



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 04, Session No. 49 of the National Assembly

National Assembly: Most of Agenda Taken up

ISLAMABAD, January 24, 2013: The National Assembly addressed five of the seven agenda items appearing on the agenda in the fourth sitting of the ongoing 49th session, which met for an hour and 22 minutes on Thursday.

Forty-one members were present at the outset while 82 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 118 (35%) members were present at one point of sitting.

The Cost and Management Accountants (Amendment) Bill 2013 was introduced and sent to the standing committee. The Ordinance for the Establishment of the office of Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Order (Amendment) 2012 was laid, and a report about the Constitution (Twenty-third Amendment) Bill 2012 was presented by the Standing Committee on Law and Justice.

A calling attention notice – one of the two notices on the agenda – about increase in the prices of cement by Rs50 per bag was taken up.

The sitting was chaired by a member of the Panel of Chairpersons. The Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, and the parliamentary leaders of MMAP, ANP, PML, PMLF, PPPS and BNPA did not attend the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The National Assembly met for an hour and 22 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1135 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1100 hours, witnessing a delay of 35 minutes.
- A member of the Panel of Chairpersons chaired the entire sitting. Both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker were not present.
- The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition did not attend the sitting.
- Parliamentary leaders of only MQM and NPP were present while those of MMAP, ANP, PML, PMLF, PPPS and BNPA were absent.
- Chief whips of PPPP and PMLN attended the sitting whereas those of MQM, MMAP, ANP, PML, and PPPS remained absent.
- Forty-one members (12% of the total membership) were present at the outset while 82 (24%) were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 118 (35%) members were present at one point of sitting.
- Seven minority members attended the sitting.
- Two members applied for leave.



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Representation and Responsiveness

- Out of 27 starred questions on the agenda, seven were taken up and responded to by the relevant minister. Additionally, six supplementary questions were asked.
- One of the two calling attention notices appearing on the agenda was taken up by the house. It was about increase in the prices of cement by Rs50 per bag.
- The CAN not taken up was regarding non-vacation of government quarters from unauthorized occupants by the Estate Office, Islamabad.

Output

- The Cost and Management Accountants (Amendment) Bill 2013 was introduced and sent to the Standing Committee.
- The Ordinance for the Establishment of the office of Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Order (Amendment) 2012 was laid before the house.
- A report on the Constitution (Twenty-third Amendment) Bill 2012 was presented before the House by the Standing Committee on Law and Justice.

Order and Institutionalization

- Eight points of order consumed 20 minutes of the sitting time.

Transparency

- Orders of the Day was available to legislators, observers and others.
- Information on members' attendance was not available to observers and the public.

The Daily Factsheet is based on direct observation of the National Assembly proceedings conducted by Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI); a member organization of FAFEN