



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 3: Session No. 85 of the Senate

Sitting Marked by Ministerial Absence

- **More than half of sitting time consumed by Points of Order**

ISLAMABAD, September 5, 2012: Starting 40 minutes behind schedule, the third sitting of Senate's 85th session witnessed a 25-minute protest by the ANP, JUIF, PML and MQM Senators. They expressed their reservations over the responses received during the question hour.

The relevant minister – communication and information technology – did not attend the sitting.

More than half of the sitting time was consumed by 16 Points of Order (55%). The sitting was marked low attendance as only 12 Senators were present at the outset of the sitting while 10 were there when it was adjourned.

The Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition attended the entire sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Senate met for three hours and three minutes.
- The sitting started at 1740 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1700 hours. The House proceedings started late by 40 minutes.
- The Deputy Chairman chaired the sitting. The Chairman was not present.
- The Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition attended the entire sitting.
- The parliamentary leaders of the MQM and PMLF attended the sitting.
- Twelve Senators (12% of total Membership) were present at the start, while 10 (10%) were present when the sitting was adjourned.
- Two Minority Senators were present.
- The House took a 30 minutes break.
- Five Senators applied for leave.

Representation and Responsiveness

- Six out of 19 questions appearing on the agenda were taken up. Additionally, 15 supplementary questions were also asked.

Output

- The Chairman of the Standing Committee on Defence and Defence Production presented "Report 1" for the period June-July, 2012 before the House.
- There was no bill on the agenda.

Order and Institutionalization

- A total of 16 Points of Order were raised, consuming an hour and 40 minutes (55% of the sitting time).



Free and Fair Election Network

Senators of ANP, JUIF, PML and MQM staged a protest for 25 minutes over the unsatisfactory responses to the questions asked.

Transparency

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

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