



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 10 - Session No. 10 of the National Assembly

NA Passes Two Bills, One Resolution Amid Protests

ISLAMABAD, April 7, 2014: The National Assembly extended the criminal law (amendment) ordinance and passed two bills amid uproar from the opposition benches on Monday during 10th sitting of its 10th session, says Free and Fair Election Network in its Daily Factsheet.

The Minister of State for Water and Power moved the resolution to extend the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 for a further period of one hundred and twenty days with effect from April 29, 2014. Nine lawmakers spoke for 28 minutes on the resolution while opposition staged a 19-minute walkout against it. During the absence of opposition members, a PTI lawmaker pointed out the quorum, however, after the headcount was found complete. The House passed the resolution with a majority vote.

The Federal Minister for Science and Technology laid two ordinances namely the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2014 and the Sales Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2014.

The minister also moved the Services Tribunals (Amendment) Bill, 2013 and the Protection of Pakistan Bill, 2013. Both were passed with a majority vote despite protest of the opposition as well as government's ally. Fourteen lawmakers spoke for one hour and 33 minutes on the Protection of Pakistan Bill, 2013. The opposition legislators and members belonging to JUI-F gathered in front of the Chair and tore apart the copies of the bill. This time the opposition staged a walk out for seven minutes. A minute later, the lawmakers of government's ally JUI-F also walked out of the House and did not return to the plenary till adjournment. A PTI lawmaker once again pointed out the quorum but it was found complete on the count. Having exhausted all its options to stop government from carrying out "unwanted" legislation, the opposition members finally walked out of House and did not return until the adjournment of the sitting. However, the minister withdrew the other bill titled Protection of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill, 2014.

The House also took up a calling attention notice for not increasing the civilian quota in Cantonment F.G. Schools in proportion to their population and non establishment of colleges therein. The parliamentary secretary for defence replied to the notice.

The relevant ministers also responded to the nine of 21 starred questions (requiring oral as well as written reply). The members asked nine supplementary questions as well.

Two points of order, raised during the proceedings, consumed two minutes of the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings:



Free and Fair Election Network

- The National Assembly met for four hours and 51 minutes, taking a 24-minute prayer break.
- The sitting started at 1714 hours against the scheduled time of 1600 hours, witnessing a delay of an hour and 14 minutes.
- The Speaker presided over the entire sitting while the Deputy Speaker was also present.
- The Prime Minister did not attend the sitting while the Leader of the Opposition stayed in the House for two hours and 43 minutes.
- The parliamentary leaders of MQM, PkMAP, PML-F, ANP, PML-Z, QWP and JI were present.
- Ninety-two members were present at the outset while 90 were there at the adjournment. A maximum of 194 members were observed to be present at one point of the sitting.
- Ten minority members attended the sitting.
- Seventeen members applied for leave.

Output

- The House passed a resolution to extend the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 for a further period of one hundred and twenty days with effect from April 29, 2014. Nine lawmakers spoke for 28 minutes on the resolution.
- The Federal Minister for Science and Technology laid two ordinances namely the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2014 and the Sales Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2014.
- The minister also moved the Services Tribunals (Amendment) Bill, 2013 and the Protection of Pakistan Bill, 2013. Both were passed with a majority vote despite protests of the opposition as well as a government ally. Fourteen lawmakers spoke for one hour and 33 minutes on the Protection of Pakistan Bill, 2013.
- The minister withdrew the other bill titled Protection of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill, 2014.

Representation and Responsiveness

- The House also took up a calling attention notice for not increasing the civilian quota in Cantonment F.G. Schools in proportion to their population and non establishment of colleges therein. The parliamentary secretary for defence replied to the notice.
- The relevant ministers also responded to the nine of 21 starred questions (requiring oral as well as written reply). The members asked nine supplementary questions as well.

Order and Institutionalization

- The opposition lawmakers walked out of the House for 19 minutes against extension of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 for a further period of one hundred and twenty days.
- The plenary witnessed rumpus during the clause-by-clause reading of the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance, 2013. The opposition legislators and those belonging to JUI-F



Free and Fair Election Network

gathered in front of the Chair and tore apart the copies of bill, while chanting slogans against the passage of the bill.

- The opposition members resorted to second walk out against the passage of the bill and returned to the House after seven minutes. A minute later, the lawmakers of the government ally JUI-F also walked out and did not return to the plenary till the adjournment.
- Two lawmakers belonging to PTI twice pointed out the quorum, however, it was found complete on both occasions.
- Having exhausted all its options to stop the government from “unwanted” legislation, the opposition members finally walked out of the House and did not return till the adjournment of the sitting.
- Two points of order, raised during the proceedings, consumed two minutes of the sitting.

Transparency

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

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of FAFEN and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union. This 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. Errors and omissions excepted