



## Free and Fair Election Network

### FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 4: Session No. 77 of the Senate

#### Lack of Quorum Persists during 4<sup>th</sup> Sitting of Senate

ISLAMABAD, January 20, 2012: The fourth sitting of the ongoing session of the Senate lasted an hour and 27 minutes on Friday and was lowly attended. Only eight Senators were present when the proceedings began while 28 were there at the adjournment of the sitting.

Nineteen questions were listed for the Question Hour with 18 being put up and responded to by the relevant ministers who came in late. This prompted a PPP Senator to point out that after the 18 Amendment of the Constitution it is mandatory for the Ministers to be present during the Senate and National Assembly's sessions.

The Chairperson for Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs presented a report on the Special Economic Zones Bill, 2010.

The Delimitation of Constituencies (Amendment) Bill, 2011 was introduced and sent to the respective Standing Committee.

The Leader of the House was present all through the sitting while the Leader of the Opposition did not attend.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

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

- The Senate met for an hour and 27 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1030 hours instead of the scheduled starting time of 1000 hours. The House proceedings started 30 minutes late.
- The Chairman presided over the entire sitting.
- The Leader of the House attended the entire sitting while the Leader of the Opposition was not present.

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 fourth sitting of 77<sup>th</sup> session of the Senate.

These reports will be 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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- The Parliamentary Leaders of the JUIF, MQM, PMLF, PKMAP, NP and the JWP attended the sitting while the leaders of the PML, JI, BNPA, PPPS, PMLN and the ANP were absent.
- Eight Members (8%) were present at the start of the sitting while 22 (22%) were there when the sitting was adjourned. A maximum of 33 Members (33%) were present during one point of the sitting.
- Two Members applied for leave to be absent.

### Representation and Responsiveness

- Nineteen questions were listed for the Question Hour; 18 were put up and responded to by the relevant ministers.
- A total of 32 supplementary questions were raised during the sitting.

### Output

- The Delimitation of Constituencies (Amendment) Bill, 2011 was taken up by the House and sent to the Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.
- The Chairperson for Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs presented a report on the Special Economic Zones Bill, 2010.

### Order and Institutionalization

- No Point of Order was raised during the sitting.
- There were no instances of protests, boycotts or walkouts during the sitting.

### 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*