



# OBSERVATION REPORT

GBA-3 Gilgit-III

## GBA-3 ELECTION RECORDS A LOW INCIDENCE OF IRREGULARITIES, HIGH TURNOUT

ISLAMABAD, November 23, 2020: Around two-thirds of registered voters for GBA-3 Gilgit-III came out to vote in a peaceful election held a week after the region elected its representatives for Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly (GBA) elsewhere.

Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) observers reported a low incidence of irregularities in the constituency's election compared to general elections, except illegal campaigning and canvassing witnessed going unchecked in around two-thirds of monitored polling stations in the constituency. The monitors reported this problem from less than one-third of polling stations during general elections.

FAFEN deployed 22 trained, non-partisan, and duly accredited observers, including six women, to observe the constituency's election. This report comprises information received from 35 (48%) out of 73 polling stations on Election Day. The actual number of observed polling stations will be higher. The constituency went to the polls a week later than the general elections due to the legally-necessitated postponement caused by a validly nominated candidate's death on October 10, 2020.

A total of 15 candidates contested the election in this constituency on November 22, 2020, of which eight were independent, while the remaining seven represented political parties. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidate Syed Sohail Abbass returned to the constituency securing 6,815 or 26% of the total valid polled votes while an independent candidate Muhammad Iqbal finished runner-up getting 4,872 (18.3%) votes. Around 66 percent voters exercised their right to vote, while the percentage of the ballots excluded from the count remained 2.5% (666 votes).

Interestingly, the female turnout also remained almost equal to that of men against general elections, where female turnout remained lower by six percentage points.

ECGB had set up 73 polling stations—31 male, 35 female, and seven combined—for election in the constituency. These stations comprised 81 male and 69 female polling booths. On average, each polling station had 566 voters and 276 voters to each polling booth, well within the preferred legal limit of 1,200 voters per

## CONSTITUENCY HIGHLIGHTS ...



### REGISTERED VOTERS

There are 41,360 registered voters in the GBA-3 Gilgit-III, including 22,341 male voters and 19,019 female voters.

#### GILGIT BALTISTAN ELECTION 20115

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
18,226	16,187	34,413

#### BY-ELECTION 2020

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
22,341	19,019	41,360

#### CHANGE

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
23%	17%	20%

### POLLING STATIONS (PS)

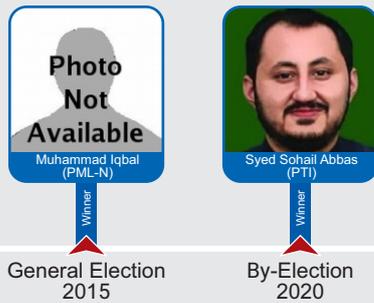
Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) set up 73 polling stations – 31 male, 35 female and 7 combined for the by-election. Overall, 150 polling booths – 81 male and 69 female – were established.

MALE PS	FEMALE PS	COMBINED PS
31	35	7
<b>150</b> POLLING BOOTHS		

polling station and 300 per polling booth.

**Campaigning and Canvassing:** The ECGB's code of conduct for contesting candidates and political parties prohibits the candidates or their supporters from the exhibition of campaign material in or outside the polling station. It also bars persuading voters on polling day and establish camps beyond 400 meters in rural areas and 100 meters in densely populated urban areas from the polling stations. FAFEN observers noted party camps' presence in the prohibited limits of 23 out of 35 observed polling stations. They also reported seeing

### TIMELINE OF ELECTIONS



campaign material of candidates or political parties inside six polling stations. Besides, the observers noted three instances of political workers found persuading the voters.

**Voting Process:** FAFEN's observers reported that secrecy screens at three polling booths in three polling stations allowed the individuals present inside the booths to see the voters marking their ballot papers. Authorized polling agents, the candidates' representatives permitted to witness the polling process and object to any irregularity as defined under the law, were seated appropriately at polling booths of 34 polling stations. They could see the entire polling process firsthand. However, the polling agents' seating arrangement at one polling station did not enable them to see the polling process correctly. The voting manner was quite organized at almost all polling stations, while the observers reported the security officials' behavior with voters also satisfactory. The voters overall expressed satisfaction with the voting process.

The majority (33) of the observed polling stations had long queues. At 29 polling stations, the authorities had set up more than one booth in a single room for voters. The observers reported non-compliance of COVID-19 prevention SOPs at four polling stations, while 27 followed them partially, and four adhered to the SOPs completely. The observers reported a scarcity of election material at four polling stations. They recorded 13 instances of polling staff not allowing voters to cast votes, mainly for not having NICs and votes not registered at the visited polling station.

FAFEN observers recorded six instances at the observed polling stations where persons other than voters, including polling agents, stamped the ballots. Moreover, they reported three cases of unauthorized individuals accompanying voters behind the screen.

The monitors reported no major incident of violence inside or outside the polling station on the day.

**Counting Process:** FAFEN observers witnessed the counting process at 16 polling stations. Of these monitored polling stations, the presiding officers (PrOs) handed over the copy of Form-45 to polling agents at 14 polling stations. Likewise, a copy of Form 45 was given to observers at 11 polling stations, while PrOs at five polling stations refused to do so. The observers reported that the PrOs did not paste the copies of the Form-45 outside six polling stations.

## CONSTITUENCY HIGHLIGHTS

### MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

As many as 15 candidates including representatives of PPP, PSP, PTI, PML-N, JUI-F, PML, ITP and 8 independents contested the by-poll.



### TOTAL CONTESTING CANDIDATES

#### GILGIT BALTISTAN GENERAL ELECTION 2015

MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
11	0	11

#### BY-ELECTION 2020

MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
15	0	15

### ELECTION HISTORY

#### Reason of By-Election

Election postponed due to the sudden death of Justive (R) Syed Jaffer Shah, validly nominated candidate.

#### GILGIT BALTISTAN GENERAL ELECTION 2015

VALID VOTES	INVALID VOTES	VOTER TURNOUT
22,193	0	64.49%

#### By-Election 20

VALID VOTES	INVALID VOTES	VOTER TURNOUT
26,498	666	65.68%

### ELECTION OBSERVERS TRAINED

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
16	6	22

### BY-ELECTION OBSERVED BY

MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
16	6	22