



Free and Fair Election Network

Senate: Budget Debated Amid Low Attendance

ISLAMABAD, June 16, 2013: The Senate continued to debate federal budget during the third sitting of the 95th session on Sunday as the Upper House also unanimously adopted a resolution to condemn the attack on female students in Quetta.

The sitting, which lasted two hours and 16 minutes, was marked by low attendance. Only nine senators were present at the start and 12 at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 36 senators were present at one time of the sitting.

Seven senators – two each of PPPP, PMLN and Independents, and one of PML – spoke on the annual budget statement for an hour and 59 minutes.

The House also unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the attack on female students in Quetta. It was moved by a PMLN female Senator.

The Chairman chaired the entire sitting. The Leader of the Opposition and the parliamentary leaders of JUIF, PML and BNPA remained absent.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for two hours and 16 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1045 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1000 hours, witnessing a delay of 45 minutes.
- The Chairman chaired the entire sitting. The Deputy Chairman was also present.
- The Leader of the House attended the sitting while the Leader of the Opposition was not present.
- The parliamentary leaders of ANP, MQM, NP and PMLF were present while those of JUIF, PML and BNPA remained absent.
- The Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatization attended the sitting.
- Nine senators were present at the outset while 12 were there when the sitting adjourned. A maximum of 36 senators were present at one point of sitting.
- One minority senator attended the sitting.
- Three senators applied for leave.

Representation and Responsiveness

- Seven senators – two each of PPPP, PMLN and Independents, and one of PML – spoke on the Annual Budget Statement for an hour and 59 minutes.



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Output

- The House unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the bomb attack on female students in Quetta. It was moved by a PMLN female lawmaker.

Order and Institutionalization

- Two points of order consumed three minutes of the sitting time. None of the points of order attracted the Chair's formal ruling.
- No instance of protest, walkout or boycott observed during the sitting.

Transparency

- 'Orders of the Day' was available to the 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