

OBSERVATION REPORT

PP-240, D. G. KHAN-I



RELATIVELY LOW INCIDENCE OF VIOLATIONS OBSERVED IN DG KHAN BY-ELECTION

ISLAMABD, August 18, 2016: The by-election for a Punjab Assembly constituency in Dera Ghazi Khan (PP-240) held on Thursday was better managed and largely peaceful.

FAFEN observers reported four violations of laws, rules and codes of conduct on an average per polling station as compared to recently held by-elections in three constituencies of Sindh where relatively higher incidence of violations was observed. The ECP deployed District Returning Officer (DRO) and Returning Officer (RO) from its own cadre of officers who managed the election efficiently.

However, the by-election had its own set of issues. Deviations from the polling scheme, illegal campaigning and canvassing and inadequate arrangements for women voters were reported by 21 FAFEN observers who observed 61 out of a total of 128 polling stations established to facilitate 150,410 voters – 57% men and 43% women- in this largely rural constituency covering a part of DG Khan's Taunsa Tehsil.

Voters of five census blocks were not facilitated at the polling stations where they were assigned to exercise their right to vote by the officially notified polling scheme. The census block codes that were assigned to PS-56 in polling scheme were not verified by the presiding officer when asked by the FAFEN observer. Rather the polling station was facilitating voters that were officially assigned to PS-51. This might be a result of a last minute change in the polling scheme after it was notified. The voters from these block codes might have been assigned to another polling station but such deviations from officially notified polling schemes create suspicion about the transparency of the process.

The pre-voting process was smooth where polling stations opened on time and staff was available, however, at three polling stations unauthorized persons were seen loitering inside polling stations before the start of poll. Lack of training for the security officials was once again an issue witnessed by FAFEN observers at 27 polling stations where the security officials told that they did not receive any training prior to the by-election.

CONSTITUENCY HIGHLIGHTS ...

PP-240 D. G. Khan-I covers Yusuf Khan, Chhatri, Bhati, Tibbi Kasrani, Lakhani, Jhok Wajan, Bukhara, Nutkani, Yusuf Khan, Chhatri, Tibbi Qaisrani, Vehowa and Ratra areas of the Taunsa Tehsil in D. G. Khan District.



REGISTERED VOTERS

There are nearly 150 thousand registered voters in the constituency of which more than 85 thousand (57%) are men while nearly 64 thousand (43%) are women voters.

GENERAL ELECTION 2013

85,652	63,546	149,198
--------	--------	---------

BY-ELECTION 2016

86,230	64,180	150,410
--------	--------	---------

PERCENTAGE CHANGE

+0.67%	+1%	+0.81%
--------	-----	--------

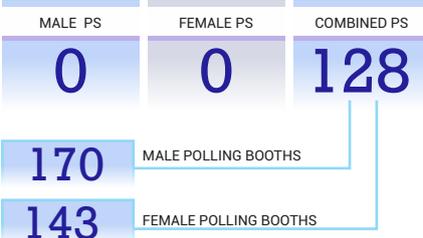
Male

Female

Total

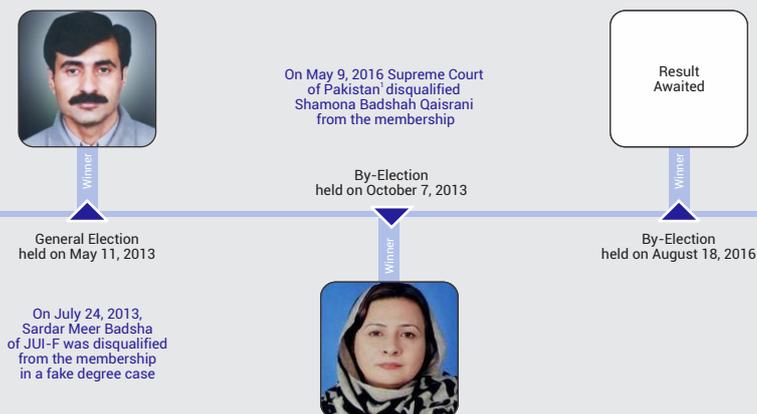
POLLING STATIONS (PS)

ECP established 128 polling stations with 313 polling booths. Of these 170 booths were for men while 143 were for women.



Party camps were reported to be established within the 400 yards of 16 polling stations while candidates were providing voters transportation facilities to voters at 18 polling stations. Voters were seen to be bringing vote vouchers at 85 polling stations. Campaign material was displayed on the walls of two polling stations while promotional material was present inside three polling stations. Party candidates and workers were seen to be persuading voters to vote for their party/candidate at six polling stations.

TIMELINE OF ELECTIONS



Presence of male staff was witnessed at 20 female polling booths. At two polling stations election staff was reported to be influencing voters by asking their choice of vote. FAFEN observers reported that in 21 polling booths, other voters accompanied the voter behind the secrecy screen violating the right to secret ballot. Similarly, polling agents were seen to be stamping the ballots on behalf of voters at six polling stations.

PP-240 is a predominantly rural constituency marked by rough terrain, harsh weather and deep political acumen and participation. The constituency is divided into plain areas and hilly parts called tribal areas that are spread over the foothills of Suleiman Range. A total of 16 candidates contested this by-election where one candidate was fielded by the ruling party PML-N whereas the other 15 candidates ran independently.

CONSTITUENCY HIGHLIGHTS ...

SENSITIVE POLLING STATIONS

A CATEGORY	B CATEGORY
11	9

A CATEGORY: Very Sensitive
B CATEGORY: Sensitive

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

Most of the contesting candidates in By-Election are independent however only PML-N fields their candidate.



TOTAL CONTESTING CANDIDATES

MALE	FEMALE
17	4

POLLING PERSONNEL

PRESIDING OFFICERS	134
ASSISTANT PRESIDING OFFICERS	329
POLLING OFFICERS	329

SCHEDULE FOR BY-ELECTION

APPOINTMENT OF DRO, RO **Dec 18, 2014***

*As amended on August 5, 2016

Appointments of DRO, RO and AROs (In pursuance of the provisions of Section 7 of the Representation of the People Act, 1976 (Act No. LXXXV of 1976), read with Section 108) for the purpose of holding bye-election in PP-240 D.G Khan-I.

ELECTION OBSERVERS TRAINED

MALE	FEMALE
21	10

ELECTION OBSERVERS DEPLOYED

MALE	FEMALE
17	4

¹ http://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/web/user_files/File/C.A.1628_2014.pdf