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**Press Release**

Elected Representative Now a Click Away

**FAFEN launches Interactive Parliamentary Information Portal**

ISLAMABAD, February 24, 2015: Citizens can now follow their elected representatives and standing committees, engage with them, post comments and debate issues through an interactive parliamentary information portal that was launched here on Tuesday, says a press release by Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN).

FAFEN’s parliamentary information portal is a unique initiative enabling citizens to get easy access to debates, deliberations and decisions in the National Assembly, Senate and provincial assemblies in an effort to contribute to general understanding and appreciation of the scope and extent of work being done by the legislatures. This is essential at a time when efforts to delegitimize politics and politicians are undermining the political institutions which have always played a critical role in minimizing conflicts and ensuing stability in the country.

“Our objective is to help establish the supremacy of elected institutions in the country as a prerequisite for strengthening democracy. No institution other than the legislatures should aggregate public demands for politically-acceptable solutions for the people of the country,” said a FAFEN spokesperson.

By subscribing to the portal (openparliament.pk), constituents will be able to monitor and evaluate the actions of their elected representatives in order to see whether they are being responsive to their demands and echoing public aspirations through their interventions. This will not only allow them to make politically rational decisions in elections, but also create a sense of responsibility among the elected representatives.

In addition, the portal enables citizens to connect with their representatives through moderated communication – either through letters or emails. The purpose of this connection is to encourage constructive engagements between citizens and their elected representatives on legislative and policy matters, which is essential for responsive legislative governance. Citizens can now send letters of support or rejection to their elected representatives on legislative matters.

The portal being, continually updated, already contains information on the functioning and businesses of the National Assembly since 2008 and the Senate and the provincial assemblies since 2011, when FAFEN initiated its direct observation of the elected houses. The observation is based on the rules of business and procedures of each assembly in order to minimize any bias. Observation has already been shared with stakeholders in the form of analytical reports, daily factsheets, press releases and recommendations to improve parliamentary processes.

The parliamentary portal has been divided into various sections, informing citizens about different interventions on the floor of the house. Parliamentroscopy – the key section of the web portal - provides details of interventions and parliamentary, tools such as motions under rules, privilege motions, legislations, questions, calling attention notices and points of order. It enables users to search for a particular intervention when it is used in a particular assembly and by whom.

In addition, FAFEN has also launched its daily online parliamentary newspaper – www.parliamentfiles.com. The paper brings news from all elected houses in easy-to-read formats for citizens to develop their interest and understanding of the legislatures and procedures. The newspaper is integral part of the parliamentary information portal.