



BY-ELECTION

# OBSERVATION REPORT

PP-78 Jhang-II

## IRREGULARITIES, ILLEGALITIES SURGE IN PP-78 BY-ELECTION

ISLAMABAD, December 1, 2016: A relatively higher incidence of procedural irregularities characterized the by-election for PP-78 (Jhang-II) held on Thursday amid a heavy deployment of security forces, says Free and fair Election Network (FAFEN).

FAFEN observers reported rampant incidents of campaigning and canvassing near polling premises, presence of unauthorized persons inside polling stations, curbs on observation, insufficient election material and anomalies in ballot processing. Incidents of irregularities and illegalities spiked significantly during the PP-78 by-poll, with 305 violations reported throughout the day, averaging three (3) violations per polling station. This is substantially higher than the average violations recorded during last two by-elections held in NA-258 Karachi (2.1 violations) and PS-11 Shikarpur (1.0 violation).

The Provincial Assembly seat in PP-78 fell vacant in October 2016 after a verdict from the Apex Court on a petition challenging the Election Tribunal's decision to de-seat Rashida Yaqoob – GE-2013 winner from the constituency. Ms. Yaqoob was disqualified by an Election Tribunal in January this year on appeals filed by Ahmad Ludhanvi, Waqas Aslam and Sheikh Daniyal on grounds of incomplete declaration of her spouse's assets.

The by-poll turned out to be a highly contested one, as 25 candidates contested the seat. In a first, a transgendered person also contested the by-poll from the constituency that has been known for turbulence due to religious fanaticism.

FAFEN trained and deployed 32 non-partisan citizens (18 men and 14 women) to observe the polling processes at 171 polling stations. However, this preliminary report contains information acquired telephonically from 102 polling stations (56 male and 46 female) on Election Day. The observers, who were to spend approximately 45 minutes inside each polling premises, were trained to observe the opening, voting, closing and counting processes at the polling stations.

Campaigning and canvassing once again remained one of the most problematic areas for ECP where party camps were set up within the 400-yards radius around the premises of 36% (37) polling stations. In addition, candidates continued to transport potential voters at 52% (53) of the observed polling stations.

### CONSTITUENCY HIGHLIGHTS ...

PP-78 Jhang-II is predominantly a rural constituency comprising of; Bagh Town Committee, and Patwar Circles of Kot Lakhanana Qanungo Halqa of Jhang Tehsil; (a) Roranwali (b) Ashaba (J) (c) Ashaba (S) And Mighiana Qanungo Halqa of Jhang Tehsil



#### REGISTERED VOTERS

There were 216,562 registered voters in the Jhang-II Constituency. Among them, 118,627 were male and 97,935 were female voters.

#### BY-ELECTION 2016

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
118,627	97,935	216,562

#### POLLING STATIONS (PS)

ECP established 171 polling stations in the constituency. Among them 86 polling stations were established for male and 85 for female while no combined polling station was established. A total of 418 polling booths were set up for the by-poll.

MALE PS	FEMALE PS	COMBINED PS
86	85	0
418		
POLLING BOOTHS		

#### SENSITIVE POLLING STATIONS

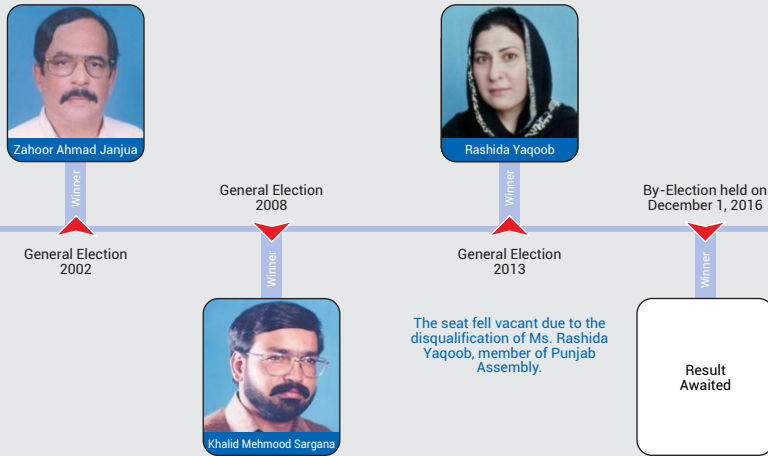
17	!	154	!
Polling stations were identified as highly sensitive.		Polling stations were identified as sensitive.	

Reports regarding promotional material displayed on the walls of 27 polling stations were also received.

Insufficient critical election material was once again an issue. Statement of the Count (Form-XIV) was found to be short at 17% (19) of the 102 observed polling stations, while the Ballot Account Form (Form-XV) was insufficiently available at 88% (90) of the observed polling stations.

Eighteen instances of breach of voters' secrecy were reported by FAFEN observers where other voters accompanied the voters behind the secrecy screens while a polling agent was also seen accompanying the voter behind the voting screen.

### TIMELINE OF ELECTIONS



FAFEN observers were barred from observing the polling processes at two polling stations while at several polling stations, observers were not allowed to conduct independent polling observation and were chaperoned by security personnel throughout the course of observation. There were several instances where observers were forced by the Rangers to vacate the polling premises without completing the observation.

A number of political party leaders visited the constituency in support of their candidates during the campaign period. Independent candidates were not far back in the race and were engaged in active campaigning. As part of the pre-election observation, FAFEN interviewed the transgendered candidate, Muhammad Arif aka Boota, who expressed satisfaction over ECP's cooperation. He also applauded the support from the local people and showed determination to solve problems of his community.

The election remained largely peaceful apart from an incident of violence reported from polling station No. 159 where supporters of PML-N and an Independent candidate clashed with each other, injuring two persons. Police officials arrested one political worker in an attempt to contain the situation.

A total of 216,562 voters – 118,627 men and 97,935 women – were registered for the by-election. ECP established 171 polling stations – 86 male and 85 female. No combined polling station was set up this time. As many as 17 (10%) polling stations were declared highly sensitive while the remaining 154 (90%) were declared as sensitive.

## CONSTITUENCY HIGHLIGHTS ...

### MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

As many as 25 candidates – five having party tickets while 20 independent candidates contested the by-poll.



### TOTAL CONTESTING CANDIDATES

MALE	FEMALE	TRANSGENDER
24	0	1

### POLLING PERSONNEL

PRESIDING OFFICERS	171
ASSISTANT PRESIDING OFFICERS	418
POLLING OFFICERS	418

### ELECTIONS' HISTORY

GENERAL ELECTION 2013		
VALID VOTES	REJECTED VOTES	VOTER TURNOUT
114,020	1,952	51.93%
GENERAL ELECTION 2008		
VALID VOTES	REJECTED VOTES	VOTER TURNOUT
80,288	3,185	50.2%
GENERAL ELECTION 2002		
VALID VOTES	REJECTED VOTES	VOTER TURNOUT
70,352	2,601	51.9%

### ELECTION OBSERVERS DEPLOYED

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
18	14	32