



Free and Fair Election Network

Low Attendance Persists

ISLAMABAD, February 20, 2013: Starting 35 minutes late, the third sitting of the ongoing 91st session of Senate continued to witness low attendance of Senators. Only four Senators were present at the outset while 17 were there at the adjournment.

Seven Senators spoke on the Adjournment Motion about the recent Quetta Bomb Blast. A JUIF Senator staged a five-minute token walkout over the law and order in Balochistan.

Three Resolutions appearing on the Orders of the Day were not taken up by the House.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for two hours and 32 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1635 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1600 hours, witnessing a delay of 35 minutes.
- The Chairman chaired the sitting.
- The Leader of the House attended the sitting.
- The parliamentary leaders of MQM, ANP and JUIF attended the sitting while those of PPP, PMLN, PML, BNPA, NP and PMLF remained absent.
- Only four senators (4% of the total membership) were present at the start, while 17 were there when the sitting adjourned. A maximum of 38 senators were observed to be present at one point of sitting.
- Two minority senators were present.
- Four senators applied for leave.
- The House took a 34-minute break.

Representation and Responsiveness

- Seven Senators spoke on the Adjournment Motion about the recent Quetta Bomb Blast. The Interior Minister gave a brief statement to wind up the debate.

Output

- Three Resolutions appearing on the Orders of the Day were not taken up by the House.

Order and Institutionalization

- Seven Points of Order were raised which consumed 15 minutes of the sitting time. However, none of the Points of Order attracted Chair's formal ruling.



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- A JUIF Senator staged a five-minute token walkout over the law and order in Balochistan.

Transparency

- Orders of the Day were available to the legislators, observers and others.
- Information on senators' attendance was unavailable to observers and the public.
- The quorum was visibly lacking at various stages of the sitting. However, it was not pointed out by any of the legislators.

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