



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 3: Session No. 42 of the National Assembly

Sitting marked by protests by PMLN and MQM

▪ 76% of sitting time spent on budget debate

ISLAMABAD, June 5, 2012: The third sitting of the National Assembly's ongoing budget session was marked by protests by PMLN and a walkout by MQM.

PMLN legislators staged a protest against the budget and the Prime Minister as loud sloganeering against the government continued for 44 minutes.

MQM Members staged a token walkout against the law and order in Karachi. Their walkout lasted three minutes.

Starting an hour and 26 minutes late, the Lower House met for three and 34 minutes. It witnessed low attendance. Ninety-six legislators were present at the outset, while only 46 were there when the sitting was adjourned.

The Leader of the Opposition, along with the parliamentary leaders of the MMAP, ANP, BNPA and PPPS, did not attend the sitting.

Three Members – two of PPPP and one MQM – spoke on the Annual Budget Statement for 157 minutes (76% of sitting time).

The following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' participation in House proceedings

- ⇒ The National Assembly met for three hours and 34 minutes.
- ⇒ The sitting started at 1826 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1700 hours. The House proceedings started late by an hour and 26 minutes.
- ⇒ The Deputy Speaker chaired the initial 93 minutes of the sitting while the remaining time was presided over by a Member of Panel of Chairpersons.
- ⇒ The Prime Minister remained in the House for 53 minutes while the Leader of the Opposition did not attend the sitting.
- ⇒ The Parliamentary leaders of PML, MQM, PMLF and NPP were present while the leaders of MMAP, ANP, BNPA and PPPS were absent.
- ⇒ The Chief Whips of the PPP, PML, MQM and ANP were present.
- ⇒ A total of 96 (28%) Members were present at the outset of the sitting, while 46 (13%) at the end of the sitting.
- ⇒ The House took a 33-minute break.
- ⇒ The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue attended the sitting for 45 minutes.
- ⇒ Ten Minority Members were present.
- ⇒ Six Members applied for leave to be absent.



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Representation and Responsiveness

- ⇒ There was no other agenda on the Orders of the Day.

Output

- ⇒ The Finance Bill 2012 was presented in the House on June 1, 2012.
- ⇒ Three Members – two of PPPP and one MQM – spoke on the Annual Budget Statement for 157 minutes (76% of sitting time).

Order and institutionalization

- ⇒ No Points of Order were raised during the sitting.
- ⇒ There was no Adjournment Motion on the Orders of the Day.
- ⇒ PMLN legislators staged a protest against the budget and the Prime Minister as loud sloganeering against the PPPP's government continued for 44 minutes.
- ⇒ MQM Members staged a token walkout against the law and order in Karachi. Their walkout lasted three minutes.

Transparency

- ⇒ Orders of the Day was available to legislators, observers and others.
- ⇒ Information on Members' attendance was unavailable to observers and the public.
- ⇒ Copies of the budget speech were available to the legislators.

The Daily Factsheet is based on direct observation of the Senate proceedings conducted by Center for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), a member organization of FAFEN