



## Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No.7 Session No.100 of the Senate

### Senate: Low attendance persists

ISLAMABAD, January 17, 2014: Starting 37 minutes behind schedule, the 7<sup>th</sup> sitting of the ongoing Senate session was marked by low attendance of legislators. Only 12 senators were present at the outset while 28 were there at the adjournment. The quorum was visibly lacking at various stages of the proceedings. However, it was not pointed out by any of the legislators, says Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) in its Daily Factsheet based on direct observation of the House.

A calling attention notice appearing on the agenda was taken up regarding stoppage of training program under Waseela-e-Rozgar, Benazir Income Support Program, throughout the country and non-payment of fee to trainers and stipend to beneficiary trainees.

Although the privilege motion of a PPP senator on not tabling the Pakistan Protection Ordinance and the Anti-terrorism Ordinance was turned down, yet, the Chairman asked the government to table the ordinances in future without any further delays.

Opposition parties, including PPP, ANP, PML and MQM, staged a token walkout of two minutes over unsatisfactory reply to the supplementary questions by the Ministry of Interior.

Seven of the 17 Starred Questions appearing on the agenda were responded to by the relevant ministries. Additionally, 28 supplementary questions were asked by the relevant ministries.

The senators also raised 10 points of order during the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the House proceedings:

#### Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for an hour and 40 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1107 hours against the scheduled time of 1030 hours, witnessing a delay of 37 minutes.
- The Chairman presided over the entire sitting.
- The Leader of the House attended the entire sitting while the Leader of the Opposition remained present for an hour and three minutes.
- Twelve senators were present at the outset, 28 at the adjournment and a maximum 31 at a point during the proceedings.
- The parliamentary leaders of PML-N, ANP, BNP-A, NP and PkMAP were present.
- Two minority senators attended the sitting.
- Seventeen members applied for leave.



## Free and Fair Election Network

### Representation and Responsiveness

- Sponsored by female legislator of PPPP, a calling attention notice appearing on the agenda was taken up which was related to the stoppage of training program under Waseela-e-Rozgar, Benazir Income Support Program, throughout the country and non-payment of fee to trainers and stipend to beneficiary trainees.
- Seven of the 17 Starred Questions appearing on the agenda were responded to by the relevant ministries. Additionally, 28 supplementary questions were asked from the relevant ministries.
- The Chair deferred the privilege motion of PPPP lawmaker about not tabling the Pakistan Protection Ordinance and the Anti-terrorism Ordinance before the House. However, the government was asked to table the ordinances without any further delays.

### Order and Institutionalization

- Ten points of order (POs) were raised during the meeting, consuming 10 minutes of the sitting.
- Opposition parties staged a token walkout for two minutes over unsatisfactory reply to the supplementary questions by the Ministry of Interior.

### 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.

*This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of FAFEN and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union. 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*