



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 1: Session No. 81 of the Senate

Senate sitting marked by PMLN walkout

ISLAMABAD, April 30, 2012: The first sitting of Senate's 81st session witnessed a walkout by PMLN Senators on the issue of Supreme Court's verdict in the contempt case against the Prime Minister.

Beginning 63 minutes late, the sitting lasted two hours and 31 minutes. Four Private Members' Bills appearing on the Agenda were introduced and sent to respective Standing Committees. The Prime Minister attended the sitting for an hour as the PMLN Senators walked out of the House.

Members raised three Points of Order which consumed 40 minutes of the sitting time. However, none of the Points of Order attracted the Chair's formal ruling.

The Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition remained present throughout the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for two hours and 31 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1803 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1700 hours. The House proceedings started late by an hour and three minutes.
- The Chairman chaired the sitting.
- The Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition remained present throughout the sitting.
- The Parliamentary Leaders of the PMLF, BNPA and ANP attended the sitting.
- Ten Senators (10% of total Membership) were present at the start, while 52 (50%) were present when the sitting was adjourned.
- The House took an 18-minute break on account of prayers.

Representation and Responsiveness

- The Question Hour was not held as Monday is a Private Members' Day.

Output

- Four Bills appearing on the Agenda - The Pakistan Commissions of Inquiry (Amendment) Bill 2012, the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan Bill 2012, the Banking Companies (Amendment) Bill 2012 and the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill 2012 – were introduced and sent to the respective Standing Committees.

Order and Institutionalization

- Three Points of Order consumed 40 minutes of the sitting time. None of the Points of Order attracted the Chair's formal ruling.



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- The PMLN Senators staged a walkout over the Supreme Court verdict in the contempt case against the Prime Minister. Their walkout lasted 34 minutes while the Prime Minister was addressing the Upper House.

Transparency

- Orders of the Day were available to Legislators, observers and others.
- Information on Members' attendance was unavailable to observers and the public.

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