



## **FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 06, Session No. 99 of the Senate**

### **Senate: Sitting Marked by Low Attendance**

ISLAMABAD, December 11, 2013: Starting 43 minutes behind schedule, the 6<sup>th</sup> sitting of the 99<sup>th</sup> session of the Upper House was marked by low attendance, as only 32 senators were present at the outset and 28 at the adjournment, says Free and Fair Election Network in its Daily Factsheet.

The sitting, which consumed three hours and 32 minutes, witnessed two instances of walkouts by the opposition. At the first instance, senators belonging to ANP, PML and PPPP staged a walkout for five minutes against the privatization of Pakistan Steel Mills while MQM lawmakers joined them later for another walkout of five minutes over the issue of unsatisfactory answer of the state minister of water and power during the Question Hour.

During the proceedings, senators raised 16 points of order that consumed 32% of the sitting.

The Chairman did not attend the sitting while his Deputy chaired the entire proceedings.

Leader of the House did not attend the sitting, while the Parliamentary leaders of PML-F, ANP and MQM attended the sitting.

Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources spoke for 18 minutes and wound up the debate on recent price-hike in the prices of petroleum products, gas and electricity and other essential items.

Following are some key observations of the Parliamentary business:

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

- The Senate met for three hours and 32 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1613 hours against the scheduled time of 1530 hours, witnessing a delay of 43 minutes.
- The Deputy Chairman chaired the entire sitting, as the Chairman was not present.
- The Leader of the House was not present while the Leader of the Opposition attended the sitting for an hour and 13 minutes.
- The parliamentary leaders of MQM, PML-F, and ANP attended the sitting.
- Only 32 senators were present at the outset while 28 were there at the adjournment of sitting. A maximum of 42 senators (40% of the total membership) were present at one point of sitting.
- Two minority members attended the sitting.
- 10 senators applied for leave.

#### **Representation and Responsiveness**



## Free and Fair Election Network

- Only four of 34 Starred Questions (requiring oral replies) appearing on the agenda were taken up and responded to by the relevant ministries. Additionally, 24 supplementary questions were asked.
- Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources spoke for 18 minutes and wound up the debate on recent price hike in petroleum products and other essential items.
- A motion under rule 218 regarding foreign policy, return of NATO forces from Afghanistan during 2014, recent Drone attacks, prime minister's visit to US and peace talks with Taliban was admitted for discussion.
- A PPP senator raised a question of privilege which was taken up and referred to the privilege committee.
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### Output

- A report of Standing Committee on Water and Power on the agenda could not be presented before the House.

### Order and Institutionalization

- Sixteen points of order (POs) consumed 67 minutes (32%) of the sitting.
- Two instances of walkouts were observed during the proceedings. ANP, PML and PPP members walked out of the House for five minutes against the privatization of Pakistan Steel Mills while ANP, PML, MQM and PPP lawmakers staged a walkout for five minutes over the issue of unsatisfactory answer of state minister for water and power during the Question Hour.

### Transparency

- 'Orders of the Day' was available to legislators, observers and others.
- Information on senators' attendance was unavailable to observers and the public.

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