

INDEX

Sr. No.	Agenda Item	Page No.
1.	Preface	
2.	Initiatives pertaining to the House	1
3.	Initiatives pertaining to the Committees	6
4.	Initiatives pertaining to the Parliamentary Outreach	10
5.	Initiatives pertaining to providing support to the members	13
6	Initiatives pertaining to the Senate Secretariat	15

PREFACE

There have been progressive reforms in the governance and institutional set up in the past but the Senate of Pakistan has undergone huge transformation through many initiatives since 12th March, 2015 under the leadership of Chairman Senate, Mian Raza Rabbani who has conceived and initiated project “Restoration of the Majesty and Transparency in the Parliament” (RMTP) after assumption of office. The initiatives launched in phase-I of RMPT cover a wide range of areas including the House Business, Committees, Public outreach, a number of Parliamentary reforms in the aftermath of the Constitutional reforms and in view of evolving role of Parliament.

It is significant to acknowledge the support and contributions of the Business Advisory Committee, Deputy Chairman Senate, Leader of the House, Leader of the Opposition, all Members of the Senate and the Secretariat in adoption and furtherance of reformatory initiatives.

On a personal note I feel privileged to be working under such a visionary leadership and humbled by the untiring efforts and work of distinguished Secretariat team members especially the ones in Legislation Branch.

While sharing these initiatives through this publication, we are developing a mechanism for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the initiatives in phase-I as we feel the need for further strengthening and deepening of initiatives to make these sustainable.

(AMJED PERVEZ)
Secretary Senate
August, 2015



INITIATIVES PERTAINING TO THE HOUSE

- i. **House of the Federation:** The Senate of Pakistan gives equal representation to all federating units and promotes a feeling of equality, peace and harmony. A tagline namely,- “House of the Federation” has been added in the Senate emblem, in order to reflect the constitutional scheme of creation of Senate of Pakistan in the emblem.
- ii. **Presence of senior officials during the Senate sitting:** An Attendance Register has been placed outside the Official Gallery for the purpose of marking of attendance by the officials/ officers of the Ministries/ Divisions business of which will be on the Orders of the Day.
- iii. **Mechanism for implementation of directions/ recommendations given by the House and Committees:** Senate Rules have been amended to ensure that Ministers concerned shall, after every three months, appear before the House and make reports on all matters referred by the House and recommendations made by Committees.
- iv. **More vibrant and effective Business Advisory Committee:** The Business Advisory Committee has been made more effective; meetings are being held on frequent basis during sessions as opposed to the previous practice wherein the Committee used to



meet only at the beginning of the Session that too for half an hour or so only.

v. **Discussion on the Reports laid in the House:** The Senate has taken an initiative of discussing all such reports in the House, which are being laid in the House in pursuance of Constitutional requirements. Discussions on following reports followed by Resolutions wherein the House expressed its opinion/observations and made recommendations on the reports:-

- a. Report of the Council of Common Interests
- b. Report on the observance and implementation of Principles of Policy in relations to the affairs of Federation

vi. **Issues of national and public importance:**

- a. Specific time has been allocated by the Chairman Senate for raising matters of urgent public importance by the Members.
- b. The House is taking up matters *suo moto* in the larger public interest. Some of such examples are:-
 - i. Denial of Birth Certificates to orphan children of SOS village; pursuant to intervention by the House, the Ministry of Interior resolved the matter on war



footing and a compliance report was presented, by the Minister of State for Interior, before the House.

- ii. During the 116th Session of the Senate, the Chair took note of Indian Prime Minister's provocative and hostile statement and asked the Advisor on Foreign Affairs to make a policy statement in the House. Furthermore, the Chair, while using its discretion, suspended discussion on the Finance Bill for 45 minutes in order to enable the House have an extensive discussion on the matter. The Senate also passed a unanimous resolution, condemning the "provocative and hostile" statements which reflected the Indian "hegemonic mindset".
- vii. **Self imposed discipline:** The Chairman decided to start the House proceedings exactly at the scheduled time. In a letter to the Members he asked them to follow the rules when asking the supplementary questions and to stop use/ misuse of Point of Orders for raising issues of public importance. The response of the Members has been very good.
- viii. **Calling Attention Notice:** Calling Attention Notice is an important tool to draw attention of the Government towards matters of urgent public



importance Senate Rules provided for only one Calling Attention Notice during a sitting of the Senate, however, keeping in view the significance of this important tool Senate Rule have been amended to provide for two Calling Attention Notices in one sitting.

- ix. **Determination of admissibility of Adjournment Motions and Privilege Motions in the House:** previously notices of Adjournment Motions and Privilege Motions were examined at the level of Secretariat and on its recommendations, the Chairman used to decide about the fate of such notices. Many notices not fulfilling the criteria of admissibility, as stipulated in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Senate, 2012, used to be get '*killed in the Chamber*'. Thus practice has been discontinued and every such notice in being openly examined in the House before taking any decision as to its admissibility or otherwise.
- x. **E-Parliament:**
- a. Provision of soft copy of the questions and their answers to the Members through e-mail two hours before the sitting to enable the Members to go through the same.
 - b. Provision of Orders of the Day and other Parliamentary papers electronically.



- xi. **Transparency and Openness:** The House Business Advisory Committee has approved the publication of Members' attendance and information pertaining to pay and allowances of Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Senators on Senate Website.



INITIATIVES PERTAINING TO THE COMMITTEES

- i. **Committee of the Whole House:** Committee of the Whole is the entire membership of the House sitting as a committee. Senate Rules have been amended to provide for conversion of the House into Committee (Committee of the Whole House), on issues of National importance, with the power to require the attendance of any person or summon production of papers, record from any Division, department, autonomous body, semiautonomous body or organization, or examine such persons on oath or solemn affirmation, or invite or summon any person to give evidence in relation to any matter under its consideration.
 - a. **First Committee constituted on 19th May, 2015:** During the Senate Sitting held on 18th May, 2015, the House referred a matter regarding “steps/reforms for providing inexpensive and speedy justice in the country” to the Committee of the whole House. Accordingly, in the Senate sitting held on 19th May, 2015, on a motion moved by Senator Raja Muhammad Zafar ul Haq, Leader of the House, the House was constituted into a Committee to consider the matter referred by the House. First meeting of the Committee was held on 20th May, wherein the Committee finalized list of stakeholders for inviting input regarding the



matter. Next meeting is likely be held after *eid-ul-fitr*.

ii. Parliamentary Committees:

- a. Standing Committees and Functional Committees including Finance Committee of the Senate and House Committee have been constituted well before the stipulated time.
- b. Special Committee on Devolution process has been made a Functional Committee of Senate in order to regularly oversee and ensure implementation of devolution scheme as stipulated in the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, vide 18th Constitutional Amendment.
- c. Confirmation of nominations for Parliamentary Committee on Judges Appointment in the Superior Courts and parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms.
- d. Constitution of the Special Committee to monitor the Gas Infrastructure Development Cess Bill, 2015.
- e. Constitution of the Special Committee on the project of Pak-China Economic Corridor.
- f. Nomination for the Joint Parliamentary Committee for adoption of Urdu as the official language.



- g. Standardization of Committee meetings minutes and Committees' reports.
 - h. Reporters have been tasked to prepare verbatim of each committee meeting.
- iii. **Mechanism for Timely reports by the Committees:** Senate Rules have been amended to provide that a Committee failing to report back to the House within the given time shall seek extension of time from the House through a motion. The said motion shall:
- a. Give reasons for delay/extension of time; and
 - b. Give a specific time of extension
- iv. **Committees' to examine budgetary allocation and its utilization:** previously the Standing Committees were empowered to *suo moto* examine the expenditures of the concerned ministry. Senate Rules have been amended to explicitly empower the Committees to bi-annually examine/review the budgetary allocation and its utilization and make report to the House in this regard.
- v. **Ratification of Nominations made by the Chairman Senate to various policy and Advisory Boards/Councils:** The Chairman Senate has devolved his discretion/powers to the Standing Committees concerned regarding nomination of Senators to various Boards and Councils, etc., as



such nominations have been made subject to ratification by the Standing Committees' concerned. Senate Rules have also been amended in this regard.



INITIATIVES PERTAINING TO THE PARLIAMENTARY OUTREACH

- i. **Public Petitions:** a drop box on the Senate website has been created where the public has been given access to file petitions on the matters of national and urgent public importance. The public petition process allows ordinary citizens to have direct access to the Senate and participate in the political process. It will raise awareness and put issues on the agenda, which might not otherwise be considered by Parliament. It is also facilitating Senate's intervention in addressing issues and problems of public importance.
 - a. **Public Petition Table:** a Public Petition Table has been established within the Senate Secretariat. The Table is tasked to process all petitions on daily basis and after putting initial filters as to the admissibility of petitions, put up the same before the Chairman Senate for directions that whether the Petition be placed before the House or referred to the Committee concerned.
 - b. **Debate on Public petitions:** Following Petitions of urgent public importance were admitted for thirty minutes discussion each, during the 115th Session of Senate:-



- i. Public Petition Regarding Enhancement of Upper Age Limit for CSS Examination
 - ii. Oversight or review by the Senate of various Policy and Administrative Boards/Councils envisaged under various Acts of Parliament especially the one established under paragraph (j) of sub-section 1 of section 9 of the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan Act, 2012.
 - iii. Public Petition Regarding Operationalization of National Technology Council.
 - iv. Non-provision of Machine Readable Passports facility in the Pakistan Embassy, Manila.
- ii. **Know your Parliament-- Parliamentary Outreach initiative:** Foreign Ambassadors, students from various schools/colleges, electronic and print media, Bar Councils/Associations, Labour Unions and other segments of society are being invited to visit the Parliament House and witness the proceedings of the Senate along with detailed briefings on the role, functions and working of the Senate.



- iii. **Live webcasting of Senate proceedings:** Senate proceedings are being webcasted live and also FM Broadcasting is being done, moreover, modalities for live telecasting are also being worked out.
- iv. **Senate's new website:** Senate's new website is under process which will be launched after *eid-ul-fitr*.



INITIATIVES PERTAINING TO PROVIDING SUPPORT TO THE MEMBERS

- i. **Research Support to the House, its Members and Committees:**
 - a. **Legislative Briefs:** The Research Directorate has started preparing and disseminating Legislative Briefs on Bills that are transmitted from the National Assembly to the Senate or are introduced in the Senate Directly.
 - b. **Summary of Reports:** Research Directorate prepares and distributes to members Summaries of Reports that are to be laid in the House.
 - c. **Committee Research Briefs:** The Research Directorate also prepares and disseminates Committee Research Briefs to all Senate Standing Committees, on specific agenda items, that require/ demand research input.
 - d. **Attachment of Young Parliamentary Associates with the Committee Chairpersons:** for providing research assistance.
 - e. **Library of Senate:**
 - i. Liaison with different libraries including Library of House of Commons, United



kingdom, National Library of Pakistan, HEC Digital Library.

ii. Developed connection with Paraline & AGORA databases.

- ii. **Orientation of new Senators (April 13-14, 2015):** Senate of Pakistan steered an interactive programme in collaboration with PIPS training wing to hold two day orientation sessions with the newly elected Senators, which included key topical deliberations on Constitution and Parliament, Rules of Procedures, Working of Committees, Non legislative and legislative business, role of Parliamentarians, etc.
- iii. **Post-Election Seminar (May 11-13, 2015):** The three days Seminar was organized by Senate in collaboration with Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).
- iv. **Post Budget Seminar for Honorable Senators (June 09, 2015):** On the directions of the Honorable Chairman Senate/President BoG PIPS, the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services organized a day long Post Budget Seminar for Honorable Senators. The Seminar aimed at providing baseline support to the Members for reviewing the Finance Bill, 2015, and continuous oversight of budgetary allocations and utilization.



INITIATIVES PERTAINING TO THE SENATE **SECRETARIAT**

Human Resource Management (HRM)

1. Policy for appointment of a child of an employee of the Senate Secretariat (BS 1-16) on the date of retirement.
2. Benefit of accumulative service i.e. previous department plus Senate service, for grant of higher grades (Gunman).
3. Ramazan package for low paid employees (400 employees).
4. Chairman has given access to all Senate employees to meet him in his office on every Monday.
5. A new tradition has been set wherein the Chairman Senate meets with the retiring employee on last day of his/ her service and present the retiring employee a souvenir.
6. Exercise is underway regarding preparation of Senate Service Act and Rules.
7. Another exercise is underway regarding preparation of job description of each and every post of the Senate Secretariat.



8. Senate Newsletter and Magazine will be published on regular basis.
9. Short Term and Long term Internship Programmes have been devised for the Youth of Pakistan.

Administration

10. Provision of Folders containing all Legislative books and excerpts of important Rules of Procedure for Members in the Senate Chamber.
11. Improvement of infrastructure in the Parliament Building, in general, and Computer/Automation field, in particular.
12. Provision for highly subsidized transport facility to the Secretariat staff.