



## Free and Fair Election Network

### FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No.2, Session No. 11 of the National Assembly

#### **National Assembly: Seven Bills Introduced, Two Resolutions Adopted**

ISLAMABAD, May 6, 2014: The National Assembly witnessed the introduction of six private members' bills and one government bill during the second sitting of its 11<sup>th</sup> session on Tuesday, says the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN).

The private members' bills include the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Amendment in Article 37), the Suppression of Terrorist Activities (Special Courts) (Amendment) Bill 2014, the Compulsory Blood Test for the Relatives of Thalassaemia Patients Bill 2014, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace (Amendment) Bill 2014, the Telegraph Amendment) Bill 2014 and the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill 2014. A government bill - the Child Protection System Bill 2014 - seeking amendment in sections 8, 10, 11 and 12 of the Child Protection System Act was also introduced. All these bills were referred to the relevant committees.

Tabled by a PPPP female lawmaker, the House adopted a resolution demanding the government take immediate steps to lift a ban on video sharing website YouTube. The House also passed a resolution calling upon the government to take steps for an increase in basic salaries of the federal government employees in proportion to price hike. It was tabled by a PML-N female legislator.

The House took up two calling attention notice (CANs) - the first was regarding the World Health Organization's advisory to bar travelling of Pakistanis abroad due to increasing cases of polio in the country and the second was about the closure of several sales offices of PIA in various parts of the country resulting in unemployment and hardships for the air passengers.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

#### **Members' Participation in the House Proceedings:**

- The National Assembly met for three hours and nine minutes.
- The sitting started at 1045 hours against the scheduled time of 1030 hours, witnessing a delay of 15 minutes.
- The Deputy Speaker presided over the entire sitting.
- The Prime Minister did not attend the sitting while the Leader of the Opposition was present for 42 minutes.
- The parliamentary leaders of PkMAP, JI, MQM, QWP and PML-Z attended the sitting.
- Twenty-three members (6%) were present at the outset while 50 (14%) at the adjournment. A maximum of 138 members (40%) were observed to be present at one point of the sitting.
- Five minority members attended the sitting.
- Nine members applied for leave.



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### Output

- The Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2014 seeking amendment in Article 37 was jointly moved by 16 lawmakers of JUI-F, PML-N, JI, PML-F and NP. Article 37 talks about the promotion of social justice and the eradication of social evils.
- A female lawmaker of JUI-F introduced three bills. The first bill was the Suppression of Terrorist Activities (Special Courts) (Amendment) Bill 2014 (Amendment in Schedule Act XV of 1975). It proposes anti-terror measures that would improve the performance of legal proceedings in courts. The second bill - the Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace (Amendment) Bill 2014 - seeks to amend the Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010. The third bill - the Telegraph (Amendment) Bill 2014 - seeks the substitution of section 25D which is about imposing a penalty for causing annoyance through telephone.
- The Compulsory Blood Test for the Relatives of Thalassemia Patients Bill 2014 was moved by a PPPP female lawmaker and it seeks making blood test compulsory for the relatives of thalassemia patients.
- Seven PTI lawmakers including three females moved the Representation of the Peoples (Amendment) Bill 2014.
- Four PML-N lawmakers including three females introduced the Child Protection System Bill 2014 which seeks to enact the Child Protection System Act to promote child rights and protect child at risk in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).
- Tabled by a PPPP female lawmaker, the House adopted a resolution demanding the government take immediate steps to lift a ban on video sharing website YouTube.
- The House passed another resolution calling upon the government to take steps for an increase in basic salaries of the federal government employees in proportion to price hike. This resolution was tabled by a PML-N female legislator.

### Representation and Responsiveness

- Sponsored by three PML-N and one JUI-F lawmakers, the House took up a CAN regarding the recommendations of the World Health Organization to bar travelling of Pakistanis abroad due to increasing cases of polio in the country.
- Another CAN sponsored by five PPPP lawmakers including two females was also taken up which was about the closure of several sales offices of PIA in various parts of the country resulting in unemployment and hardships for the air passengers.
- Seven MQM lawmakers sought an amendment in sub-rule (1) of rule 10 of the Rules of Procedure to hold elections of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker at the same time. The matter was referred to the relevant committee for its opinion.

### Order and Institutionalization

- Legislators spoke on 19 matters under Rule 18 for 47 minutes.
- No instance of protest, walkout or boycott was witnessed during the sitting.



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### 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.

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