



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No.1, Session No.98 of the Senate

Senate: 69% Agenda of The First Sitting left Unaddressed

ISLAMABAD, October 28, 2013: The Upper House on Monday did not take up more than two-third of the private members' day's agenda in the first sitting of the 98th session.

The House left five motions under rule 218, as many resolutions and a government bill (the Surveying and Mapping Ordinance, 2013) unaddressed. However, moved by a PPPP lawmaker, the Emigration (Amendment) Bill, 2013 was introduced and referred to the relevant committee.

A report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan on the visit of delegations from China and Poland was also presented before the House.

Additionally, the House took up two motions under rule 218 to hold discussion on non-payment of compensation to decree holders of land acquired for AFV Ranges in Nowshera, and procedure laid down for appointment of Judges in the superior courts.

The entire sitting was presided over by the Chairman. The Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition and the parliamentary leaders of PPPP, PML, MQM, JUI-F and ANP attended the proceedings.

The sitting witnessed two token walkouts, by the opposition Senators, first led by the ANP lawmakers over the kidnapping incidents in Balochistan and the second by the PPPP Senators on the proposed privatization of Pakistan Steel Mills. The MQM senators did not participate in both walkouts.

Following are some key observations of the House proceedings:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The Upper House met for two hour and 11 minutes. The house observed a 25-minute prayer break.
- The sitting starting at 1645 hours witnessing a delay of 45 minute against the scheduled start time of 1600 hours.
- Thirty Senators were present at the start of the proceedings, 40 at the end and a maximum 50 Senators at a point during the sitting.
- The Chairman presided over the entire sitting. The Deputy Chairman was absent.
- The Leader of the House and the Opposition attended the entire sitting.
- Parliamentary leaders of PPPP, ANP, JUIF, PML and MQM attended the sitting.
- Four Senators applied for leave.



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Output

- Moved by a PPPP lawmaker The Emigration (Amendment) Bill, 2013 was introduced and sent to the concerned committee.

Representation and Responsiveness

- The house offered *fatiha*, led by a JUI-F lawmaker, for the victims of the Balochistan earthquakes and the terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- Two motions under rule 218, tabled by a PPPP Senator, were taken up for debate. The Chairmen ordered for a detailed report (by Monday) on the first motion regarding non-payment of compensation to decree holders of land acquired for AFV Ranges in Nowshera for the last several decades. While the discussion on the motion regarding the procedure for the appointment of Judges in the superior courts will continue in the next private members' day. Two PPPP lawmakers spoke on the latter motion for 42 minutes today.

Order and Institutionalization

- Senators spoke on 12 points of order consuming 35 minutes.
- The ANP and PPPP Senators - backed by the entire opposition except MQM- each staged a five-minute token walkout over the non-recovery of a kidnapped ANP leader, and the proposal to privatize the Pakistan Steel Mill, respectively.

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.

The Daily Factsheet is based on direct observation of the National Assembly proceedings conducted by Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI); a member organization of FAFEN