



BY-ELECTION

OBSERVATION REPORT

PS-11 SHIKARPUR-I

SHIKARPUR BY-ELECTION: HEIGHTENED SECURITY IMPROVES ENFORCEMENT, UNDERMINES TRANSPARENCY

ISLAMABAD, October 20, 2016: Notwithstanding the marked decrease in number of violations of law, the usual procedural irregularities of canvassing around polling stations, presence of unauthorized personnel inside polling premises, absence of arrangement facilitating women voters and curbs on observation continued to be reported from a number of polling stations established by ECP for by-election in PS-11 Shikarpur-I on Thursday.

Heightened security continued to be a prominent feature in Shikarpur by-election with Rangers enjoying the magisterial powers offered by the ECP managed the security for election that remained largely peaceful.

The number of incidents of illegality and irregularity came down significantly with total number of violations reported on polling day remained 65 from 68 polling stations, averaging less than one per polling station. This is lower than the average of 1.5 violation per polling station observed during last by-election observed in Rawalpindi (PP-7) last month.

However, the improved enforcement of electoral laws, rules and code of conduct once again came at the cost of procedural transparency as duly accredited FAFEN observers were barred from entering in four polling stations whereas Rangers chaperoned the observers wherever they were allowed to carry-out their work in accordance with the mandate provided by the ECP.

The campaign period was reported to be quite orderly as all contesting candidates and political parties conducted their campaigns within the limits stipulated by electoral laws and the code of conduct provided by the ECP. No oversized campaign material were seen to be displayed in the constituency whereas the use of loudspeakers was only reported in PPP and JUI-F rallies. More importantly, no incidents of violence uncovered during the by-polls in the predominantly rural provincial constituency.

The pre-voting processes remained smooth as well with polling agents objecting on the opening process at only one polling station while an Assistant Presiding Officer (APO) reported to be absent from duty.

Though the security officials deployed on polling stations had removed the party camps from around most of the polling stations, such camps were still present outside nine percent polling stations. Similarly, campaign material for different contesting candidates and parties was seen to be displayed on walls of six percent polling

CONSTITUENCY HIGHLIGHTS ...



A predominantly rural constituency, PS-11 comprises Shikarpur Municipal Committee, Shikarpur School Tawana Committee (STC) excluding Tehsil Committee and Sultankot STC.

REGISTERED VOTERS

There were 135,435 registered voters in the provincial constituency. Among them 72,949 were male and 62,486 were female voters.

GENERAL ELECTION 2013

67,834 59,402 127,236

BY-ELECTION 2016

72,949 62,486 135,435

PERCENTAGE CHANGE

+7.54% +5.19% +6.44%

Male Female Total

POLLING STATIONS (PS)

ECP established 105 polling stations in the constituency. Among them 41 were for each male and female polling station while remaining 23 were combined polling stations. A total of 366 polling booths were set up for the by-poll.

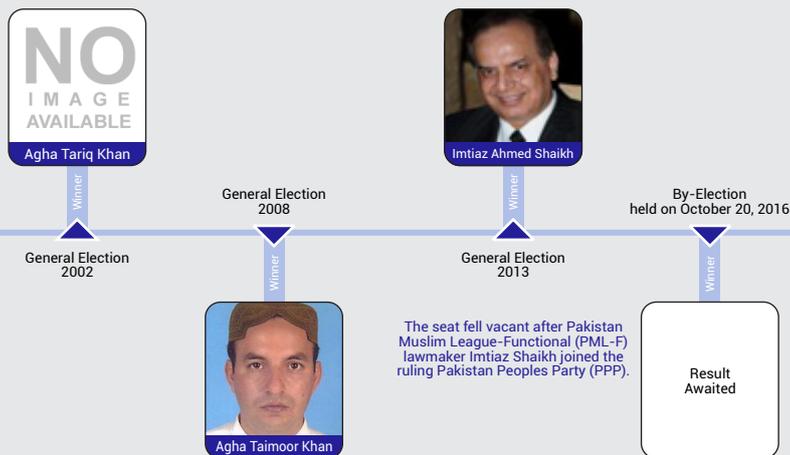


stations. At around one out of every five observed polling stations, the candidates or parties were reportedly providing transport to their prospective voters.

Unauthorized persons including candidates' bodyguards, political leaders and others, were reported to be present inside six percent observed polling stations.

Presiding Officers at seven percent polling stations told FAFEN observers that they had not attended ECP's election trainings. Presiding officers at nearly nine percent polling station did not have a complete knowledge of the census block codes allotted to their

TIMELINE OF ELECTIONS



polling station, while presiding officers at another 18 percent polling stations did not have any polling schemes with them.

Facilitation for women voters continued to be ignored by the ECP as 12 female polling booths had male staff performing election duties. Such deployment, though completely legal, creates problems for women voters especially in areas with sensitivities about gender-segregation.

The by-election in PS-11 was necessitated due to the resignation tendered by PML-F's Imtiaz Ahmed Shaikh, who joined the ruling PPP. Shaikh had bagged 35,010 votes in GE-2013 while PPP candidate was the runner up with 24,249 votes.

Five candidates took part in the by-election where PPP, JUI-F and PTI each fielded their candidate and the remaining two independently contested the by-election. However, PPP and JUI-F candidates were expected to be the frontrunners, expecting a stiff competition in order to bag the seat.

The number of registered voters increased by six percent to 135,435 (72,949 men and 62,486 women) compared to 127,236 registered voters (67,834 men and 59,402 women) in GE-2013. ECP had set up 105 polling stations (41 each male and female while 23 were combined) with 366 polling booths for the by-polls.

FAFEN trained and deployed 20 non-partisan citizen observers (18 male and two female) to observe voting processes at 105 polling stations setup by Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), however, this report is based on the information acquired telephonically from 68 observed polling stations by FAFEN observers.

CONSTITUENCY HIGHLIGHTS ...

SENSITIVE POLLING STATIONS

A CATEGORY	B CATEGORY
23	82

A CATEGORY: Very Sensitive
B CATEGORY: Sensitive

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

As many as five candidates – three having party tickets of PPP, JUI-F and PTI while two independents contested the by-poll.



TOTAL CONTESTING CANDIDATES

MALE	FEMALE
5	0

POLLING PERSONNEL

PRESIDING OFFICERS	105
ASSISTANT PRESIDING OFFICERS	366
POLLING OFFICERS	366

ELECTIONS' HISTORY

GENERAL ELECTION 2013

VALID VOTES	REJECTED VOTES	VOTER TURNOUT
64,552	2,678	52.8%

GENERAL ELECTION 2008

VALID VOTES	REJECTED VOTES	VOTER TURNOUT
52,600	2,524	40.7%

GENERAL ELECTION 2002

VALID VOTES	REJECTED VOTES	VOTER TURNOUT
38,592	1,159	35.7%

ELECTION OBSERVERS DEPLOYED

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
18	2	20