



Pre-U20/26-March-2013

ECP Should Ensure State Property Free of Campaign Material

Introduction

This report highlights the use of state resources by political parties for election campaigning. It has been prepared from information gathered by the Free and Fair Election Network's (FAFEN) District Long-Term Observers (DLTOs) between March 11 and 17, 2013. The DLTOs were tasked to observe whether there was any campaign material, such as party flags, banners, posters, stickers and wall chalking on the premises of government offices.

The report is based on observations of District Election Commissioner (DEC) offices in four districts – Sahiwal and Lahore in Punjab and Kech and Washuk in Balochistan – and other government offices in seven districts – Sialkot, Bahawalnagar and Gujrat in Punjab; Khyber Agency and Mohmand Agency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA); Swat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Harnai in Balochistan.

Summary

FAFEN observers reported seeing campaign material of at least nine political parties in eight of the 11 reporting districts.

Similar to FAFEN's earlier observations, Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had the highest incidence of campaign material on the premises of government buildings. In addition, at least seven other parties had their campaign material on state property.

Most of the material was found in Swat (KP) and Sialkot (Punjab), followed by Gujrat (Punjab). FAFEN observers saw seven kinds of material outside four offices in Sialkot, and as many banners, stickers and posters outside three offices in Swat. The DLTO in Gujrat saw two types of posters, a banner and a party flag outside two government offices. In Mohmand Agency (FATA), Harnai (Balochistan) and Bahawalnagar (Punjab), DLTOs each reported one instance of campaign material posted outside a government building.

In total, FAFEN observers found eight instances of wall chalking, seven posters, six banners, two flags and two party stickers on the premises of government buildings. Most of the material was found outside the offices of Deputy Commissioners (DCs)/District Coordination Officers (DCOs), followed by the offices of Executive District Officers (EDOs) Education and District Police Officers (DPOs). A few materials were seen outside EDO Health offices. In many cases, campaign material of different parties was seen on the premises of the same building.

Out of four DEC offices observed, FAFEN observers reported seeing wall chalking of PML-F and PPP-SB outside the office in Washuk (Balochistan). The remaining three DEC offices in Lahore, Sahiwal (Punjab) and Kech (Balochistan) did not have any campaign material on their premises.

Party-wise, District-wise Analysis

FAFEN observers reported seeing campaign material of at least nine political parties in eight of the 11 districts. Similar to FAFEN's earlier observation, PPP and PML-N had the highest incidence of campaign material on the premises of government buildings.

FAFEN observers reported seeing PPP's campaign material at five government offices in four districts, while PML-N's banners, posters and graffiti were found outside as many offices in three districts.

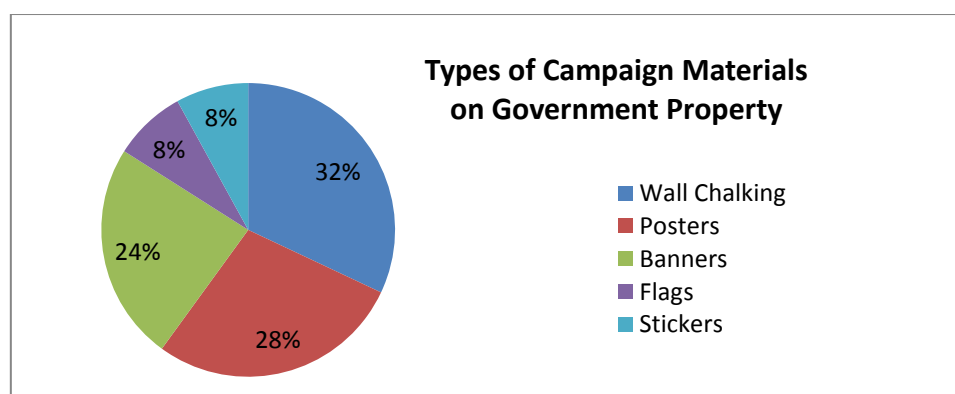
The Awami National Party (ANP), Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) each had their campaign material outside three state offices. In addition, observers saw campaign material of four other parties – Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Peoples Party-Shaheed Bhutto (PPP-SB) and Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F) – on the premises of government buildings.

Most of the material was found in Swat and Sialkot, followed by Gujrat. FAFEN observers saw seven kinds of campaign material outside four offices in Sialkot, and as many banners, stickers and posters outside three offices in Swat. The DLTO in Gujrat saw two posters, a banner and a party flag outside two offices. Mohmand Agency, Harnai and Bahawalnagar DLTOs reported the least campaign material outside government buildings. The following table summarizes observation of campaign material:

Party-wise, District-wise Analysis of Observed Campaign Material at Government Offices			
Political Party	No. of Observations	No. of Districts	Districts
PPP	5	4	Gujrat, Mohmand Agency, Sialkot, Swat
PML-N	5	3	Bahawalnagar, Sialkot, Swat
JUI-F	3	3	Harnai, Sialkot, Swat
ANP	3	1	Swat
JI	3	1	Gujrat
PTI	2	1	Sialkot
PML-F	1	1	Washuk
PPP-SB	1	1	Washuk
Others	2	1	Khyber Agency
Total	25		

Government Office-wise Analysis

FAFEN observers reported seeing eight instances of wall chalking, seven posters, six banners, two flags and two party stickers on the premises of government buildings.



Similar to FAFEN's earlier observations, most of the campaign material was found outside the offices of Deputy Commissioners (DCs)/District Coordination Officers (DCOs), followed by the offices of Executive District Officers (EDOs) Education and District Police Officers (DPOs). Less material was seen outside the EDO Health's office.

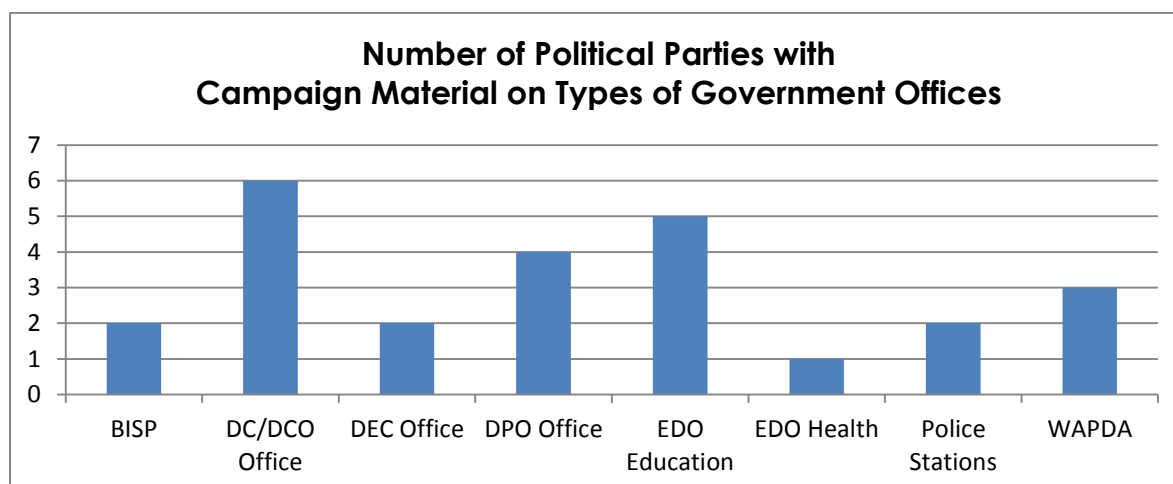
In some cases, campaign material of different parties was seen on the premises of the same building. FAFEN observers saw banners of PPPP, PML-N and PTI outside the DC/DCO office in Sialkot. JI had its flag, poster and banner outside the DC/DCO office in Gujrat.

In addition, observers saw graffiti of JUI-F and PML-N outside the EDO Education's office in Sialkot, while ANP's banners and stickers were seen outside the same office in Swat. The DLTO in Bahawalnagar reported seeing PML-N's graffiti outside the EDO Education's office.

FAFEN observers reported seeing a local party's flag and wall chalking outside the DPO office in Khyber Agency, while PTI and PPPP had their graffiti and posters at the same office in Sialkot and Gujrat. Posters of ANP, PPPP and PML-N were seen outside the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) office in Swat, while PPPP's poster and JUI-F's sticker were seen outside the office of Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) in the same district.

A banner and poster of PML-N and PPPP were found outside police stations in Sialkot and Mohmand Agency, respectively, while JUI-F's graffiti was found outside the EDO Health's office in Harnai.

In addition, the DLTOs observed a total of four DEC offices in Lahore, Sahiwal, Kech and Washuk and reported seeing graffiti of PML-F and PPP-SB in Washuk. The remaining three offices did not have any campaign material on their premises.



Recommendations

Based on its repeated observation of campaign material on government property, FAFEN reiterates its recommendations that:

1. The Caretaker government, ECP and other relevant state institutions should ensure that state property is not used for any political or campaigning purpose.
2. Political parties and citizens should observe public offices across the country and promptly report any campaigning at public offices to the ECP and other authorities.

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 observe 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 observe 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, that began from February 1, 2013, will help 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, ratified by Pakistan in 2010. FAFEN LTOs use standardized checklists to report electronically to the FAFEN Election Observation Secretariat. FAFEN compiles data and information from around the country to issue regular thematic updates for the consideration of voters and election stakeholders.

FAFEN LTOs observe and report on the activities of 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 security forces, and the overall political environment during the pre-election period.