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About PATTAN-Coalition38

PATTAN is one of the leading civil society organisations of Pakistan and has been working to empower marginalised classes to make state and govt bodies accountable for improving governance of elections, disasters and rights. Currently, PATTAN is the secretariat of Coalition38 - a largest network of CSOs, labour unions, CBOs, and intellectuals.

Coalition38 aims to influence the state institutions for the implementation of Articles 3; 29; 37, and 38 of Pakistan's Constitution in letter and spirit through research, awareness raising, social mobilization, networking of civil society including marginalised people and women.

PRESS RELEASE

Despite zero turnout of women, the Election Commission declared the final consolidated results in NA-10

Islamabad, 24 December 2024: Not a single woman cast her vote in 84 or 28% of the polling stations set up for female voters only and combined for both genders in NA-10 and its three provincial constituencies. The same pattern was found in the three associated provincial constituencies e.g. PK-26; PK-27 and PK-28 which fall under NA10 as shown in Table 1 below. **Yet the Election Commission declared the final consolidated results of the constituencies without holding legally required enquiry and re-polling.** This was a brazen failure of the ECP for not responding to a clear violation of Section 9 of the Elections Act 2017.

The audit team of PATTAN-Coalition 38 discovered this huge void while conducting the audit of the result forms available on the ECP website till the filing of the press release. Moreover, the results of eight (8) polling stations in NA-10 were unavailable on the ECP website during our audit.

In the wake of the Working Women's Day celebrations the pledge of the Chief Election Commissioner 'to eliminate the gender gap among voters by the next general election' therefore seems to be hollow.

The case of women's participation in voting was further examined in terms of female voters' turnout from two angles, (a) based on total polled votes and (b) in relation to total registered votes. In both cases, results reveal extremely disturbing trends.

For instance, in terms of female registered voters' turnout, at 100 or 33% of female and combined polling stations was either zero or less than 10%. While the female voter's turnout was either zero or less than 10% of the polled votes in as many as 74 combined polling stations. This reveals the extent of gross under-participation of women in polling in the above-mentioned constituencies.

The absence of female voters at such a large scale is highly likely to be the result of enforced restraints on women to cast their votes and cannot be considered an outcome of voluntary choices.

It is worth reminding that Section 9 of the Elections Act 2017 makes it mandatory and categorically instructs the ECP that: (a) before declaring the final results hold the enquiry to assess the material impact of the women's voters' absenteeism and low turnouts on the poll results, and (b) based on the enquiry to hold the re-polling in the affected polling stations or whole of the constituency. The ECP failed to take cognizance of this obvious void and yet declared the final consolidated results.

We are of the considered opinion that similar deficits are likely to surface in some other constituencies of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa too. Therefore, a comprehensive audit of the ECP result forms is the need of the hour, and this is the only way to rebuild the trust of the stakeholders in the ECP working.

We urge the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to take notice of the failure of the ECP in this regard, initiate an investigation and punish the responsible officials for this gross misconduct and negligence.

We also appeal to women's rights groups, civil society organisations and political parties to make it a test case for improving electoral governance in Pakistan.

Table 1. Polling stations having zero female turnout in NA10

Associated provincial & national constituencies	Female poll stations	Combined poll stations	Total
PK-25	5	41	46
PK-26	5	21	26
PK-27	5	7	12
NA-10	15 (19%)	69 (31%)	84 (28%)

Table 2. Polling stations where female voters' turnout was less than 10% in NA-10

Associated provincial & national constituencies	Combined PSs having less than 10% turnout of polled votes	Female & combined PSs having less than 10% turnout of women registered votes		
		Female Polling Stations	Combined Polling Stations	Total
PK-25	43	11	47	58
PK-26	24	6	23	29
PK-27	7	6	7	13
NA-10	74 (33%)	23 (28%)	77 (25%)	100 (33%)

Table 3. Polling stations' serial numbers in NA-10 having zero or less than 10% women's turnout in registered voters

Associated provincial constituencies	Polling stations with zero female turnout	Polling stations having less than 10% of female turnout
PK-25	1, 3-5, 7-18, 20-23, 25-31, 33-34, 38-39, 46, 65, 76, 104-105, 133-141, 143,	1, 3-5, 7-23, 25-31, 33-35, 38-39, 45-46, 65, 70, 76-77, 102, 104-105, 114-116, 129, 131-141, 143
PK-26	147, 163, 190-191, 193-195, 204, 207-208, 213-214, 225, 228-229, 232-233, 235, 237, 241-248, 251,	147, 161, 163, 190-195, 204, 206-208, 213-214, 225, 228-229, 232-233, 235, 237, 241-248, 251
PK-27	335, 337-339, 341, 344-346, 348-349, 351, 383	332, 335, 337-339, 341, 344-346, 348-349, 351, 383