



## Free and Fair Election Network

### **Senate: Session's Last Sitting Marked by Low Attendance**

ISLAMABAD, March 14, 2013: The 17<sup>th</sup> and the last sitting of the 91<sup>st</sup> session of Senate, which met for two hours and five minutes on Thursday, was marked by low attendance and lack of quorum. The House passed the Anti-terrorism (Second Amendment) Bill 2013.

Only five senators were present at the outset, 12 at the end, whereas a maximum of 31 senators were present at one point of sitting. The Chairman suspended the sitting for 30 minutes because of lack of quorum and the absence of concerned minister.

The Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges, and the Standing Committee on Defence and Defence Production presented their reports.

The House also discussed the state of economy particularly the current status of all macroeconomic indicators (monetary and fiscal) as the issue was raised by a calling attention notice.

The entire sitting was chaired by the Chairman. The Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition and the parliamentary leaders of MQM, ANP, and JUIF were also present.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

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

- The Senate met for two hours and five minutes. The Chairman suspended the proceedings for 30 minutes because of absence of concerned minister and lack of quorum.
- The sitting started at 1105 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1030 hours, witnessing a delay of 35 minutes.
- 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, and JUIF were present whereas those of PML, BNPA, NP, and PMLF were absent.
- Only five senators were present at the outset while 12 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 31 senators were present at one point of sitting.
- Two minority senators attended the sitting.
- Two senators applied for leave.



## Free and Fair Election Network

### Representation and Responsiveness

- Two of the six starred questions appearing on the agenda were taken up and responded to by the relevant ministries. Additionally, four supplementary questions were asked.
- A calling attention notice regarding state of economy particularly on current status of all macroeconomic indicators (monetary and fiscal) appearing on the agenda was taken up.

### Output

- The House passed the Anti-terrorism (Second Amendment) Bill 2013.
- Two committee reports – one by the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges, and another by the Standing Committee on Defence and Defence Production – were presented before the House.

### Order and Institutionalization

- Three points of order consumed eight minutes of the sitting time.
- No incident of walkout, boycott or protest observed during the sitting.

### 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*