



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No.04, Session No.98 of the Senate of Pakistan

Senate Fails to Take Up Agenda Due to Opposition's Boycott

ISLAMABAD, October 31, 2013: The Chairman adjourned the Senate's proceedings due to a lack of quorum as the opposition boycotted the fourth sitting of the 98th session on Thursday.

The opposition (excluding MQM Senators) boycotted the sitting over the Interior Minister's conduct with the opposition members who accused him of presenting wrong figures about the killings in the terrorism incidents in response to a question put before the house in the previous sitting.

As there were only seven members at the beginning of the proceedings a PPPP lawmaker pointed out the missing quorum after the recitation of Quran. The proceedings were adjourned till next day as the quorum was found lacking after the Chair ordered for the assembly bells to be rung for five minutes and suspension of the proceedings for 30 minutes.

A standing committee report, questions and a calling attention notices were left unaddressed.

Following are some key observations of the House proceedings:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Upper House met for 50 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1106 hours against the schedule start time of 1030 hours, witnessing a delay of 36 minutes.
- Seven senators were present at the start and a maximum 19 Senators at the adjournment of the sitting.
- The Chairman presided over the entire sitting. The Leader of the House was present while the Leader of the Opposition was absent.
- Two minority Senators were present.

Representation and Responsiveness

- There were 23 starred questions on the agenda for which the relevant ministries had submitted written responses.
- A report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, on its visit to Turkey from 1st to 7th December, 2012 was not presented before the House.
- A single calling attention notice regarding appointments of CCOs in LESCO and GEPCO in contravention of rules was not taken up.

Order and Institutionalization

- No points of order were raised during the sitting.
- The entire opposition boycotted the session due to misconduct of the Federal Interior Minister in the previous sitting. The MQM lawmakers did not join the opposition's boycott.



Transparency

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- 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.

This daily factsheet is based on direct observation of the Senate proceedings conducted by PATTAN Development Organization; a member organization of FAFEN. Errors and omissions excepted.