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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

Access to the ECP website is being restricted from some Western countries.

After Lahore, fake result forms and unprecedented gerrymandering found in Sindh and KPK.

Huge gaps between national and provincial turnouts in certain constituencies exposed the moral and ethical bankruptcy of polity and governance and are likely to haunt Pakistan and its people for a long time.

Islamabad, 23 August. "A robust audit of the result forms of General Election 2024 that were available on the ECP's website determines the nature of the institution and its professional standards. Unfortunately, ECP only managed to prove the allegations of its brazen partisanship and glaring incompetence – a blatant violation of Article 218 of Pakistan's Constitution," claimed Pattan-Coalition 38.

While the government is trying its best to silence the critics and social media, many overseas Pakistanis residing in the UK and the USA informed us that they could not visit the Election Commission's website as it was blocked. Our IT experts checked their claims and found them true. Barring access to its website, the ECP is not only violating the Constitution, and Elections Act but also its "guiding principles" that it had set up under its Strategic Plan.

PATTAN and Coalition-38 audits focused on five major indicators to measure the material impact on the election outcomes: (1) exceptional difference in turnouts between national and associated provincial assembly constituencies at a significantly high number of polling stations; (2) last-minute changes in polling schemes without informing candidates and the public; (3) splitting of polling stations of associated provincial assemblies across multiple national assembly constituencies; (4) discrepancies and concealments within and across election result forms; (5) tampering of figures in form-45s.

The investigations of these indicators in its current audits of six national constituencies and earlier findings in some of the most prominent constituencies have revealed the nature and scale of rigging and manipulation that had helped the establishment to achieve the "positive" results in GE-2024

The current audit report covers six national constituencies: three from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Peshawar, Buner, and Haripur), and one each from Sindh (Karachi), Punjab (Lahore) and Balochistan (Pishin).

National Assembly constituency NA-242 (Karachi) shows evidence of an excess of 36,000 votes compared to the associated provincial turnout and issued ballot papers. In contrast, the difference between the winning and runner-up of the constituency is half of it, e.g. 18,000. While the overall voters' turnout was 44 per cent at 285 polling stations. At 36 polling stations, turnout exceeded 90% and a difference of more than 500 votes was recorded in 45 polling stations each. The winner in nearly all polling stations with unusually high turnouts was 'incidentally'

the returned candidate - Mr. Mustafa Kamal of MQM-P. Like NA-128, the NA-242 too was spread over four provincial constituencies covering only one of them completely. At the same time, the two shared merely one-third and one-fifth of polling stations and voters, respectively – a nagging disregard for the principles of delimitations of constituencies under Section 20 of the Election Act.

NA-127 (Lahore), where Mr Ata Tarar of PML-N was declared winner, is a distinct example of maladministration of the electoral process through manipulations in electoral results, gerrymandering of constituencies' delimitation and ballot rigging. The constituency was spread over four partial provincial constituencies, PPs-157, -160, -161 and -162, in the preliminary delimitations. However, the polling stations of another provincial constituency (PP-163) were attached to the polling scheme close to the polling day without following any lawful procedure. When examining the data, it was discovered that hundreds of form 45s and form 46s, which are the basic documents for preparing the election results of a polling station, were either not posted, found incomplete, or illegible, obscuring the vital information for audits and transparency. Such discrepancies cannot be disguised and are bound to draw attention towards the manipulations of election results at every level.

The election results of NA-265 (Pishin), where Molana Fazal Ur Rehman was declared winner, suffer even more from the incompetency of ECP as the entire data of hundreds of polling stations of the two associated provincial constituencies are missing from the ECP website, thus making it impossible to cross-check empirically and draw any conclusion of fair and free elections as it raised apprehension of concealment and large-scale manipulations of election results at a later stage.

NA-28 (Peshawar) is perhaps one of the most prominent constituencies where extensive manipulations of election results were carried out. Here the PATTAN's audit found that 95% of polling stations are those where the number of polled votes of national and the associated provincial seats are different. On 81% of polling stations, the polled votes for the national constituency is more than 100 votes. In 26 polling stations NA-28, the turnout is more than 90% of registered voters, 8 of which are showing even 100%. More than seventy-nine thousand (79,000) extra votes were added which closely compares the margin of victory for Mr Noor Alam, of more than seventy-three thousand (73,000).

Interestingly, the audit of election results forms of NA-10 (Buner) and NA-18 (Haripur), as available on the ECP website, found no serious discrepancies or irregularities in election results as can be seen from the attached statistical tables. The comparison of polled votes and issued ballot papers was found consistent across national and its associated provincial constituencies, apart from some sporadic variations that do not significantly impact the election outcomes and votes secured by the winners and runners-up. The overall turnout for NA-10 and NA-18 was 37 per cent and 50 per cent respectively which was closely comparable across the respective associated provincial constituencies. Mr Gohar Ali Khan and Omar Ayub were declared, respectively in NA-10 and NA-18.

The audit used the same unbiased procedure that PATTAN had applied in its earlier cases to examine the electoral results posted by the Election Commission on its website. These results validate the accuracy of the audit methodology and the findings of serious violations of Pakistan's Constitution (Article 218) and the Elections Act 2017 in constituencies reported earlier.

Therefore, it can be argued that a high popularity rate, the presence of strong and well-informed party workers as well as cultural norms might have deterred large-scale electoral fraud as otherwise, it would have become highly risky for wholesale rigging, tampering and counterfeiting electoral

results. The constituencies where PATTAN's audit uncovered brazen violations of the laws and peoples' votes were targeted by exploiting the potential of closer competition combined with lower turnouts.

Free and fair elections are indispensable for political stability and democratic progress in the country. However as exposed in the PATTAN's audits, ECP has miserably failed to meet its constitutional obligations. The perpetrator of stealing the people's mandate must not go unpunished. The judicial organs need to proactively adjudicate the election petitions to redress the petitions of election fraud and violation of laws. The conduct of the Election Commission warrants an overhaul to institute its autonomy, non-partisanship, insulation from external interferences and vested interests, integration of checks and balances, and transparency at every level. The nature and magnitude of distortion of election results as complained about and reported compels the adoption of digital technologies for voting, filing and compiling election results. Holding free and fair elections and accepting the people's mandate demand deep soul-searching from parties, civil society and media as well as state institutions.

Use the following link for the data tables.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JldjacEq0AnL77REciWqBN9Sl6RnnqK9/view?usp=sharing>

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