



## Free and Fair Election Network

### **Senate: 24th Constitutional Amendment Bill Passed**

ISLAMABAD, March 06, 2013: The Senate, which met for three hours and 48 minutes in the 11<sup>th</sup> sitting of 91<sup>st</sup> session, passed the 24<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Bill for the creation of Bahawalpur *South* Punjab Province.

The main opposition party - PMLN – along with NP staged a walkout over passage of the bill.

Additionally, the House passed the Defence Housing Authority Islamabad Bill 2013 and the Global Change Impact Studies Centre Bill 2013.

Only 12 Senators were present at the outset of the sitting, while 70 were there at the adjournment. A total of 86 legislators were present when the 23<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Bill was being passed.

The Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition and the parliamentary leaders of MQM, ANP, JUIF, PML, NP and PMLF attended the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

#### **Members' Participation in House Proceedings**

- The Senate met for three hours and 48 minutes. There was a 16-minute prayer break.
- The sitting started at 1600 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1500 hours, witnessing a delay of an hour.
- The Chairman chaired the entire sitting.
- The Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition attended the sitting.
- The parliamentary leaders of MQM, ANP, JUIF, PML, NP and PMLF were present whereas that of BNPA was absent.
- Only 12 senators were present at the outset while 70 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 86 senators were present at one point of sitting.
- Two minority senators attended the sitting.
- Five senators applied for leave.

#### **Representation and Responsiveness**

- Six of the 11 starred questions on the agenda were taken up and responded to by the relevant minister. Additionally, eight supplementary questions were asked.
- A calling attention notice about the sufferings of Pakistani students in Chinese universities due to non payment of subsidy by the government was deferred.

#### **Output**



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- The Defence Housing Authority Islamabad Bill 2013, the Global Change Impact Studies Centre Bill 2013, and the Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill 2013 were passed by the Upper House.
- The Federal Ombudsmen Institutional Reforms Bill 2013 was not taken up.
- A standing committee report on the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University (PIMS), Islamabad Bill 2013 was presented to the House.

### **Order and Institutionalization**

- Two points of order consumed four minutes of the sitting time.
- The main opposition party - PMLN – along with NP staged a walkout over passage of the 24th Constitutional Amendment Bill.

### **Transparency**

- ‘Orders of the Day’ was available to legislators, observers and others.
- Information on senators’ 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*