



## Free and Fair Election Network

### FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 09, Session No. 49 of the National Assembly

#### **National Assembly: Sitting Marked by Walkouts**

ISLAMABAD, February 01, 2013: The 55-minute 9<sup>th</sup> sitting of the 49<sup>th</sup> session of National Assembly was marked by low attendance and walkouts. Sixty-two members were present at the outset while 55 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 108 members were present at one point of sitting.

A report about creation of new province(s) in the province of Punjab and an annual report of the Council of Common Interests for the year 2011-2012 were also laid before the House.

Five walkouts, four of which were about the issue of new provinces, were observed during the sitting. MMAP legislators staged two walkouts; first over Governor Rule in Balochistan and the second over the commission on new provinces not debating the issue of Hazara province. A PML legislator also walked out against the commission not discussing the issue of Hazara province five minutes before the sitting was adjourned.

PMLN lawmakers staged a 15-minute walkout for not being allowed to speak about provinces' report on a point of order. Similarly a PMLN legislator walked out over the proposal to include Mianwali in the new proposed province.

The sitting was chaired by a member of the Panel of Chairperson. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the parliamentary leaders of MQM, MMAP, ANP, PML, PMLF, PPPS and BNPA did not attend the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

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

- The National Assembly met for 55 minutes.
- The sitting started at 1140 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1100 hours, witnessing a delay of 40 minutes.
- A member of the Panel of Chairpersons chaired the sitting.
- The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition did not attend the sitting.
- Parliamentary leader of NPP was present while those of MQM, MMAP, ANP, PML, PMLF, PPPS and BNPA were absent.
- Chief whips of PPPP and ANP attended the sitting whereas those of PMLN, MQM, MMAP, PML, PMLF, BNPA and PPPS remained absent.
- Sixty-two members were present at the outset while 55 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 108 members were present at one point of sitting.
- Five minority members attended the sitting.



## Free and Fair Election Network

### Representation and Responsiveness

- Fifteen starred questions on the agenda were deferred till the next sitting.
- A motion under rule 259 about law and order situation appearing on the agenda was taken up. An MQM member spoke on the motion for 14 minutes.
- Two calling attention notices appearing on the agenda were not taken up.

### Output

- A report about creation of new province(s) in the province of Punjab was laid before the House.
- An annual report of the Council of Common Interests for the year 2011-2012 was also laid before the House.

### Order and Institutionalization

- Fourteen points of order consumed 29 minutes of the sitting time.
- Five walkouts were observed during the 55 minute sitting. MMAP legislators staged two walkouts; first a four-minute walkout over Governor Rule in Balochistan and, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion, moments before adjournment of sitting over not considering the Hazara Province in the commission for creation of new provinces. PMLN lawmakers staged a 15-minute walkout for not being allowed to speak about provinces' report on a point of order. A PMLN legislator walked out one minute before adjournment for inclusion of Mianwali in the new proposed province. A PML member, also a minister of state, walked out of the House for non-inclusion of Hazara Province in new province's commission five minutes before the adjournment of sitting.

### Transparency

- Orders of the Day was available to legislators, observers and others.
- Information on members' attendance was not available to observers and the public.

*The Daily Factsheet is based on direct observation of the National Assembly proceedings conducted by Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI); a member organization of FAFEN*