



Our Vision

A democratic and just society that guarantees rights, respect and dignity of all individuals.

Our Mission

TDEA-FAFEN strives to strengthen public accountabilities by enhancing capability of citizens' associations to work for civil liberties, improved governance, democracy and peace in Pakistan.

Election Observation



FAFEN to observe by-elections:

- ▶ PK-93, Upper Dir-III on September 15, 2015
- ▶ PP-16, Attock-II on October 6, 2015
- ▶ NA-122, Lahore-V on October 11, 2015
- ▶ NA-154, Lodhran-I on October 11, 2015

FAFEN NEWS ALERT

A FORTNIGHTLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

AUGUST 31, 2015

Training of Election Observers in Haripur

Kiran Peter

The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) trained 104 observers (40 females and 65 males) to observe 419 (82%) polling stations in NA-19 Haripur where by-election was held on August 16, 2015. The organization also conducted four trainings for the observers on August 14 and 15, 2015.

The trainee observers were informed about FAFEN's Vision and Mission, besides its achievements since 2006, significance of elections, polling process, role of polling staff, authorized and unauthorized persons at a polling station, polling material, relationship between elections, democracy and governance.

Each observer was oriented about standardized checklists based on the provisions of the Representation of the People Act 1976, Conduct of Elections Rules 1977 and instructional handbooks provided to the election officials by the ECP. The observers documented their findings on the provided checklists during the polling day. FAFEN also oriented observers on the usage of biometric machines which were piloted in 30 polling stations. They were provided with an observation checklist to observe those polling stations which were using biometric machines on the polling day.

The participants of the training were active and had a stake in electoral reforms. They wanted to improvise a free, fair and transparent system of elections in the country as a result of their observatory effort. Besides, the technical observation, the participants were asked about the importance of elections and democratic governance in Pakistan. They responded that true democratic



■ Training being imparted at Sungi office in Haripur

governance can only be prevailed if the gap between the State and the Citizens is bridged. The participants were also familiarized with the concept of "Monitoring and Observation". Following are some of their comments on the differences between the two:

"During observation, we can only observe irregularities, but we cannot stop violations. For example, if the polling process is being violated, the observer cannot do anything but to observe it only."

Sumera Nosheen (Trainee)

"Monitoring is a process through which we observe as well as monitor. We can also interrupt and point out irregularities in the process. It is like someone is cheating in the examination hall and the instructor stops him from doing this act."

Abad ur Rehman (Trainee)

Hence, we can say that the one-day election observation training was an excellent way of raising awareness and mobilizing citizens for the evolution of free, fair and transparent elections in Pakistan.

DOES IMPLEMENTATION OF BIOMETRIC VOTING SYSTEM A VIABLE OPTION?

Kazim Hamdani

Pakistan, for the first time, employed biometric voting system in NA-19 Haripur by-elections on August 16, 2015. The idea behind using biometric system emerged in order to ensure accurate identification of potential and existing voters so as to enhance the existing electoral infrastructure. FAFEN's electoral observation has concluded that this practice was actually executed effectively. Indeed, following the massive uproar regarding electoral irregularities in several recurring manifestations (which served as a catalyst in promoting the citizenry's aspiration for 'free and fair elections') it is imperative to assess the viability of implementing an effectual electronic voting system.

Regulating the ability of polling officials and dishonest electoral agents to facilitate voter imitation is one of the principal gains in designing and installing Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). Secondly, the implementation of the aforementioned technology is aimed at automating the verification process for the provision and selection of candidates. Furthermore, the eradication of 'rejected votes' with EVMs will not only supplement transparency in the electoral process but will also exponentially minimize the human factor in the polling process. However, as a caveat, one must note that implementation and training are pivotal to guarantee that all stakeholders have clarity over the system needs and expectations from this technique.

It would be idealistic to assume that EVMs would lead to a foolproof electoral process as there are inherent detriments in this system as well; this is a predicament which the custodians of the electoral infrastructure must deliberate through parliamentary discourse. Hence, one must acknowledge that



even with this system put into practice, the Pakistani electoral process will not be entirely purged from corrupt practices but merely change the nature and methodology of corrupt practices in it; in this regard, technology advocates often overstate the prospective advantages of the system's implementation. The actual cost of applying this system is substantial and includes the fingerprint scanning devices, pilot projects, trainings, modifications of the existing IT systems and its supporting infrastructure - all of which are required for effective implementation. Indeed, the training of voting personnel and voters is essential (as is the preparation of backup options as a contingency plan).

Hence, in conclusion, it must be noted that although the implementation of a biometric system is a significant step towards greater transparency in the electoral process, it is not a panacea which will rid the system of all its varied ills. The main motivation behind implementing biometric polling is to reduce irregularities and the debate regarding whether or not it can be realized and adequately implemented is one which is a significant issue in Pakistan's political landscape.

FAREWELL PARTY FOR OUT-GOING STAFF MEMBER

The colleagues of Adnan Anjum, the out-going member of TDEA/FAFEN, threw farewell party in his honor on Friday last for completing six years in FAFEN and leaving the organization on a positive note. The staff made generous contributions to make the party a great success. Head of Programs Muddassir Rizvi recalled the days when Adnan joined the office in 2009. He was full of praise for Adnan as, according to him, Adnan stepped up the leader with his personal commitment and sheer hard work. He said FAFEN would certainly miss a thorough professional person. Adnan's friends also inked their sentiments in the form of a booklet which was given to him as a souvenir. All of them shared their personal experiences of working with him and eulogized his services for the organization. Adnan was very popular even among the kitchen staff as well as the security guards, as all of them remembered him in great words and wished him well for his future endeavors.



FAFEN TO CONDUCT 4 PROJECT TRAININGS NEXT WEEK

Atif Sandhu

FAFEN is going to conduct four Project Management Training workshops from the first week of September, 2015. These training events have been designed for the orientation of implementing partners' project staff in all provinces. Besides these workshops, trainings on election-day observation, long-term election observation, advocacy and campaigning, parliamentary observation and social mobilization will also be conducted during September and October, 2015.

and partner's capacity for delivering the program objectives, achieve desired results as well as ensure value for money in an effective and efficient manner. Based upon previous experiences and lessons learnt, FAFEN decided to hire a professional team and established an exclusive unit of Capacity Building and Organizational Development (CBOD) in 2015. This unit is designing and delivering capacity building packages with a new but extensive approach and methodology. This would not only help partners build their skills and knowledge but also retain the



All these trainings will be conducted by the Capacity Building and Organizational Unit of the TDEA under DFID funded project, Citizens' Action for Democratic Governance in Pakistan (CADGP).

The nature of organizational work and thematic areas are one of the major determinants of capacity building plans and strategies, as the capacity building is an ongoing process through which individuals, groups, organizations and societies enhance their ability to identify and meet development challenges. The nature of the challenges keeps on changing due to external and internal political, social, economic and legal complexities which require a constant scanning and subsequent mitigation strategies for coping up the emerging situations.

Since its inception, FAFEN has been determined to build its own

capacities and turn them into organizational/individual abilities for delivering project outputs in a timely and effective manner.

Throughout CADGP project period, CBOD will remain one of the high priority areas for TDEA/FAFEN. Keeping in mind the significance and amount of work under the project, FAFEN has devised a CBOD model that holistically covers all of the organizational tiers as well as capacity areas. The application of this model will oblige partner organizations to apply acquired skills, knowledge and solutions vertically and horizontally throughout the organization. FAFEN's CBOD model also heavily focuses on the measurement of improvement in programming, planning and project delivery so that the results of CBOD interventions can be reflected in program delivery.

MPS ATTENDANCE REPORT CARD

Syed Mohsin Shayan

FAFEN published a report on the attendance of parliamentarians in the 24th session of the National Assembly. According to the report, only 10 percent Members attended all the 14 sittings, including 34 MNAs – 20 elected directly, besides 13 women and one non-Muslim. On an average, each sitting was attended by 199 members while 114 Members remained absent and 26 were on leave.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif attended one sitting where as Leader of the Opposition Syed Khurshid Shah attended nine. The parliamentary leaders of PTI and PML remained absent without leave in all 14 sittings while Awami Muslim

League's leader Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed was the most regular parliamentary leader attending 11 sittings. PkMAP leader Mehmood Khan Achakzai,JI leader Sahibzada Tariq Ullah and PML-Z leader Muhammad Ijazul Haq attended 10 sittings each.

Speaker of the National Assembly attended 11 sittings while the Deputy Speaker was present in 13 proceedings.

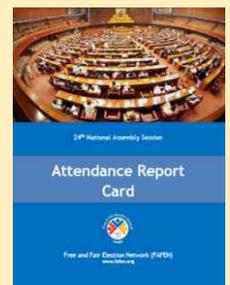
Out of the 339 total Members at the start of the session, 25 (7%) did not show up in any of the 14 sittings while nine of the Members remained absent throughout the session.

The parliamentarians who are sent to the corridor of power have greater

responsibility on their shoulders but the menace of absenteeism from the assemblies suggest that the honorable Members are not very much interested in raising the issues of their constituencies rather they seem more interested in settling their matters outside the Parliament.

For detailed report kindly follow this link

<http://fafen.org/24th-national-assembly-session-attendance-report-card/>



DETERIORATING CONDITION OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Sajjad Ahmed

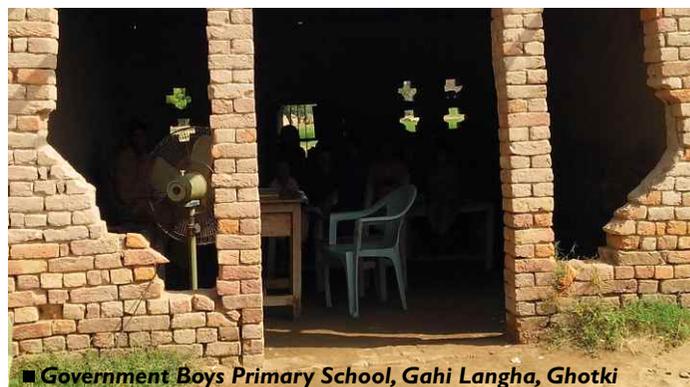
FAFEN trained 45 district coordinators to conduct monitoring visits of government schools all over the country. They monitored 2,583 schools in all, including 113 in five districts of Balochistan, 519 in 12 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 1,338 in 26 districts of Punjab and 613 in 16 districts of Sindh.

Infrastructure and Building Facilities:

Among the monitored schools, 29 in Balochistan, 72 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 110 in Punjab and 112 in Sindh did not have proper building and basic infrastructure facilities. The most depressing situation was monitored in Sindh where the schools wore a deserted look, without having proper furniture and a place for children to sit. As many as 151 schools in Punjab were found without having the boundary walls, 69 in Balochistan, 118 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 307 in Sindh. Six hundred and forty one (24.80%) schools had no proper entrance gates, raising questions on the integrity and commitment of the government towards future security of the children.

Among 2,583 monitored schools, only 1,621 (62%) had the electricity connection, while 101 (89%) in Balochistan, 175 (33%) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 266 (19.88%) in Punjab and 420 (68.51%) in Sindh did not have electricity connections. Balochistan ranked highest in terms of no electricity connections in schools while Punjab ranked the lowest as only 19.88% schools were without electricity connection.

Clean drinking water was another issue in the government



schools. Of the total monitored schools, 106 (93.8%) in Balochistan, 212 (40.8%) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 178 (13.30%) in Punjab and 444 (72.43%) schools in Sindh were facing acute shortage of potable water.

Sports is considered to be a vital aspect in a child's physical, mental, social and cognitive development. All children are encouraged to take part in the physical activities and hence the presence of a playground is considered to be essential in a school. However, 64% monitored schools did not have playgrounds. Balochistan saw worse situation in terms of non-availability of playgrounds, which was 97.13% of the total schools monitored in that province, followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 81% schools did not have any playground. Similarly 86.8% monitored schools across Pakistan did not have sports equipment, including 100% in Balochistan, 85% in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 82% in Punjab and 94% in Sindh.

Infrastructure and Building Facilities

S. No	Building and Facilities	Yes/No	Balochistan	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Punjab	Sindh	Total
1	Condition of School Buildings	No	29	72	110	112	323
		Yes	84	447	1,228	501	2,260
2	Boundary wall Around Schools	No	69	118	151	307	645
		Yes	44	401	1,187	306	1938
3	Entrance Gates	No	74	120	148	299	641
		Yes	39	399	1,190	314	1,942
4	Electricity Facility	No	101	175	266	420	962
		Yes	12	344	1,072	193	1621
5	Safe Drinking Water	No	106	212	178	444	940
		Yes	7	307	1,160	169	1,643
6	Playgrounds	No	110	420	653	481	1,664
		Yes	3	99	685	132	919
7	Staffroom for Teachers	No	108	429	1,094	544	2175
		Yes	5	90	244	69	408
8	Sports Facilities for Students	No	113	442	1,106	582	2,243
		Yes		77	232	31	340

PUBLIC PETITION

FAFEN LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO OPEN UP ELECTORAL REFORMS' COMMITTEE

Zartasha Niazi

Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) has launched a public campaign to open up the proceedings of the Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms for greater transparency and ownership of the citizens.

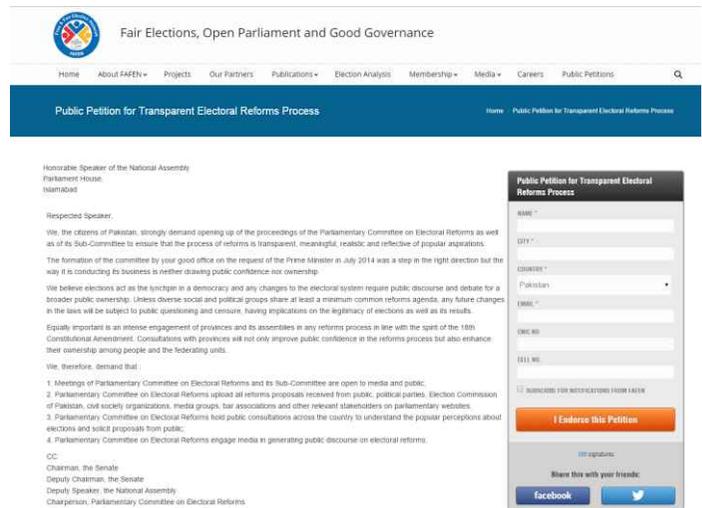
Speaker of the National Assembly has been urged to direct the Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms and its Sub-Committee to allow interested citizens and media to attend their meetings as closed door sittings do not inspire public confidence in the process and the product.

To draw public support for this initiative, FAFEN has also launched a public petition on its website 'fafen.org', urging citizens and other stakeholders to sign the petition for opening up the parliamentary committee to ensure that the process of reforms is transparent, meaningful, realistic and reflective of popular aspirations.

FAFEN believes elections act as the lynchpin in a democracy and any changes to the electoral system require public discourse and debate for a broader public ownership. Unless diverse social and political groups share at least a minimum common reforms agenda, any future changes in the laws will be subject to public questioning and censure, having implications on the legitimacy of elections as well as its results.

Equally important is an intense engagement of provinces and its assemblies in any reforms process in line with the spirit of the 18th Constitutional Amendment. Consultations with provinces will not only improve public confidence in the reforms process but also enhance their ownership among people and the federating units.

FAFEN, therefore, urges the Speaker of the National Assembly



to direct the committee to upload all reforms proposals received from public, political parties, Election Commission of Pakistan, civil society organizations, media groups, bar associations and other relevant stakeholders on parliamentary websites; to hold public consultations across the country to understand the popular perceptions about elections and solicit proposals from public and to engage media in generating public discourse on electoral reforms.

The citizens' petition has been addressed to the Speaker of the National Assembly and copied to Chairman, Senate; Deputy Chairman, Senate; Deputy Speaker, National Assembly; Chairperson, Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms; Chairperson, Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Electoral Reforms and all Members of Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms.

EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITOR

Syed Abul Ahad

Manager, Communications
Email: abdul.ahad@tdea.pk

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Zartasha Niazi

Program Officer, Media & Advocacy
Email: zartasha.niazi@tdea.pk

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Hammad Hussain

Email: hammad.hussain@tdea.pk

Address:

House 145, Street 37, F-10/1
Islamabad-44000
Phone: 051-8466232
Email: news@tdea.pk