



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No.02, Session No.97 of the Senate of Pakistan

Senate: Sitting Marked by Low Attendance

ISLAMABAD, August 20, 2013: The second sitting of ongoing 97th session of Senate was marked by low attendance as the Upper House debated the armed standoff in Islamabad on August 15.

Only 14 Senators were present at the outset while 22 were present at the end of the sitting.

Eleven Senators debated an Adjournment Motion on the armed standoff in Islamabad for two hours and one minute before the sitting was adjourned. The debate on Adjournment Motion will continue in the next sitting.

Two reports on privilege motions regarding the Ministry of National Regulations and Services and the Ministry of Interior's failure to reply to starred questions were laid before the House.

The Chairman presided the entire sitting while Deputy Chairman did not attend the sitting. The Leader of the House and Leader of Opposition were present in the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the House proceedings:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for three hours and 49 minutes. A 22-minute prayer break was taken.
- The sitting started at 1650 hours witnessing a 50-minute delay against the scheduled start time of 1600 hours.
- Fourteen Senators were present at the start and 22 at the end of the sitting. At one point, a maximum of 38 Members were present in the sitting.
- The Chairman presided the entire sitting while Deputy Chairman did not attend the sitting.
- The Leader of the House and Leader of Opposition were present in the whole proceedings.
- Parliamentary Leaders of PMLN, PPP, PML, JUIF, MQM and ANP attended the sitting.
- Five Members applied for leave.
- Three minority Members were present.

Representation and Responsiveness

- Out of 19 starred questions on the agenda, 11 were taken up on the floor of the House. Additionally 23 supplementary questions were asked.
- The single Calling Attention Notice on the agenda about the electricity price hike was not taken up.



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- Eleven Senators – four from ANP, three PPPP, two PML and one each from MQM and PKMAP – took part in the debate on the Adjournment Motion on the armed standoff in Islamabad.
- A PPPP Senator tabled a privilege motion against the Finance Division for misinforming the Senator about security papers of Managing Director.
- Two reports on privilege motions regarding the Ministry of National Regulations and Services and the Ministry of Interior's failure to reply to starred questions were laid before the House.

Order and Institutionalization

- No instances of protest/boycott/protests were observed.

Transparency

- Orders of the Day was available to the legislators, observers and others.
- Information on Senators' attendance was not available to the observers and the public.

The Daily Factsheet is based on direct observation of the National Assembly proceedings conducted by Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI); a member organization of FAFEN