delay in construction work on Kashmir Highway's expansion and renovation project was taken up. A PPP senator raised an adjournment motion to debate the publication of statements of Election Commission of Pakistan's members in newspapers. The motion was not taken up.

The parliamentary leaders of PML, BNPA and PMLF did not attend the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for two hours and 51 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1109 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1000 hours, witnessing a delay of an hour and nine minutes.
- The Chairman chaired the sitting for an hour and 27 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, and NP were present whereas those of PML, BNPA, and PMLF were absent.
- Only one senator was present at the outset while 13 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 35 senators were present at one point of the sitting.
- One minority senators attended the sitting.
- One senator applied for leave.

Representation and Responsiveness

- Seven of the 20 starred questions appearing on the agenda were taken up and responded to by the relevant ministries. Additionally, 23 supplementary questions were asked.



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- A calling attention notice regarding delay in construction work on Kashmir Highway expansion and renovation project was taken up.
- A supplementary adjournment motion was raised to debate the publication of statements of Election Commission of Pakistan's members in newspapers. Six members deliberated upon the issue for an hour and 15 minutes.

Output

- The House passed the Federal Ombudsmen Institutional Reforms Bill 2013 and the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill 2013.
- The Medical and Dental Council (Amendment) Ordinance 2013 was laid before the House.

Order and Institutionalization

- Two points of order consumed 10 minutes of the sitting time.
- No incidence of walkout, boycott or protest observed during the sitting.

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