**FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 2, Session No. 119 of the Senate**

**Ministerial Absence from Senate; Chairman Issues Last Warning**

ISLAMABAD, September 15, 2015: Chairman Senate, Raza Rabbani, issued fourth and last warning over the absence of relevant minister from the floor of the House, causing drop in agenda on Tuesday, says Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN).

The Chairman was about to give ruling over ministerial absence but instead issued last warning on the request of PML-N’s parliamentary leader. He also noted that future absence of the ministers whose relevant business is on the agenda would result in temporary or permanent ban on said minister’s appearance in the House. The Chair also directed Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges to issue a notice to the Secretary Inter-Provincial Coordination to ensure his presence in the House.

Overall attendance of the lawmakers continued to be low as only 20 (19%) lawmakers were present at the start and 32 (31%) at the time of adjournment of the sitting.

The House commemorated International Day of Democracy. Ten lawmakers expressed their views on this occasion consuming 50 minutes while the Chairman concluded the debate during his eight minute speech.

A motion under rule 172A by Senator Aitzaz Ahsan to constitute a committee of full House in order to consider legislative, administrative and other measures required for mainstreaming and ensuring constitutional rights to the people of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) was adopted by the House.

 Some key observations are as follows:

**Members’ Participation in House Proceedings**

* The Senate met for three hours and 35 minutes
* The sitting started at the scheduled time of 1500 hours
* Deputy Chairman presided over the sitting for an hour and 18 minutes while the remaining time was presided by the Chairman
* The Leader of the House did not attend the sitting
* The Opposition Leader attended the entire sitting
* Prime Minister did not attend the sitting
* Twenty (19%) senators were present at the start and 32 (31%) at the time of adjournment
* Parliamentary leaders of PPPP, NP, BNP-M, PML , PkMAP, PTI, JI and JUI-F were present
* Four minority members were present

**Output**

* Two reports of the Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatization on starred questions number 44 and an AM moved by Senator Muhammad Ali Khan on 12th May were presented by Mohsin Laghari instead of the Chairman Standing Committee, Salim Mandviwala. Chairman Standing Committee on Communications also presented a report on starred question number 29. Chairman Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges also presented three reports in the House.
* Farhatullah Babhar presented two reports on behalf of Chairperson Functional Committee on Human Rights; one on the killing of a girl in Jacobabad by her husband in front of her parents and the other on constitution of Commission for Protection of Child Rights to prevent offences against children which may include cruelty towards child, exposure to sodomy, pornography, trafficking of children, sexual abuse etc.
* Four periodical reports – one by Minister for Communications and three by Adviser to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs – were also presented in the House.

**Representation and Responsiveness**

* Of the three adjournment motions (AM) appearing on the agenda, Senator Farhatullah Babar’s AM regarding Senator Mushahid Ullah Khan’s controversial interview to BBC was deferred till next sitting. Senator Taj’s AM on problems faced by prisoners in Adiala Jail was disposed while Senator Sitara Ayaz’s AM regarding Indian violations of cease fire on Line of Control was admitted for discussion. Debate on AM moved by Sardar Muhammad Azam Khan Musakhel regarding NFC Awards continued but all four members that spoke on the issue demanded the presence of Minister of Finance for the report to be fruitful.
* A Calling Attention Notice (CAN) by Senator Nuzhar Sadiq was dropped due to mover’s absence while another CAN by Senator Mukhtiar Ahmed regarding death and injuries caused by a ruptured High Power Voltage Transmission line in Dhoro Naaro, Sindh could not be discussed due to absence of Minister for Water and Power.
* Nine of the 26 starred questions appearing on the agenda were taken up. In addition, the lawmakers raised 29 supplementary questions.

**Order and Institutionalization**

* The lawmakers raised six POs that consumed nine minutes of the proceedings’ time

**Transparency**

* ‘Orders of the Day’ was available to the legislators, observers and public

This daily factsheet is based on direct observation of the Senate proceedings conducted by PATTAN Development Organization – a member organization of FAFEN. Errors and omissions are excepted.