

PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF PUNJAB

# FAFEN PARLIAMENT MONITOR

## 35th SESSION

April 26 - May 7, 2018



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Session  
Number

35

Working  
Days

8

Actual  
Sittings

7

Working  
Hours

11

Hours & 27 Minutes

# LAWMAKERS DISINTEREST MARKS PUNJAB ASSEMBLY'S 35TH SESSION

- Four out of seven sittings adjourned due to lack of quorum
- One Private Member's Bill regarding Compulsory Teaching of the Holy Quran passed

ISLAMABAD, May 10, 2018: Lack of interest of provincial lawmakers in proceedings marked the 35th session of Punjab Assembly, which passed one private member's as well as two government bills and witnessed introduction of nine legislative proposals.

The session, comprising seven sittings, started on April 26, 2018 and concluded on May 7, 2018. The cumulative duration of the sittings was 11 hours and 27 minutes as each sitting, on average, witnessed a delay of an hour and 46 minutes from its starting time and continued for an hour and 38 minutes.

The lack of quorum persisted during the first five sittings and it was pointed out for seven times. Four sittings had to be adjourned due to presence of less than 25% (93) lawmakers in the House while the required number was found complete twice after the customary bells were rung for five minutes. One instance was such when quorum was found complete after suspension of the proceedings for 40 minutes.

According to FAFEN's observation, the lawmakers' attendance remained low throughout the session – with an average of 21

(6%) members present at the start and 50 (13%) at the adjournment of each sitting.

The Chief Minister did not attend any sitting while the Leader of the Opposition attended six sittings for four hours and 12 minutes (37% of the proceedings). The Speaker attended all sittings and chaired the House for nine hours and 51 minutes (86 % of the proceedings) while the Deputy Speaker attended one sitting. The rest of the time (96 minutes) was lost in suspension of the proceedings due to lack of quorum.

The parliamentary leaders of political parties represented in the assembly did not attend most of the sittings. The JI leader attended four sittings and PML-Z leader attended two sittings. The leaders of PPPP, PML, BNA-P and PNML did not attend any of the sittings.

## Legislation

The 35th session's legislative agenda comprised 14 bills including one private members' bills. The House passed three bills including one private member's bill – the Compulsory Teaching of the Holy Quran Bill 2017 – sponsored by JI Parliamentary Leader. Two other government bills passed by the

## KEY MEMBERS ATTENDANCE



Rana Muhammad Iqbal  
SPEAKER

7 /7

Presiding Time (hh:mm)

10:58



Sardar Sher Ali Gorchani  
DEPUTY SPEAKER

1 /7

Presiding Time (hh:mm)

00:00



Mian Shahbaz Sharif  
CHIEF MINISTER

0 /7

Attended Time (hh:mm)

00:00



Mian Mehmood-ur-Rashid  
LEADER OF OPPOSITION

6 /7

Attended Time (hh:mm)

04:12

## PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS ATTENDANCE



Syed Waseem Akhtar



JI

4 /7



Ghulam Murtaza



PML-Z

2 /7

## Suspension

# 1

Hour & 36 Minutes

Members at Outset  
(Average)

# 21

present

Members at End  
(Average)

# 50

present

Maximum Attendance

# 62

present

House were the Punjab Sound Systems (Regulation) (Amendment) Bill 2018 and the Punjab (Regularization of Service) Bill 2018. The House referred nine government bills to the relevant standing committees while two government bills were not taken up. The bills referred to standing committee included the Punjab University of Technology Rasul Bill 2018, the Punjab Agricultural Marketing Regulatory Authority Bill 2018, the Punjab Bonded Labour System (Abolition) (Amendment) Bill 2018, the Punjab Fisheries (Amendment) Bill 2018, the Registration (Punjab Second Amendment) Bill 2018, the Punjab Government Servants Housing Foundation (Amendment) Bill 2018, the Punjab Witness Protection Bill 2018, the Explosive Substances (Punjab Amendment) Bill 2018 and the Punjab Sound Systems (Regulation) (Amendment) Ordinance 2018. The bills not considered by the House were the Registration (Punjab Amendment) Bill 2018 and the Punjab Land Revenue (Amendment) Bill 2018.

### Resolutions

All five resolutions appearing on the agenda were not taken up. These resolutions urged the government to construct a Cricket Ground in Lahore, ensure maintenance of roads affected during safe city project, take steps to control irregularities occurred during matric and intermediate exams, install CCTVs in Public places and take action to overcome shortage of clean drinking water in Rawalpindi and Chaklala Cantonment board.

### Reports

The Assembly's Standing Committees presented 24 reports to the House during the session. These reports were mainly made on the legislative proposals, privilege

motions and starred questions. The House granted extension to various standing committees for presentation of 12 reports while the government also presented eight reports on legislative proposals, three statutory reports and a report on the privilege motions before the House.

### Questions

The House held Question Hours during six out of seven sittings. As many as 82 Starred Questions were set up for answers during the session. No un-starred question was put up for reply. A starred question requires written as well as oral reply while an un-starred question requires written reply only. However, the House took up only 36 (43%) starred questions for answers during the proceedings. The lawmakers raised 84 supplementary questions to gain further clarity on government's responses.

### Adjournment Motions

The lawmakers submitted six Adjournment Motions (AMs) on various matters of public importance related to education, health, governance and corruption. One AM was not taken up and five were deferred for receiving no reply from the treasury. All six motions were sponsored by PTI lawmakers.

### Points of Order

The lawmakers also raised 44 Points of Order (POs) consuming two hours and 63 minutes (9% of the proceedings).

### Quorum

The PTI lawmakers identified the lack of quorum six times and the treasury benches pointed out quorum one time during the proceedings. This caused disruption in five sittings of the 35th session

3

Bills Passed

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6

Adjournment  
Motions

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5

Resolutions  
Adopted

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44

Points of  
Orders

of Punjab Assembly. Four sittings (1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th) were adjourned without addressing the entire agenda of the day due to quorum deficiencies. One hour and thirty six minutes of the proceedings were also lost due to lack of quorum. On two occasions, the quorum was completed after the Assembly bells were rung for five minutes.

### Protests and walk-outs

The House witnessed three incidents of walkout and five incidents of protest during the session. The opposition parties collectively staged one walkout and protested against misogynist remarks of Minister of Law and Parliamentary affairs against women political workers of PTI. JI staged walk out to show solidarity with sugarcane growers and PTI staged walk out and protested against hasty passage of Punjab (Regularization of Service) Bill 2018. Besides this, opposition collectively protested on three other issues; demanding immediate resignation of Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs as he's been disqualified to become a member, against a statement of PML(N) Quaid and over unwarranted remarks of the Punjab Law Minister.

## ABOUT FAFEN

- § FAFEN is one of the most credible networks of civil society organizations working for strengthening citizens' voice and accountability in Pakistan since 2006.
- § FAFEN has harnessed information technology for real-time monitoring, facilitation and technical backstopping of partners for effective and result-based program delivery.
- § FAFEN is the only civil society group to have been invited by the Judicial Commission to present the evidence of illegalities and irregularities documented through the course of General Elections 2013 Observation. The systemic and procedural issues identified by FAFEN have been acknowledged by the commission in its detailed findings.
- § FAFEN's recommendations for electoral reforms have contributed to the work of Parliamentary Committee for Electoral Reforms.
- § FAFEN's advocacy for parliamentary transparency, accountability and reforms has shaped public discourse on parliamentary reforms. Improved citizens' access to parliamentary information including daily public release of parliamentarians' attendance records can be directly attributed to FAFEN's work.
- § FAFEN deployed 18,000 and 40,000 non-partisan and trained observers for the systematic observation of general election 2008 and 2013, respectively, largest citizens' observation ever undertaken in Pakistan.
- § FAFEN's evidence and recommendations for reforms have improved the quality of public and political discourse on elections, its issues and need for reforms. Leading political parties and media houses extensively use FAFEN's election findings and analysis to build a case for reforms.
- § With more than 20,000 followers on Twitter and around 135,000 on Facebook, FAFEN is considered one of the most reliable sources of electoral and parliamentary information in the country.

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This report is based on direct observation of the proceedings of the Punjab Assembly conducted by PATTAN Development Organization – a member organization of FAFEN. Every effort has been made to keep this report, which deals with on-floor performance of the Members, accurate and comprehensive. Errors and omissions are excepted.