**FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No.4, Session No.20 of the National Assembly**

**Lack of Quorum Marks Fourth NA Sitting**

ISLAMABAD, March 19, 2015: Starting 28 minutes behind the schedule, the National Assembly continued to witness low attendance as only 43 legislators (13%) were present at the start and 26 (8%) at the adjournment of the fourth sitting of the ongoing 20th session on Thursday, says Free and Fair Election Network in its daily factsheet.

The quorum was visibly lacking at various stages of the sitting. However, it was not pointed out by any of the lawmakers in the House. The Prime Minister did not attend the sitting, while the Opposition Leader was present for 82 minutes. In addition, the parliamentary leaders of PkMAP, ANP, BNP, JI and QWP attended the sitting.

The House took up a calling attention notice (CAN) and nine out of 41 starred questions appearing on the agenda. Additionally, 17 supplementary questions were also raised in the sitting.

The House did not debate a motion under Rule 259 regarding petrol crisis in the country while another CAN about appointment of 50 new officers on deputation by PIA was not taken up.

The following are some key observations of the House proceedings:

**Members’ Participation in the House Proceedings:**

* The National Assembly met for two hours and 27 minutes.
* The sitting began at 1128 hours against the scheduled time of 1100 hours, witnessing a delay of 28 minutes.
* The Speaker chaired the sitting for an hour and 47 minutes while the rest of the proceedings were presided over by Deputy Speaker.
* The Prime Minister did not attend the sitting, while the Leader of the Opposition was present for 82 minutes.
* Forty-three lawmakers (13%) were present at the start of the sitting and 26 (8%) at the adjournment. A maximum of 128 members (37%) were observed to be present at one point of the sitting.
* The parliamentary leaders of PkMAP, ANP, BNP, JI and QWP attended the sitting.
* Three minority members were present in the sitting.
* Eleven members applied for leave.

**Representation and Responsiveness**

* Minister for States and Frontier Regions winded up the debate during his 17 minutes speech on a motion under Rule 259 regarding problems being faced by the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). State Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination also spoke on it for one minute.
* Sponsored by five JUI-F lawmakers, the House took up a CAN regarding reduction and delay in the release of funds for Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal adding to the difficulties of the deserving people.
* Nine out of 41 starred questions appearing on Orders of the Day were taken up and responded to by the relevant ministry. In addition, the legislators raised 17 supplementary questions during the sitting.

**Order and Institutionalization**

* Twenty-two points of order consumed 42 minutes (29%) of the proceedings’ time.
* No protests/walkouts/boycotts were witnessed.

**Transparency**

* ‘Orders of the Day’ was available to the legislators, observers and others.
* Information on members’ attendance was not shared with the observers or the public.
* The quorum was visibly lacking at various stages of the sitting. However, it was not pointed out by any of the lawmakers in the House.

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