



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 9: Session No. 42 of the National Assembly

No Parliamentary Head Attends Conclusion of Budget Debate

ISLAMABAD, June 13, 2012: The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue concluded the general debate on budget during the 9th sitting of the 42nd session on Wednesday as the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and all other parliamentary parties' heads did not attend the sitting.

The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue spoke for 11 minutes. Additionally, eight legislators – two from MMAP and one each from MQM, PML, ANP and PPPP and two Independents – spoke on the budget and recommendations by the Upper House for 76 minutes (74% of sitting time).

Two Members – one each of PPPP and PML – spoke on the charged expenditures for five minutes.

A total of 71 (21%) legislators were present at the start and 141 (46%) at the end of the sitting.

PMLN legislators staged a protest against the Prime Minister's conviction in the contempt case and the budget. Loud sloganeering against the budget started at 1900 and continued till the adjournment.

The following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' participation in House proceedings

- The National Assembly met for an hour and 43 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1745 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1700 hours. The House proceedings started late by 45 minutes.
- The Deputy Speaker chaired the initial 18 minutes of the sitting while the remaining time was presided over by the Deputy Speaker.
- The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition did not attend the sitting.
- None of the parliamentary leaders attended the sitting.
- The Chief Whips of the PPPP, PMLN, PML, ANP, MQM and MMAP were present.
- A total of 71 (21%) legislators were present at the start and 141 (46%) at the end of the sitting.
- The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue attended the entire sitting.
- Eight Minority Members were present.
- Four Members applied for leave to be absent.

Representation and Responsiveness

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



Free and Fair Election Network

Output

- Eight legislators – two from MMAP and one each from MQM, PML, ANP and PPPP and two Independents – spoke on the budget for 76 minutes (74% of sitting time).
- Two Members – one each of PPPP and PML – spoke on the charged expenditures for five minutes.
- The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue wound up the budget debate. He spoke for 11 minutes.

Order and institutionalization

- Three Points of Order consuming three minutes of sitting time.
- PMLN legislators staged a protest against the Prime Minister's conviction in the contempt case and the budget. Loud sloganeering against the budget started at 1900 and continued till the adjournment of sitting.

Transparency

- Orders of the Day were 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 Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), a member organization of FAFEN