



FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 09: Session No. 35 of the National Assembly

Productive 9th NA Sitting Witnesses PMLN-MQM tussle

ISLAMABAD, October 13, 2011: The National Assembly disposed of almost the entire agenda of the ninth sitting of the ongoing 35th session. The agenda-focused sitting witnessed relatively better attendance, with 62 Members present when the sitting started, while 156 Members were present when it was adjourned. A maximum of 210 Members were present at one point of the sitting.

Although half of the sitting time was taken up by nine Points of Order, the House took up two Calling Attention Notices (CANs); more than half of the listed questions, deliberated over two pieces of legislation, and two Standing Committee reports were taken up.

The House witnessed a tussle between the Members of the PMLN and MQM, which interrupted the proceedings for 10 minutes. As both the Parliamentary Parties started sloganeering against each other, Members from the treasury benches intervened to cool down tempers.

The Prime Minister attended the sitting briefly for 10 minutes, while the Leader of Opposition was present for 90 minutes.

Members' participation in House proceedings

- ⇒ The National Assembly met for three hours and 10 minutes.
- ⇒ The ninth sitting started at 1050 Hours against the scheduled starting time of 1000 hours. The proceedings started late by 50 minutes.
- ⇒ The Deputy Speaker chaired the entire sitting.
- ⇒ The Prime Minister attended the sitting briefly for 10 minutes, while the Leader of Opposition was present for 90 minutes.
- ⇒ Besides the PM and the Opposition Leader, the Parliamentary Leader of the NPP was the only one present, while the leaders of the PML, PPPS, PMLF, MMAP, ANP, MQM, NPP and BNPA were absent.
- ⇒ The Chief Whips of PPPP, PMLN, MQM, MMAP and ANP were present, while those of PML, PMLF, NPP and BNPA were absent.
- ⇒ A total of 62 (18%) Members were present at the outset, while 156 (46%) Members at the end of the sitting. A maximum of 210 Members (62%) were present at one point of the sitting.
- ⇒ Eight Members applied for leave to be absent from the sitting.
- ⇒ All the Minority Members were present during the 9th sitting.



Free and Fair Election Network

Representation and Responsiveness

- ⇒ The House took up both the Calling Attention Notices (CANs) on the Orders of the Day.
- ⇒ Moved by five PMLN Members- three males and two females, the first CAN was regarding "increase in the prices of urea fertilizer by Rs. 106/- per bag", which was directed to Ministry of Industries.
- ⇒ The other CAN was about the "increase in the incidents of violence against women in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and other parts of the country". Sponsored by five Members of the PPP - four females and one male Member – it was directed the Ministry of Human Rights.
- ⇒ A total of 18 questions were listed to be taken up during the Question Hour. However, 11 questions were put up and responded by the relevant ministries.
- ⇒ A total of 12 Supplementary Questions were raised in the House during the sitting.

Output

- ⇒ A total of three Bills appeared on the Orders of the Day. The National Commission for Women Bill 2011 was introduced, while the Defence Housing Authority Islamabad Bill 2007 was deferred. The Pakistan Energy Efficiency and Conservation Bill 2011 was not taken up by the House.
- ⇒ Two Standing Committee reports regarding a Question of Privilege and the National University of Modern Languages (Amendment) Bill 2011 were presented before the House.

Order and institutionalization

- ⇒ A total of nine Points of Order were raised, consuming 97 minutes (51% of total sitting time). However, none of the Points of Order raised by Members attracted the Speaker's ruling.
- ⇒ The House witnessed a tussle between the Members of the PMLN and MQM, which interrupted the proceedings for 10 minutes. As both the Parliamentary Parties started sloganeering against each other, Members from the treasury benches intervened to cool down tempers.

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 of the Members.

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.