



Free and Fair Election Network

FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 3, Session No. 5 of the National Assembly

National Assembly: Eight legislators debate presidential address

ISLAMABAD, September 18, 2013: Eight lawmakers took part in the debate on the presidential address as the Federal Employees Benevolent Fund and Group Insurance (Amendment) Bill was introduced during the third sitting of the National Assembly's fifth session on Wednesday.

The Speaker chaired the sitting for two hours and 37 minutes while the remaining proceedings were chaired by a member of Panel of Chairpersons. The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition did not attend the sitting.

Five out of 12 starred questions on the agenda were taken up on the floor. Additionally, 17 supplementary questions were asked.

MNAs spoke for an hour on 22 issues under Rule 18 which allows the members to raise any matter which is not points of order.

The House took up two Calling Attention Notices on the issues of load shedding in districts Mardan, Swabi and Buner, and the sale of cell phone SIMs of Afghanistan in open market in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa creating law and order issues.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

Members' Participation in House Proceedings

- The National Assembly met for four hours and 37 minutes. The House observed a 20-minute prayer break.
- The sitting started at 1043 hours against the scheduled starting time of 1030 hours, witnessing a delay of 13 minutes.
- The Speaker chaired the sitting for two hours and 37 minutes while the remaining proceedings were chaired by a member of Panel of Chairpersons.
- The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition did not attend the sitting.
- The parliamentary leaders of PkMAP, APML, AMLP, PML-F, and ANP were present.

- Forty-one members were present at the outset while 56 were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 156 members were present at one point of sitting.
- Seven minority members attended the sitting.
- Seven members applied for leave.

Output

- The Federal Employees Benevolent Fund and Group Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2013 was introduced and sent to the relevant Standing Committee.



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Representation and Responsiveness

- Two Calling Attention Notices about overloaded power transformers in grid station at Mardan resulting in load shedding in districts Mardan, Swabi and Buner; and the sale of cellphone SIMs of Afghanistan in open market in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa giving rise to kidnapping for ransom, extortion and other crimes were taken up.
- Five out of 12 starred questions on the agenda were taken up on the floor. Additionally, 17 supplementary questions were asked.
- Eight lawmakers shared their views on the presidential address in a two-hour debate. A PkMAP lawmaker spoke for 38 minutes followed by an MQM MNA (25 minutes), AMLP (20), an Independent Member (12), PPPP (10) and JUIF, JI and PMLN lawmakers spoke for six, five and four minutes, respectively.

Order and Institutionalization

- Under Rule 18, MNAs spoke for an hour on 22 issues which were not points of order.
- No incident of protest, walkout, or boycott was observed during the sitting.

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