



Political Developments and Early Campaigning

Pre-U15/14-Mar-2013

Political Parties Gear Up for Polls

Introduction

The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) has deployed 130 District Long-Term Observers (DLTOs) in districts across the country to observe all aspects of the election process. These observers send data to the FAFEN Election Observation Secretariat in Islamabad, which uses the information to publish Pre-election Updates distributed widely to the public and via media. The information is also used to raise issues with various stakeholders to help improve the electoral process.

This report, based on information received from 38 districts, highlights various political developments observed in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Balochistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in February 2013.

Summary

FAFEN's DLTOs identified at least 38 districts in February 2013 with political developments related to General Election 2013, including districts where election campaigns started before the announcement of the election schedule. Most of these districts are in Punjab (18), followed by KP (13), FATA (4) and Balochistan (3).

The DLTOs identified 23 significant political developments in Punjab, followed by 20 in KP, five in FATA and three in Balochistan. These developments include seat adjustments, new alliances, defections, rifts among and within political parties, and public meetings.

Also included in this analysis are partisan distributions of development resources and requests for additional polling stations for internally displaced people (IDPs).

The developments pertain to several political parties and independent candidates. Parties included Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Muslim League (PML), Awami National Party (ANP), Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Balochistan National Party (BNP), National Party (NP) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM).

Legal Framework

Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) finalized earlier than usual the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates, issued by Notification on 28 January 2012. It is possible that the finalization of the Code in advance of announcement of the election schedule reflects the historic situation of the elected Government completing its full term. Political contestants know the approximate date of the elections, and a Code of Conduct to guide their activities before the exact election schedule announcement is therefore appropriate.

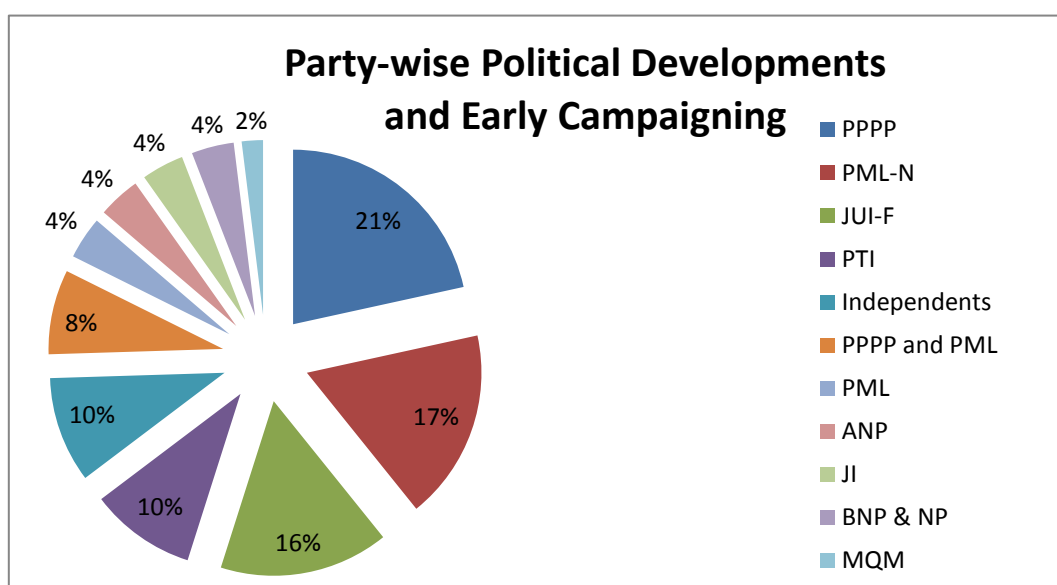
ECP also issued two Notifications on 22 January and 6 February 2013 on the theme of allocations of funds for development projects. According to ECP: "No funds will be diverted from an ongoing project to a new or existing development project in any constituency" except for matters of strategic importance on a case-by-case basis. Development funds are often distributed immediately before elections to mobilize voters and influence election results.

Party-wise Political Developments and Early Campaigning

FAFEN DLTOs observed 51 activities that can be construed as early campaigning and/or political developments related to the upcoming General Elections 2013. The following table sorts these activities according to the political parties and independent candidates.

Party-wise Political Developments and Early Campaigning			
Political Party	No. of Activities	No. of Districts	Districts
PPPP	11	10	Lahore, Rawalpindi, Bahawalpur, and Gujrat (Punjab); Mansehra, Tank, and Peshawar (KP); Lasbela (Balochistan)
PML-N	9	9	Mandi Bahauddin, Khanewal, Toba Tek Singh, and Vehari (Punjab); Swat, Lakki Marwat, Karak, and Hangu (KP); North Waziristan (FATA)
JUI-F	8	7	Dera Ismail Khan, Karak, Hangu, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, and Bannu (KP); South Waziristan and North Waziristan (FATA)
PTI	5	5	Toba Tek Singh, Mianwali, and Gujranwala (Punjab); Tank and Karak (KP)
Independent Candidates	5	5	Khushab, Nankana Sahib, Bahawalnagar and Gujranwala (Punjab); North Waziristan (FATA)
PPPP & PML	4	4	Sahiwal, Narowal, Okara, and Kasur (Punjab)
PML	2	2	Sialkot (Punjab); Abbottabad (KP)
ANP	2	2	Kohistan and Nowshera (KP)
JI	2	2	Swat (KP) and Orkazai Agency (FATA)
BNP & NP	2	2	Kech and Panjgur (Balochistan)
MQM	1	1	Kohistan (KP)
Total	51		

Observers recorded one-fifth of these activities (11, or 21%) by/related to PPPP in 10 districts, followed by PML-N with nine activities (17%) in nine districts, JUI-F with eight activities (16%) in seven districts, and PTI and independent candidates each with five developments (10% each) in as many districts. At least six other political parties – PML, ANP, JI, BNP, NP and MQM – were involved in observed early campaigning or significant political developments.

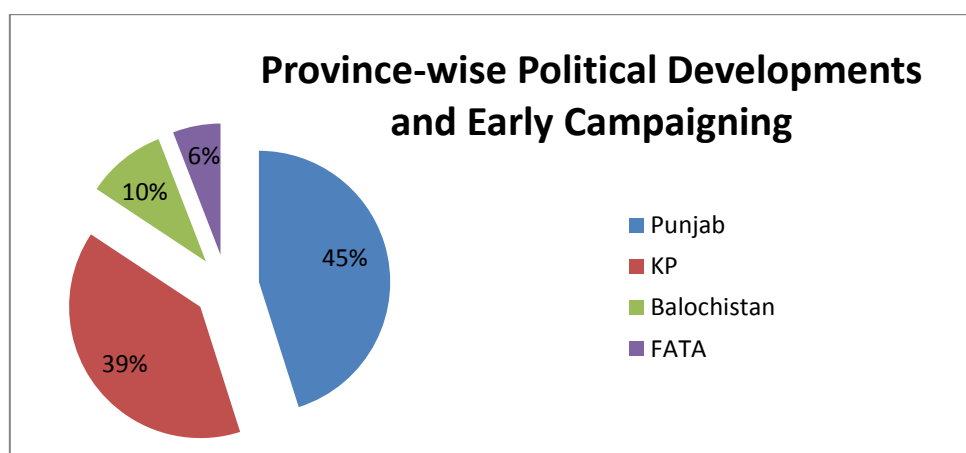


Province-wise Political Developments and Early Campaigning

FAFEN DLTOs observed a total of 51 political developments or early campaigning activities in 38 districts across the country. The largest number of observed political developments and campaigning activities were 23 in Punjab, followed by 20 in KP, 5 in FATA and 3 in Balochistan. The following table sorts these activities by province.

Province-wise Political Developments and Early Campaigning								
Region	Party-wise Number of Developments						Names of Districts	
Balochistan	3						Kech, Panjgur and Lasbela	
	PPPP	BNP	NP					
	1	1	1					
FATA	5						South Waziristan, North Waziristan, Khyber Agency and Orakzai Agency	
	JUI-F	PML-N	JI	Independent				
	2	1	1	1				
KP	20						Swat, Lakki Marwat, Karak, Hangu, Tank, Abbottabad, Kohat, Dera Ismail Khan, Kohistan, Bannu, Peshawar, Nowshera, Mansehra	
	PPPP & PML	PML-N	JUI-F	ANP	PTI	MQM		JI
	4	4	6	2	2	1		1
Punjab	23						Sahiwal, Mandi Bahauddin, Okara, Narowal, Lahore, Toba Tek Singh, Khushab, Bahawalnagar, Gujrat, Sialkot, Kasur, Rawalpindi, Bahawalpur, Gujranwala, Nankana Sahib, Khanewal, Mianwali, Vehari	
	PML-N	PPPP & PML	PTI		Independent			
	4	12	3		4			
Total	51							

Observers recorded almost half of these activities (23, or 45%) in Punjab, followed by more than one-third in KP (20, or 39%), five in Balochistan (10%) and three in FATA (6%).



Details of Party Political Developments and Early Campaigning

Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP)

FAFEN observers recorded 11 activities related to PPPP that can be construed as early campaigning or political developments related to General Election 2013. These activities took place in 10 districts of Punjab, KP, and Balochistan.

In Punjab, the senior party leadership attended a convention in Lahore organized by the All Pakistan Minority Alliance, an allied party. The party also filed a reference with the ECP against members who joined PML-N. In Rawalpindi, a senior Gujrat Khan-based PPPP leader distributed sewing machines free-of-charge amongst women. In Bahawalpur, a well-known PML-F politician announced joining PPPP.

In Gujrat, PML-N has unofficially announced a party ticket for an influential family that fought on PPPP ticket in General Election 2008. Members of the family have already started campaigning for PML-N. Moreover, a leader of PPPP in Gujrat held a press conference announcing he will contest the election from NA-105. This goes against PPPP's agreement with the PML, who have pitched Chaudhry Pervez Elahi for the same constituency.

In Mansehra in KP, PPPP candidate Shuja Salim Khan is expected to face tough resistance, after Habibullah Khan, the son of former minister Babar Naseem Khan, announced contesting the upcoming election. Habibullah reportedly has significant support in Garhi Habibullah in Mansehra and is expected to give the PPPP candidate serious competition.

In Tank, PPPP and ANP formed an alliance. There have also been reports of meetings between PPPP and JUI-F over seat adjustment in Peshawar, instead of an alliance. Also in Tank, PPPP and ANP have formed an alliance reportedly to break the JUI-F stronghold.

In Lasbela, Balochistan, the death of former chief minister Jam Mohammad Yousaf reportedly has disrupted an alliance between the Jam and Bhuttani families, giving PPPP a chance to form an alliance with the Jam family.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)

A total of nine election-related activities or developments of PML-N were recorded by FAFEN observers in as many districts in Punjab, KP, and FATA.

In Mandi Bahauddin in Punjab, the party had two subgroups vying for the party ticket. The party decided not to give a ticket to the group led by Chaudhry Ijaz (he lost in General Election 2008) and has instead given it to Mumtaz Ahmed Tarar. The resulting rift in the party ranks is reportedly expected to benefit the PPPP in the constituency.

In Khanewal, four members of the Punjab Assembly have resigned from the PPPP and announced joining PML-N. In Toba Tek Singh, Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif inaugurated various development schemes and spoke at a public gathering. The Chief Minister also spoke to sizable public gatherings with the PML-N candidate for the constituency in all three tehsils of Vehari, inaugurating various development schemes before each of his speeches.

In Swat (KP), a member of the PPPP, along with his supporters, joined PML-N. In Laki Marwat, PML-N and PML (Like-Minded) have agreed upon fielding a joint candidate to run in General Election 2013. The party arranged multiple public meetings in Karak to mobilize voters. In Hangu, the party set up a new office to better coordinate election activities.

In North Waziristan (FATA), a PML-N candidate sent a request to ECP for the establishment of polling stations for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Dera Ismail Khan instead of Tank because the number of IDPs in Dera Ismail Khan (84,585) is more than double that in Tank (40,551).

Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F)

JUI-F was involved in eight political developments in seven districts of KP and FATA.

The party held multiple public meetings in Dera Ismail Khan (KP) to discuss arrangements for a conference. In Karak, the party arranged public meetings, and initiated public contacts in Hangu. In Kohat and Lakki Marwat, prominent political figures announced joining JUI-F. In Bannu, a JUI-F stronghold, the party declared that Shah Mohammad will contest the provincial seat instead of Syed Hamid Shah.

Differences have been reported in South Waziristan (FATA) between the central leadership of JUI-F and local office-bearers over the nomination of a candidate for the upcoming election.

In North Waziristan, JUI-F reportedly has accelerated efforts to unite two tribes – Lower and Upper Dawars. If the two tribes unite under the JUI-F banner, the party's chance of winning a seat there will increase significantly as the two tribes represent a large portion of the people in the agency. However, Maulvi Gul Ramzan, who has significant support in the constituency, has announced contesting the upcoming general election independently. Some analysts predict this will be a blow to JUI-F's chances in the agency.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)

In Toba Tek Singh (Punjab), the PTI chief met representatives of a student group, and a public gathering was arranged in Karak. The party also reportedly intensified youth mobilization in Mianwali. Following ECP orders for intra-party polls as a pre-requisite for contesting General Election 2013, PTI conducted polls in Gujranwala (Punjab) and Tank (KP).

Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) and Pakistan Muslim League (PML)

In Sahiwal and Okara, seat adjustments have been almost finalized between PPPP and PML for the General Election 2013. In Narowal, PML nominated a new district head and agreed to a seat adjustment with PPPP. In Kasur, the two parties have settled on seat adjustments: NA-141 to be taken by PPPP and NA-142 by PML. These are all Punjab districts.

Pakistan Muslim League (PML)

In Sialkot, Punjab, the Pakhtoon Itihad has announced it will support PML. This coalition is reportedly aimed at breaking the stronghold of PML-N in the district. Negotiations between PML and Tehreek-e-Suba Hazara reportedly are underway for seat adjustments in various constituencies of Abbottabad (KP).

Awami National Party (ANP)

In Kohistan (KP), an important politician joined ANP along with his family members and supporters. In Nowshera, ANP party workers have started submitting applications for getting party tickets to contest the General Election 2013.

Balochistan National Party (BNP) and National Party (NP)

In Kech, representatives of BNP and National Party met to discuss seat adjustment. In Panjgur, a National Party workers' meeting was called to develop a strategy for General Election 2013. Both of these districts are in Balochistan.

Muthaidda Qaumi Movement (MQM) and Jamaat-i-Islami (JI)

In Kohistan (KP), two well-known political figures announced joining MQM. In Swat, Dost Muhammad and thousands of his supporters reportedly decided to switch from PML-N to JI. In Orakzai Agency (FATA), JI announced name of its candidate for the General Election 2013.

Others

From Khushab and Nankana Sahib in Punjab, two new candidates have announced they will contest the General Election 2013. In Bahawalnagar and Gujranwala, also in Punjab, two religious parties conducted rallies, while in Khyber Agency (FATA), a politician aiming for the National Assembly is reportedly doling out money for water supply schemes and funds for youth.

About FAFEN

The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), established in 2006, is a coalition of 42 leading civil society organizations working to strengthen all forms of democratic accountabilities in Pakistan. Governed by the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA), FAFEN also implements robust programs in-between elections related to monitoring parliamentary affairs, connecting constituents to their elected representatives, monitoring the performance of public and elected institutions and advocating electoral and democratic reforms.

FAFEN Election Program

FAFEN is implementing a long-term election observation program nationwide, including both pre- and post-electoral processes. FAFEN is deploying 130 District Long-Term Observers (DLTOs) across the country to monitor all phases of elections. FAFEN's Constituency Long-Term Observers (CLTOs) will observe the political campaigns in all National Assembly constituencies during the two months prior to Election Day. In addition, FAFEN will deploy more than 43,000 trained, non-partisan citizens to monitor polling stations across the country on Election Day. All FAFEN observers adhere to the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) Code of Conduct for National Observers as well as the Global Principles for Non-Partisan Election Observation and Monitoring by Citizen Organizations (April 2012). FAFEN's 10-month observation process from February 1, 2013, helps keep all election stakeholders informed on issues relevant to fairness and transparency at every stage of the election process.

FAFEN Election Observation Methodology

FAFEN's election observation activities are based on the Constitution and laws of Pakistan, global best practice standards for elections, as well as the legal obligations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified by Pakistan in 2010. FAFEN LTOs use standardized checklists to report electronically to the FAFEN Election Observation Secretariat in Islamabad regularly. FAFEN compiles data and information from around the country to issue regular thematic updates for the consideration of voters and election stakeholders. FAFEN LTOs monitor and report on the activities of District Election Commissioner (DEC) offices, preparations of elections such as appointment and training of election officials, the process of candidate nominations, and compliance with the ECP's Code of Conduct for political parties and candidates (after the announcement of election schedule). In addition, LTOs observe and report on compliance of the executive branch with legal responsibilities and ECP regulations, including restrictions on transfers of civil service personnel and initiation of new development schemes. LTOs also monitor political and electoral intimidation and violence, the actions of the police and other security forces, and the overall political environment during the pre-election period.