



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 14: Session No. 77 of the Senate

Lack of Quorum Persists during 14th Sitting of Senate

ISLAMABAD, February 03, 2012: Witnessing low attendance, the 14th sitting of the ongoing Senate session lasted an hour and 49 minutes on Friday. Only 11 Senators were present when the proceedings began while 20 were there at the end of the sitting.

Out of the 15 questions listed for the Question Hour, 11 were put up and responded by the relevant ministers.

The First Quarterly Report for the year 2011-12 of the Central Board of Directors of the State Bank of Pakistan was presented.

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 49 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1042 hours instead of the scheduled starting time of 1000 hours. The House proceedings started 42 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.
- The Parliamentary Leaders of PMLN, MQM, PMLF, PKMAP, BNPA and the ANP attended the sitting while the leaders of the PML, NP, JWP and the PPPS were absent.
- Eleven Senators were present at the start of the sitting while 20 were there when it was adjourned. A maximum of 33 Senators (33%) were present during one point of the sitting.
- Four Senators applied for leave to be absent.

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 14th sitting of 77th 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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Representation and Responsiveness

- Out of the 15 questions listed for the Question Hour, 11 were put up and responded by the relevant ministers.
- A total of 29 supplementary questions were raised during the sitting.

Output

- The First Quarterly Report for the year 2011-12 of the Central Board of Directors of the State Bank of Pakistan was presented.

Order and Institutionalization

- Twenty-two Points of Order consumed an hour (55%) of the sitting time. Only two attracted the Chair's formal ruling.
- A JI Member walked out of the House protesting that this session is being prolonged for no reason. The walkout lasted three minutes.

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, visibly lacking at various stages during the sitting, 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