

PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF PUNJAB

# FAFEN PARLIAMENT MONITOR

## 3<sup>rd</sup> SESSION

October 16 – October 25, 2018



**FREE AND FAIR ELECTION NETWORK**

[www.fafen.org](http://www.fafen.org) | [www.openparliament.pk](http://www.openparliament.pk)

Session  
Number

3

Working  
Days

10

Actual  
Sittings

6

Working  
Hours

9

Hours & 18 Minutes

## PUNJAB ASSEMBLY: 34 LAWMAKERS PARTICIPATE IN BUDGET DISCUSSION

ISLAMABAD, October 26, 2018: As many as 34 out of 370 (10%) sitting lawmakers participated in the general discussion on budget 2018-19 held during the third session of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab, observes Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) in its Session Report.

The ruling party PTI presented its first provincial budget during first sitting of the session amidst opposition parties' protest. The lawmakers belonging to PML-N kept interrupting the Minister for Finance during entire length (36 minutes) of his speech. The protesting lawmakers also gathered in front of the Speaker's dais and tore the official documents of the budget. The Speaker suspended the membership of six protesting lawmakers for violating the decorum of the House and barred their entry in the precincts of the Assembly till the completion of investigations against them.

The Leader of the Opposition announced to boycott the House proceedings in protest against the Chair's decision. However, despite the announcement, several party lawmakers were marked present in the official attendance records available on the Assembly's website. On an average, 20 lawmakers of the party were marked present during

each of the last five sittings. As many as 31 PML-N lawmakers were marked present on the first day of the boycott, 26 on second day, 11 on third day, 18 on fourth day, and 16 on fifth day.

The House allocated four days for the general discussion on the budget and a single day for discussion and voting on Demands for Grants as well as the Finance Bill. The general discussion on the budget continued for three hours and 23 minutes (36% of the proceedings). The male lawmakers consumed 74% of this time and the female lawmakers 26%. Of the 34 lawmakers – 22 men and 12 women – who took part in the budget debate, 28 belonged to PTI, three to PPPP, two to PML and one to RHP. Around 79% of the time allocated for budget discussion was consumed by PTI lawmakers, seven percent each by PML and RHP lawmakers and six percent by PPPP lawmakers.

The voting on 43 Demands for Grants took place during the last sitting of the session. The opposition lawmakers' cut motions on these demands lapsed due to their absence from the proceedings. The Minister for Finance also laid before the House the Schedule of Authorized Expenditure for the year 2018-2019.

## KEY MEMBERS ATTENDANCE



SPEAKER

**5**/<sub>6</sub>

Presiding Time (hh:mm)

**06:27**



DEPUTY SPEAKER

**6**/<sub>6</sub>

Presiding Time (hh:mm)

**02:51**



CHIEF MINISTER

**4**/<sub>6</sub>

Attended Time (hh:mm)

**02:31**



LEADER OF OPPOSITION

**1**/<sub>6</sub>

Attended Time (hh:mm)

**00:48**

## PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS ATTENDANCE



PPPP

**0**/<sub>6</sub>



RHP

**5**/<sub>6</sub>

## Average Delay

# 1

Hour & 39 Minutes

Members at Outset  
(Average)

# 100

present

Members at End  
(Average)

# 137

present

Maximum Members  
(Average)

# 166

The House met for nine hours and 18 minutes cumulatively during six sittings held between October 16 and October 25, 2018. Each sitting started one hour and 39 minutes behind its scheduled time and continued for one hour and 33 minutes, on an average. Moreover, every sitting had an average 100 (27%) lawmakers present at the commencement 137 (37%) lawmakers at the adjournment while three out of eight minority lawmakers attended each sitting. According to official attendance records of plenary sittings, average attendance during the session remained 166 lawmakers per sitting. The highest attendance, 272 lawmakers, was recorded on first sitting and the lowest, 140 lawmakers, on fifth sitting. The Leader of the House attended nearly 27% of the proceedings (two hours 31 minutes) and was present in four out of six sittings. The Leader of the Opposition attended only one sitting.

The Speaker was present in five sittings and presided over 69% proceedings (six hours and 27 minutes) while the Deputy Speaker attended every sitting and presided over 31% proceedings (2 hours and 51 minutes). The parliamentary leader of PPPP did not attend any sitting during the session. The sole lawmaker of Rah-e-Haq Party (RHP) attended five sittings.

The House adopted a resolution presented by treasury lawmaker condemning PML-N leader Nehal Hashmi's statement criticizing the role of military in the country's development. Additionally, the last

sitting's agenda included five ordinances to be presented before the House including the University of Murree Ordinance 2018, the Punjab Laws (Amendment) Ordinance 2018, the Punjab Local Government (Amendment) Ordinance 2018, the Punjab Shops and Establishments (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 and the Companies Profits (Workers' Participation) (Amendment) Ordinance 2018. However, none of these ordinances was taken up.

The Chair referred a PTI lawmaker's Question of Privilege to a Special Committee. The lawmaker had sought action against the Leader of Opposition for his alleged disrespectful behavior towards the House. The House also approved constituting a 12-member Special Committee to assess the losses incurred to exchequer due to closure of development projects initiated by the government before 2008. Moreover, the lawmakers spoke on 17 Points of Order during the session, consuming 37 minutes of proceedings.

The PML-N lawmakers also pointed out the lack of quorum five times during second, third and four sittings. On four instances, the quorum was completed after ringing the Assembly bells for five minutes. On one instance, the quorum was found complete on the headcount ordered by the Speaker.

## 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 23,700 followers on Twitter and around 144,700 on Facebook, FAFEN is considered one of the most reliable sources of electoral and parliamentary information in the country.

**Free and Fair Election Network**  
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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.