



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No.8, Session No. 5 of the National Assembly

National Assembly: Resolution demands relief for quake victims

ISLAMABAD, September 25, 2013: The National Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution expressing solidarity with the Balochistan earthquake victims and urged the government to take relief measures for rehabilitation during the eighth sitting of its fifth session on Wednesday.

Except for the question hour, the House suspended regular agenda to discuss the resolution which was moved by a PPPP legislator. A total of 12 MNAs spoke on the situation in Balochistan earthquake for 90 minutes. Prayers were also offered for those who lost lives during the earthquake.

The House did not take up two calling attention notices, five resolutions, and five motions under rule 259.

The Speaker chaired the sitting for one hour and 40 minutes. The rest of the proceedings were chaired by a member of the Panel of Chairpersons.

The Prime Minister did not attend the proceedings while the Leader of the Opposition was present for two hours and 46 minutes. The parliamentary leaders of JI, ANP, and PML-F were present.

All opposition members walked out from the proceedings at 1400 hours over the absence of relevant minister to brief the House on the relief activities for the victims of the earthquake. The opposition members did not return till adjournment of the sitting except a JI MNA who joined the proceedings five minutes after the protest.

A newly elected PTI lawmaker took oath during the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The National Assembly met for four hours and 35 minutes observing a 26-minute prayer break.
- The sitting started at 1048 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1030 hours, witnessing a delay of 18 minutes.
- The Speaker chaired the sitting for one hour and forty minutes while the Deputy Speaker was absent. The remaining proceedings were chaired by a member of the Panel of Chairpersons.



Free and Fair Election Network

- The Prime Minister did not attend the proceedings while the Leader of the Opposition was present for two hours and 46 minutes.
- The parliamentary leaders of JI, ANP, and PML-F were present
- Thirty-nine members were present at the outset while 34 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 164 members were present at one point of sitting.
- Five minority members attended the sitting.
- Eight members applied for leave.
- A newly elected PTI lawmaker took oath during the sitting.

Output

- Moved by a PPPP lawmaker, the House expressed solidarity with the victims of earthquake and called upon the government to take measures for their rehabilitation.

Representation and Responsiveness

- Except for the question hour, the House suspended the regular agenda and discussed the situation in Balochistan after the earthquake. Twelve MNAs spoke on this catastrophe for 90 minutes.
- Out of 41 starred questions on the agenda, seven regarding the Ministries of Interior and Finance were taken up. Additionally, 17 supplementary questions were asked.

Order and Institutionalization

- MNAs spoke on 25 points of order for one hour and eight minutes.
- All opposition members walked out from the proceedings at 1400 hours over the absence of relevant minister to brief the House on the government's relief efforts in Balochistan's earthquake-hit districts. The opposition members did not return till adjournment of the sitting except a JI MNA who joined the proceedings five minutes after the protest.

Transparency

- 'Orders of the Day' was available to the 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