



FREE AND FAIR ELECTION NETWORK

Election Update - 9

Intimidation and Harassment by Police and Intelligence Agencies

January 29, 2008 - Islamabad

The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) has deployed coordinators in more than 250 National Assembly constituencies across the country to observe all aspects of the election process. These observers send weekly reports to the FAFEN Secretariat based in Islamabad which uses the information to raise the issues with various stakeholders with a view to improving the quality of the electoral process.

This report is based on the information sent by FAFEN observers for the period between January 12 and 18, 2008 in 190 constituencies of the following 70 districts:

Sr. No.	Province	Number of Districts	Name of Districts
1.	Punjab	28	Gujrat, Narowal, Gujranwala, Chakwal, Khushab, Sargodha, Kasur, Jhang, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, Okara, Pak Pattan, Sahiwal, Bahawalnagar, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, Rajanpur, Multan, Attock, Rawalpindi, Khanewal, Lahore, Vehari, Bhakkar, Jhelum and Mianwali
2.	NWFP	17	Kohistan, Swat, Buner, Charsadda, Mardan, Peshawar, Bannu, Haripur, Khyber Agency (FATA), Upper Dir, Battagram, Swabi, Lower Dir, Karak, Lakki Marwat, Mansehra and Nowshera
3.	Sindh	18	Dadu, Khairpur, Sukkur, Mirpurkhas, Sanghar, Hyderabad, Tharparkar, Karachi West, Karachi South, Karachi East, Karachi Central, Malir, Ghotki, Matiari, Nawabshah, Tando Allah Yar, Tando Mohammad Khan and Thatha
4.	Balochistan	6	Pishin, Lasbela, Jaffarabad, Qila Abdullah, Jhal Magsi and Qila saifullah
5.	Federal Capital	1	Islamabad
	Total	70	

While these regular reports will be covering various aspects of the election process, this report highlights issues related to election intimidation and harassment. This report focuses on the role of police and intelligence agencies in the electoral process and provides information about incidents of intimidation and harassment of candidates and their supporters by the security agencies during the election campaign. Election Update-9 also gives some information regarding harassment of voters by candidates and their supporters.

FAFEN reports suggest that in most cases police and other security apparatus are acting in favor of candidates affiliated to the former ruling party i.e. Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q). Generally it is found that police are partisan in districts where any of the candidates is closely related to District/Tehsil Nazims, who control the ward and watch functions of local police.

One of the most frequent complaints received by FAFEN is of police harassing candidates and/or workers of certain political parties by threatening them or registering cases against them. Particularly, the candidates and supporters of the PPP candidates are being threatened by the police that their names can be included in the list of those who ransacked and damaged public and private property during the protests and in incidents of violence that took place after the assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto. Such reports are coming particularly from various districts in Sindh such as Sanghar, Karachi South and Thatta.

Police also are asking the supporters and candidates of political parties who formed the opposition during the tenure of the previous government to stop campaigning. In Khanewal district, the police issued a warning to the PPP candidates asking them not to campaign as there was a serious threat to their lives. In Thatta district, police are not giving security clearance to PPP candidates for holding public meetings.

In some cases, FAFEN observers reported that police had directly asked candidates to announce their support to the PML-Q. Police are also targeting those political workers who are active in organizing public meetings and rallies for opposition candidates. Such complaints have come from Muzaffargarh and Khanewal districts.

In Jhelum, FAFEN observers reported that the police are putting hurdles in arranging gatherings by some political parties by creating an atmosphere of intimidation and restricting potential voters from reaching the venue of campaign gatherings.

While rallies and public gatherings by the candidates of one party are being allowed, district police authorities are generally not permitting rallies and public meetings to candidates of some other parties on the pretext of security reasons. This has been reported from Jhelum, Thatta and Gwadar.

Besides police, FAFEN observers have also reported involvement of intelligence agencies' officials in the electoral process. The reports suggest that the officials of some intelligence agencies are demoralizing the candidates of opposition parties by telling them that the names of the winners have already been finalized, and therefore, they are wasting their time in campaigning.

The following sections give detailed country-wide analysis of harassment and intimidation issues by police and intelligence agencies:

1. Police Harassing Candidates and Supporters

Reports of police intimidation of candidates have been received from 15 constituencies of 10 districts – nine in Punjab and one in Sindh.

The districts where police are reportedly harassing candidates are Gujranwala, Chakwal, Sargodha, Rahim Yar Khan, Rawalpindi, Khanewal, Lahore, Vehari and Mianwali (Punjab) and Nawabshah (Sindh).

According to FAFEN observers' reports from 175 constituencies, police are harassing supporters of candidates in 27 constituencies of 16 districts – 13 in Punjab and three in Sindh.

Police are harassing supporters of particular candidates in Gujranwala, Chakwal, Sargodha, Faisalabad, Rahim Yar Khan, Rajanpur, Multan, Rawalpindi, Khanewal, Lahore, Vehari, Jhelum and Mianwali (Punjab) and Sukkur, Matiari and Nawabshah (Sindh).

2. Police Supporting Candidates

FAFEN observers from 172 constituencies have reported that police are supporting a particular candidate in 38 constituencies of 18 districts – all in Punjab.

The districts where police are reported to be supporting a particular candidate are Gujranwala, Chakwal, Khushab, Sargodha, Kasur, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, Okara, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Rajanpur, Multan, Attock, Rawalpindi, Khanewal, Lahore, Vehari and Mianwali.

3. Security Provision by Police

According to the reports received from 161 constituencies, police are providing security to all candidates equally in 77 constituencies of 45 districts – 13 in NWFP, 22 in Punjab, seven in Sindh and in three in Balochistan.

Police are giving security clearance to all candidates in Gujrat, Narowal, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Kasur, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Okara, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, Rajanpur, Multan, Attock, Rawalpindi, Khanewal, Lahore, Vehari, Bhakkar and Mianwali (Punjab); Kohistan, Swat, Buner, Mardan, Peshawar, Bannu, Khyber Agency, Upper Dir, Battgram, Swabi, Karak, Lakki Marwat and Nowshera (NWFP); Dadu, Mirpurkhas, Tharparkar, Karachi Central, Malir, Nawabshah and Thatha (Sindh) and Lasbela, Jaffarabad and Jhal Magsi (Balochistan).

On the other hand, reports sent by FAFEN observers from 165 constituencies show that police are providing security only to a particular candidate in 27 constituencies of 19 districts – 11 in Punjab, four in Sindh, two each in NWFP and Balochistan.

In Punjab, police are providing security only to particular candidates in Jhang, Faisalabad, Okara, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Multan, Attock, Khanewal, Lahore, Vehari and Jhelum districts. In NWFP, police are providing security to specific candidates in the constituencies of Peshawar and Nowshera districts, in Sindh police are providing security to one candidate in Mirpurkhas, Tharparkar, Karachi East and Thatta districts whereas in Balochistan the police are providing security only to specific candidates in Pishin and Qila Saifullah districts.

4. Interference By Intelligence Agencies

FAFEN observers' reports from 168 constituencies reveal that in 13 constituencies (10 in seven districts of Punjab, two in two districts of NWFP and one in Sindh) the officials of intelligence agencies are intimidating candidates.

Such reports have come from 13 constituencies of Chakwal, Rahim Yar Khan, Rajanpur, Khanewal, Lahore, Vehari and Jhelum (Punjab); Swat and Khyber Agency (NWFP) and Malir (Sindh).

FAFEN observers have also sent reports from 25 constituencies of 14 districts (12 in Punjab and two in NWFP) stating that officials of intelligence agencies are wooing support for a particular candidate.

Such reports have come from 23 constituencies of Chakwal, Sargodha, Kasur, Okara, Rahim Yar Khan, Rajanpur, Multan, Attock, Khanewal, Lahore, Vehari, and Jhelum (Punjab) and Khyber Agency and Mansehra (NWFP).

5. Supporters Intimidating Voters and Destroying Election Material

From 168 constituencies, FAFEN observers report that supporters of a particular candidate are intimidating and harassing potential voters in 19 districts. These constituencies are situated in Gujrat, Gujranwala, Chakwal, Faisalabad, Okara, Rahim Yar Khan, Rajanpur, Multan, Khanewal, Lahore, Jhelum and Mianwali (Punjab); Buner, Khyber Agency and Swabi (NWFP); Hyderabad, Karachi South, Karachi Central and Thatha (Sindh).

According to FAFEN observers, supporters of a particular candidate are destroying election material of their rival candidates in 19 out of 164 constituencies in 13 districts (nine in Punjab two in Balochistan and one each in NWFP and Sindh). Such reports have been sent by FAFEN observers from Gujrat, Chakwal, Okara, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Rajanpur, Rawalpindi, Khanewal and Lahore (Punjab); Peshawar (NWFP); Karachi Central (Sindh) and Jaffarabad and Qila Abdullah (Balochistan).

Recommendations:

FAFEN urges:

1. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to coordinate with all relevant authorities to provide instructions and training to police around the country regarding their roles and responsibilities during the election campaign period as well as during Election Day to ensure both security and a level playing field for all independent and political party candidates.
2. Political parties to provide concrete evidence to the ECP of any intimidation or harassment to enable the Commission to enforce all aspects of the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Contesting Candidates 2007/08 and in order to hold the Commission accountable for equitable enforcement of the same.
3. Political parties to urge their candidates not to violate the letter or spirit of the Code of Conduct, including with regard to intimidation of potential voters, destruction of opposing candidates' campaign materials and illegal involvement of local government officials in campaigning.

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