



FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 2: Session No. 40 of the National Assembly

Low Attendance continues in NA

ISLAMABAD, March 15, 2012: Starting 50 minutes late, the National Assembly met for two hours and 23 minutes during its second sitting of the 40th session on Thursday, continued to witness low attendance by the MPs.

With 41 Legislators present at the start and 51 when the sitting was adjourned. A maximum of 136 Members were observed at any time of the sitting.

The National Institute of Science and Technical Education (Islamabad) Bill, 2012 was introduced.

Twenty-one Points of Order were raised which consumed an hour and 13 minutes of the sitting time. None of them attracted the Chair's formal ruling.

The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition did not attend the sitting. None of the parliamentary leaders attended the proceedings.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' participation in House proceedings

- The National Assembly met for two hours and 23 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1050 hours instead of the scheduled starting time of 1000 hours. The proceedings started 50 minutes late.
- The sitting was chaired by the Deputy Speaker for an hour and 43 minutes while the remaining 40 minutes by a Member of Panel of Chairpersons.
- The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition did not attend the sitting.
- None of the parliamentary leaders attended the proceedings.
- The Chief Whips of MQM, ANP, PMLN and PPP were present.
- Forty-one Legislators (12%) were present at the outset of the sitting while there were 51 MNAs (15%) at the end of the sitting. A maximum of 186 Members were present at one point of the sitting.
- One Member applied for leave to be absent.
- Nine minority Members were present.



Free and Fair Election Network

Representation and Responsiveness

- One out of two CANs appearing on the Orders of the Day was taken up by the House. Moved by five PML Members - four females and one male – was about negligence of CDA to repair roads and streets of various Sectors in Islamabad. This CAN was directed to the Cabinet Secretariat.
- Out of the 26 questions to be taken up during the Question Hour, only 12 were put up and responded by the relevant ministries.
- Twelve Supplementary questions were raised during the sitting.

Output

- The National Institute of Science and Technical Education (Islamabad) Bill 2012 was introduced.
- Two Standing Committee reports were presented to the House.

Order and institutionalization

- Twenty-one Points of Order consumed an hour and thirteen minutes of the sitting time. None of them attracted the Chair's formal ruling.
- MQM legislators staged an hour and 10 minutes walkout against extortion in Karachi..

Transparency

- Orders of the Day were available to Legislators, observers and others.
- Information on Members' attendance was unavailable to observers and the public.
- The Quorum was visibly lacking at various stages during the sitting. However, lack of quorum was not pointed out by any Member.

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