



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 5: Session No. 41 of the National Assembly

PMLN protest during NA sitting

ISLAMABAD, May 2, 2012: The fifth sitting of the National Assembly's 41st session on Wednesday, which lasted an hour and 43 minutes, continued to witness protest by the opposition over the Supreme Court decision in the contempt case against the Prime Minister.

Several agenda items remained unaddressed due to the protest by the PMLN legislators against the Prime Minister. However, six Private Members' Bills were introduced and sent to respective Standing Committees.

A total of 177 Legislators present at the start and 175 when the sitting was adjourned. A maximum of 218 Members were observed at any time of the sitting.

The Prime Minister did not attend the proceedings while the Leader of Opposition attended the sitting for 64 minutes.

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 1830 hours instead of the scheduled starting time of 1700 hours. The proceedings started an hour and 30 minutes late.
- The Speaker chaired the initial 30 minutes of the sitting while the remaining time was presided over by the Deputy Speaker.
- The Prime Minister did not attend the sitting while the Leader of the Opposition was present for 64 minutes.
- Only the parliamentary leader of the PML, MQM and NPP was present, while those of the BNPA, ANP, MMAP and PMLF remained absent.
- The Chief Whips of PPP, PMLN, PML, ANP, MQM, and MMAP were present.
- A total of 177 Legislators (52%) were present at the outset of the sitting while there were 175 MNAs (51%) at the end of the sitting. A maximum of 218 Members were present at one point of the sitting.
- Seven minority Members were present.
- Seven Members applied for leave.
- The House took a 39-minute break for prayers.



Free and Fair Election Network

Representation and Responsiveness

- Two Calling Attention Notices appearing on the Agenda were not taken up by the House.
- Out of the 16 questions to be taken up during the Question Hour, only three were put up and responded by the relevant ministries.
- Six Supplementary questions were raised during the sitting.

Output

- Six Private Members' Bills - the Works of Defence (Amendment) Bill 2012, the Higher Education Commission (Amendment) Bill 2012, the Disabled Persons Employment and Rehabilitation Bill 2012, the Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill 2012, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2012 and the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2012 – were introduced and sent to respective Standing Committees.

Order and institutionalization

- No Points of Order were raised during the sitting.
- The proceedings were again disrupted when the PMLN legislators started sloganeering on the issue of Supreme Court's verdict in the contempt case against the Prime Minister.
- A PML Member staged a walkout as her bill was not taken up the House. She walked out of the House at 2000 hours and did not come back to attend the remaining proceedings.
-

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.