



FAFEN PARLIAMENT MONITOR

(June 3–21, 2014)

Twelfth (Budget) Session
National Assembly of Pakistan

FAFEN Parliament Monitor:

Budget Session (June 3-21, 2014)

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This report is based on direct observation of the National Assembly proceedings conducted by CPDI Development Organization, a member organization of FAFEN

Abbreviations

AJIP	Awami Jamhuri Ittehad Pakistan
AM	Adjournment Motion
AMLP	Awami Muslim League Pakistan
APML	All Pakistan Muslim League
BISP	Benazir Income Support Program
BNP	Balochistan National Party
CADD	Capital Administration and Development Division
CAN	Calling Attention Notice
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FBR	Federal Board of Revenue
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GST	General Sales Tax
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IND	Independent Member
JI	Jamaat-e-Islami
JUI-F	Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam - Fazlur Rehman
MNA	Member of National Assembly
MQM	Muttahida Qaumi Movement
NP	National Party
NPP	National Peoples Party
PAT	Pakistan Awami Tehreek
PkMAP	Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party
PML	Pakistan Muslim League
PML-F	Pakistan Muslim League (Functional)
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz)
PML-Z	Pakistan Muslim League (Ziaul Haq Shaheed)
PO	Point of Order
PPPP	Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians
PSDP	Public Sector Development Program
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
QWP	Qaumi Watan Party

Executive Summary

The National Assembly's twelfth (budget) session was marked by the approval of the federal budget for the fiscal year 2014-15. The House passed the Finance Bill after incorporating 43% of the recommendations proposed by the Senate. Other legislations, including the Anti-terrorism (Amendment) Bill 2014, were also passed amid protests and low attendance of members.

The session, comprising 14 sittings, started with the introduction of the Finance Bill in the first sitting. As many as 140 out of 340 lawmakers (41%) participated in the general discussion on the budget. Although nearly the same number of members had debated the budget last year, the discussion consumed 60% of the session as compared to 38% last year. A change in trend was witnessed as women parliamentarians spoke more actively in proportion to their strength in the House - 35 (58%) female MNAs shared their views on the Finance Bill as compared to 105 (39%) male members.

The lawmakers criticized the ruling PML-N for its poor performance in the first parliamentary year, presenting inaccurate figures of economic growth, adopting regressive tax policies and unequal distribution of resources among the federating units. However, government allies raised their voices in support of the government for preparing an efficient budget despite rigorous economic challenges.

The National Assembly incorporated 57 out of 133 recommendations proposed by the Senate in the final consideration of the Finance Bill - more than twice the recommendations approved last year (21 out of 113, or 18.6%). Likewise, the Opposition members were more active in the scrutiny of the bill compared to the previous year as they submitted 978 cut motions (compared to 770 last year) against 72 demands for grants (as opposed to 53 last year). However, none of the cut motions gathered a large number of votes and were rejected as the ruling party holds the majority of the House.

Additionally, the House approved the supplementary demands for grants and appropriations for the financial year 2013-2014; excess demands for grants and appropriations for the years 2004-2005, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008; schedule of authorized expenditure 2014-15; supplementary schedule of authorized expenditure 2013-14; and excess schedule of authorized expenditure 2004-05, 2006-07 and 2007-08.

In the wake of political leadership stressing for electoral reforms, the National Assembly approved a motion to form a committee comprising members of all parliamentary parties in the 12th sitting.

The House passed three treasury-backed legislations, including an amendment to the Anti-Terrorism Bill 1997. Additionally, the Legal Practitioners and Bar Councils (Amendment) Bill 2014 and the Service Tribunals (Amendment) Bill 2014 were also given a nod from the legislators.

The House adopted six resolutions appearing on supplementary agenda. These resolutions condemned the terrorist attacks on pilgrims in Taftan (Balochistan) and at the Karachi airport as well as the attack on an MQM lawmaker Tahira Asif in June 2014. On other resolutions, the House commended the government's decision to launch a military offensive in North Waziristan Agency; paid tribute to former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on her birth anniversary and resolved to extend the Federal Judicial Academy (Amendment) Ordinance 2014 for another 120 days.

The House conducted two debates in addition to budget deliberations that lasted five hours and 43 minutes. The first debate was on the terrorist attacks at the Karachi airport and on Shia pilgrims near the Pak-Iran border while the second dealt with the Zarb-e-Azb operation in North Waziristan Agency.

The question hour was held in only one sitting as budgetary considerations resulted in suspension of question hours in the remaining sittings. As many as 33 members (17 male and 16 female)

submitted 63 questions, of which 52 were fully answered. PML-N members submitted 25 questions, followed by members of PTI (16), PPPP (nine), MQM (six), JI (five) and JUI-F (two). Additionally, two CANs moved to highlight water scarcity and shortage of teachers in Islamabad in the second sitting were left unaddressed.

The parliamentarians raised 110 POs which consumed 5% of the session's time. As many as 31 POs were raised on law and order, while 22 dealt with the 2014-15 Budget.

The session lasted 83 hours and 28 minutes. On average, each sitting started 32 minutes late and lasted for nearly six hours. The members' attendance remained low as 67 MNAs were seen at the outset and 72 at the end on average. The Prime Minister was present in six out of 14 sittings, while the Finance Minister attended 10 sittings and remained present on the floor for 30% of the sessions' time.

On the other hand, the Leader of the Opposition attended the entire session.

The Chairman presided 52% of the session, while the Deputy Speaker chaired 31% of the proceedings. Nearly 6% of the session was presided by the Panel of Chairpersons, while the remaining time was consumed in prayer breaks.

The presence of parliamentary leaders showed considerable variance – with the JI leader attending 13 sittings followed by leaders of PkMAP (11), MQM (nine), PML-F (seven), ANP (six), NPP and PML (four each), JUI-F (three) and PTI (two). Among single member parties, AMLP and APML members were seen in eleven sittings, followed by QWP (10), BNP (nine), PML-Z (eight) and AJIP and NP (four each).

FAFEN observes the MNAs' participation against three categories; lawmakers who submit agenda, those who debate it and members who participate in both activities. As many as 180 members (53%) participated in the House proceedings – 24 submitted agenda items, 69 took part in the House deliberations while 87 participated in both activities.

Budget in the National Assembly

1

The budget is presented in the National Assembly on a day and time appointed by the Leader of the House. The Finance Minister or any other minister authorized by the Leader of the House presents the Finance Bill before the House. On this day, no other business except for the introduction of the Finance Bill is to be transacted.

There are three stages of the budget's consideration - the general discussion on the budget as a whole, discussion on appropriations (in respect of charged expenditure), and discussion and voting on demands for grants (in respect of expenditure other than charged expenditure) including voting on motions for reduction, if any.

1.1 Budget Debate

According to the National Assembly rules governing financial matters (Rules 182-197); the Assembly may discuss the budget as a whole or any question of principle involved therein on days allocated for the general discussion on the budget. However, no motion can be moved at this stage nor can the budget be submitted for the vote of the assembly.

The 2014 Finance Bill was presented in the first sitting. The Finance Minister delivered his budget speech that lasted slightly over two hours. Additionally, he laid the supplementary demands for grants and appropriations for the financial year 2013-2014 and excess demands for grants and appropriations for the years 2004-2005, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 before the House.

Table 1.1: Members' Participation in the Budget Debate: Party & Gender-wise Analysis

Party	Male	Female	Total	Total Membership in NA
PML-N	30	10	40	190
PPPP	18	10	28	46
PTI	24	5	29	34
MQM	15	3	18	24
JUI-F	6	4	10	13
IND	2	0	2	7
PML-F	1	0	1	5
JI	3	1	4	4
PkMAP	2	1	3	4
ANP	1	0	1	2
NPP	0	1	1	2
PML	0	0	0	2
AMLP	1	0	1	1
QWP	1	0	1	1
BNP	1	0	1	1
PML-Z	0	0	0	1
AJIP	0	0	0	1
APML	0	0	0	1
NP	0	0	0	1
Total	105	35	140	340

The general discussion on the budget commenced in the second sitting and continued till the 10th sitting - consuming 50 hours and 22 minutes (about 60% of the session time), considerably longer compared to

the previous year's discussion which took 38% of the entire session. The House discussed the charged expenditure on the 2013-14 Budget on the same day the general discussion on the budget ended.

In the subsequent sittings the members discussed demands for grants for Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Cabinet Division (11th sitting); cut motions (12th sitting); and supplementary demand for grants (14th sitting).

In all, 140 (41%) MNAs participated in the budget debate in the House. A change in trend was witnessed as a higher percentage of female members spoke during the budget deliberations. As many as 35 (58%) female and 105 (39%) male legislators participated in the debate compared to 39% female and 42% male members last year.

Female members of PML-N, PPP, PTI, MQM, JUI-F, JI, PkMAP and NPP spoke on the budget in the same order of precedence. Among male members belonging to single member parties, only AMLP and QWP shared their views in the deliberations. On the contrary, members belonging to PML-Z, AJIP, APML, NP, NPP and PML abstained from sharing their views on the budget.

1.2 General Discussion on Budget

The general discussion on the budget was underscored by criticism of the government not only on the provisions of the budget but also on its past year's performance. Members belonging to political parties currently in power in the provinces or in previous governments were seen projecting their economic achievements instead of making any significant contributions to the budget debate.

The Leader of the Opposition opened the general discussion in the presence of the Prime Minister and rebuked the government for crafting an anti-poor budget and for its poor performance in its first year.

The opposition bench reprimanded the government for presenting inaccurate figures of economic growth, including the alleged misreporting of 4.1 percent GDP growth as opposed to 3.3 percent according to the IMF. The failure of government to achieve export target of 8% (currently standing at 2.4%), control inflation standing at 8.7%, the debt-to-GDP ratio rising above 62% and current account deficit rising from \$1.5 to \$2.1 billion in 10 months was also criticized.

Nearly all parties expressed reservations with the government for shifting tax and privatization policies under the diktats of the IMF. They also criticized the latter for giving tax amnesties to the rich while increasing taxes on the poor and issuing 24 Statutory Regulatory Orders (SROs) allegedly issued by the government in one year to benefit their favorites to the tune of Rs477 billion.

The increase in GST from 16% to 17%, failure to meet revenue target and sufficient steps to impose direct taxation were also contended as members called for bringing three million person identified by NADRA into the tax net. They rejected the 10% increase in salaries and pension for being insufficient in the face of rising inflation.

The government was urged to live up to its promise of bringing back money leaked to foreign banks, rebuking it on acquiring a \$10 billion loan in a year and resurgence of circular debt to around Rs300 billion. Some right-wing elements in the House advocated the need for an interest free banking system to rectify the financial matters in the economy.

Members called for augmenting incentives to the agriculture sector which is currently faced with declining growth rate. They asked for subsidies on agriculture and medicines, discouraging import of agricultural goods from India and imposition of agriculture tax on landowners.

The lawmakers also charged the government for unfair distribution of resources and development funds across federating units on several occasions. Additionally privatization of state-owned entities (OGDCL, PPL, HBL etc.) and the mechanism through which Rs28 million were approved for the Metro Bus Project were also questioned.

Parliamentarians belonging to less developed regions claimed their respective regions were ignored in the federal budget. They called for construction of power houses and eradication of polio in FATA besides proposing a motorway from Karachi to Lahore, Hyderabad and Gwadar.

Members seemed concerned about the law and order situation in the country and its indelible marks on the economy, requesting the government to beef up allocations to ensure public security on several occasions. The MNAs were dissatisfied with the allocations of resources for crucial projects, such as Pak-China Economic Corridor, Karachi Circular Railway and Earthquake Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Authority. Voices were raised for women development while non-Muslim lawmakers called for inclusion of non-Muslims in Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal.

On the other hand, members speaking in favour of the budgetary allocations (mostly belonging to PML-N) praised the government for taking initiative to revive national institutions, launching mega projects, 24% increase in the PSDP compared to the previous year, Rs42 billion allocation for infrastructure and projected spending on energy reforms (Rs205 billion in various power projects).

Additionally, lawmakers felicitated the government for increasing the monthly stipend of BISP from Rs1000 to Rs1500, creating employment opportunities through introduction of the 3G and 4G technologies, Prime Minister's youth loan scheme, appreciation of rupee against the US dollar and GSP plus status awarded to Pakistan for the next 10 years.

1.3 Discussions on Charged Expenditure/Demands for Grant

The parliamentarians discussed charged expenditures during the 10th sitting which, among other expenditures, dealt with all debt charges of the federal government, various administrative expenses, presidential expenditures, expenses of supreme and high court judges, election commissioners, the Auditor General and the primary and secondary presiding officers of both houses of the parliament.

Seven members – the Finance Minister, four PPP members and one each from PTI and JUI-F – shared their views during the said deliberations. The MNAs asked for transparency in government spending while rebuking heavy borrowing, stressing on the need to revamp Pakistan Railways, establishment of an Islamic financial system and allocation of additional funds to Pakistan Bait-ul-mal.

Out of 145 demands for grants proposed by various ministries and divisions, the House discussed the demands of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Cabinet Division during the eleventh sitting. As many as 36 members including MNAs sitting on opposition benches and the Ministers for Finance, Parliamentary Affairs and Privatization took part in the said deliberations.

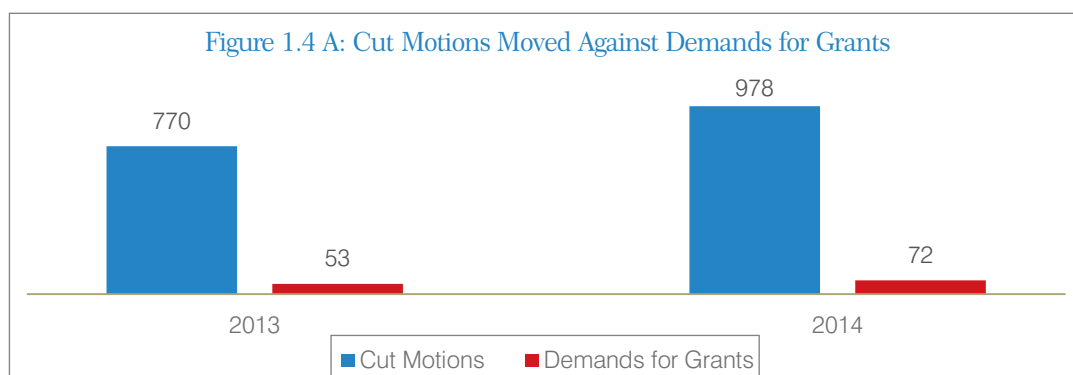
The members criticized the supervision of foreign affairs by the Prime Minister, huge expenditure (Rs270 million rupees reportedly) incurred on his foreign visits and lack of comprehensive foreign policy during the discussion. They also asked for curtailing the allocation of funds to the Cabinet Division as it had remained inactive during most of the year. Members also levelled corruption charges on the FBR while emphasizing the need for tax reforms and a reduction in government borrowing.

The House took up supplementary demands for the year 2013-14 in the last sitting where lawmakers urged the government to seek the House's approval before giving supplementary grants to any department and curtail protection of the government's excess expenditures. On members' contentions regarding a lack of legal framework for such practices, the Speaker asked the House to take the matter to the relevant standing committee for amendment in the Constitution and House rules.

1.4 Cut Motions

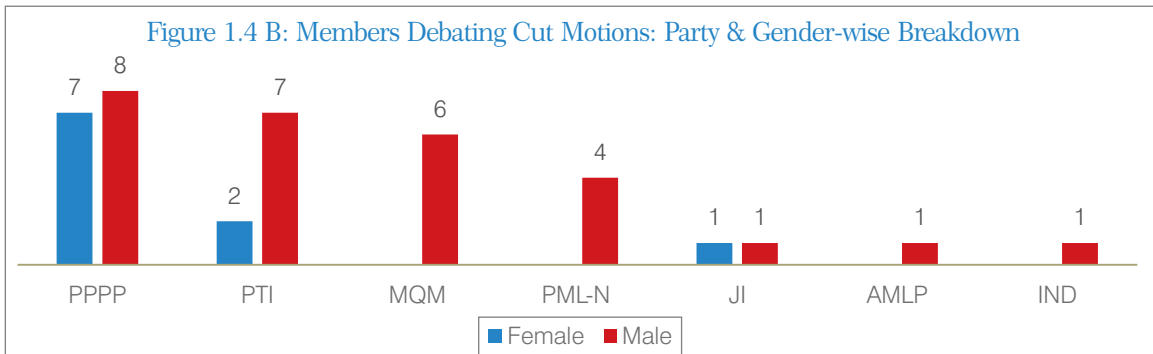
The lawmakers can move a policy, economy or token cut motion to show disapproval of a policy, demand reduction or removal of an item in demand and ventilation of specific grievance which is within the sphere or responsibility of the government. The admissibility of a cut motion is subject to the chair's discretion.

The lawmakers submitted 978 cut motions against demands for grants for 72 ministries/divisions as opposed to 770 against 53 demands in the previous year. The House rejected all the cut motions proposed by the opposition members with a majority vote.



The division of capital outlay on purchases by the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan received 122 cut motions that were discussed by 17 members for more than two hours. Other divisions receiving cut motions included CADD (57), National Food Security and Research Division (54) and Interior Division (51).

Overall, 38 members debated cut motions against seven government ministries/divisions for five hours and 38 minutes during the 12th sitting and criticized the government for suboptimal performance and neglect. Unlike last year where PTI members were most active in sharing their views on cut motions, more time was taken by PPPP members (153 minutes) this year, followed by PML-N and MQM members (about 60 minutes). On the other hand, PTI members spoke for 57 minutes.



1.5 Senate Recommendations

The National Assembly presented the Finance Bill to the Senate for recommendations. Senators belonging to PPPP, ANP, JUI-F, PML-N, MQM, PkMAP, and PML-F discussed the budget for nearly six hours during the 105th session and proposed 133 recommendations at the end of the deliberations.

Even though the National Assembly is not bound to incorporate the Senate recommendations as many as 57 recommendations (43%) were incorporated fully or partially in the budget. Last year, the Lower House had accepted 21 out of 113 (18.6%) recommendations.

Besides other proposals, the Senate recommendations sought amendments to tax laws, fund allocation for repair of various roads, establishment of educational institutions in under developed areas, release of government dues to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, regularization of security companies and provision of subsidies to agriculture sector. They also proposed measures to conserve energy in order to increase electricity supply to various parts of the country.

Other Parliamentary Output

2

This section gives the details of legislations besides the Finance Bill considered during the session. It also provides information on resolutions, debates and other agendas taken up by the House.

2.1 Legislation

The House passed three government bills in addition to the Finance Bill during the session, all of which were amendments to existing laws. These included the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill 2014, the Legal Practitioners and Bar Councils (Amendment) Bill 2014 and the Service Tribunals (Amendment) Bill 2014.

The Anti-terrorism (Amendment) Bill 2014 sought to amend the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 by conferring additional powers to law enforcement agencies to tackle terrorism. The bill adds an additional subsection in Section 3 which authorizes armed and civil armed forces to issue a three-month detention to any person suspected in offence against national security, target killing, kidnapping for ransom and extortion.

The bill also adds two new subsections (27AA and 27B) in Section 9 of the said Act. The 27AA punishes the investigating officer with an imprisonment of two years if found guilty of implicating an innocent person in crime. The other subsection (27B) empowers the Qanun-e-Shahadat 1984 to convict an accused on the basis of modern techniques such as electronic and forensic evidence.

The Legal Practitioners and Bar Councils (Amendment) Bill 2014 aimed to establish an Islamabad Bar Council under the Legal Practitioners and Bar Councils Act 1973. Earlier, the capital territory was given representation in the Punjab Bar Council. However, the establishment of Islamabad High Court made it legal to open the Islamabad Bar Council. Additionally, the Service Tribunals (Amendment) Bill 2014 sought to appoint a chairman and members in the Federal Services Tribunal in order to make it financially autonomous to spend its budget. The bill also empowers the tribunal to implement its order and judgments, reducing the burden of implementation from high courts.

2.2 Resolutions

The House adopted all the six resolutions tabled during the session. Two resolutions were moved by PML-N individually, while the remaining four were moved jointly by various parties. As many as 17 members – 15 male and two female – tabled the resolutions which came through supplementary agenda.

One of the resolutions sponsored individually by PML-N paid tribute to former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on her birth anniversary while the other extended the Federal Judicial Academy (Amendment) Ordinance 2014 for a period of 120 days.

All the jointly moved resolutions were related to incidents of terrorism, law and order and the ongoing military operation in North Waziristan. Two of these condemned the terrorist attacks on pilgrims in Taftan

Table 2.2: Resolutions Adopted during the Session¹

No.	Resolution	Party
1.	This House strongly condemns the terrorist act on pilgrims in Taftan, Balochistan on June 8, 2014 resulting in the loss of innocent lives and injuries to many others. The Prime Minister has directed the law enforcement agencies to take action against the perpetrators of the attack and calls upon both the federal and provincial government to provide the best possible medical assistance to the injured persons	PML-N NPP JI PTI MQM PML-Z MQM JUI

¹<http://www.na.gov.pk/en/resolutions.php>



No.	Resolution	Party
2.	This House strongly condemns the terrorist attack on the old terminal of Karachi Airport on 8th - 9th June, 2014 resulting in the loss of many lives, injuring many others and damage to government and private properties. This House also expresses grave concern over the death of seven workers in the cold storage. It prays for the departed souls and expresses its deepest sympathies with the bereaved families. This House pays rich tribute to the brave personnel of Pakistan Army, Airport Security Force, Police and other law-enforcing agencies who successfully and courageously countered the attacks and cleared all the sensitive areas in a very short time	PML-N PPPP MQM PTI JI PML-Z JUI
3.	This House expresses its full support with the decision of the Government of Pakistan to launch the military operation by our valiant armed forces against militants in the tribal areas. The House calls upon the federal and provincial governments to provide all necessary assistance to the effected IDP families till they are able to return to their homes. This House resolves to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the armed forces till final victory	PML-N PPPP MQM QWP PTI
4.	This House recognizes the day as the birthday of Shaheed Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and pays homage to her courage and will to fight against extremism and tyranny, while upholding the ideals and values of democracy, moderation and tolerance	PML-N
5.	This House strongly condemns the attack with fire arms on lady Parliamentarian Mrs. Tahira Asif of MQM on June 18, 2014. The House demands that culprits involved in this crime be arrested by the Police of Punjab	PML-N PPPP MQM PKMAP PTI JUI JI
6.	The National Assembly resolves to extend the Federal Judicial Academy (Amendment) Ordinance 2014 for a further period of one hundred and twenty days w.e.f. 8th August, 2014 under provision to sub-paragraph (ii) of (a) of clause (2) of Article 89 of the Constitution of the Islamic republic of Pakistan	PML-N

and at the Karachi airport. Another resolution condemned the murder of an MQM lawmaker in Lahore. The resolutions demanded inquiries into the incidents and punishment to the culprits. The House also praised the government's decision to launch a military offensive in North Waziristan and expressed solidarity with the armed forces through one resolution.

2.3 Debates on Public Issues and Other Agenda

The House conducted debates on two issues that consumed five hours and 43 minutes. The first debate was held to condemn the terrorist attack at the Karachi airport and the suicide attack on Shia pilgrims in Taftan, Balochistan. The House suspended regular agenda during the third and fourth sittings to discuss these incidents, in which 15 members condemned the deadly attacks.

The Prime Minister took the House in confidence on the launch of a military operation in North Waziristan – an issue which was later admitted for discussion during the 9th sitting. Eleven members spoke on the subject by expressing their solidarity with the military troops.

The House also approved a motion to form a committee comprising members of all parliamentary parties for electoral reforms following mounting pressure from the civil society, media and political segments.

This section sheds light on lawmakers' efforts to keep checks and balances on the government in terms of its performance and policy implementation through parliamentary instruments.

3.1 Question Hour

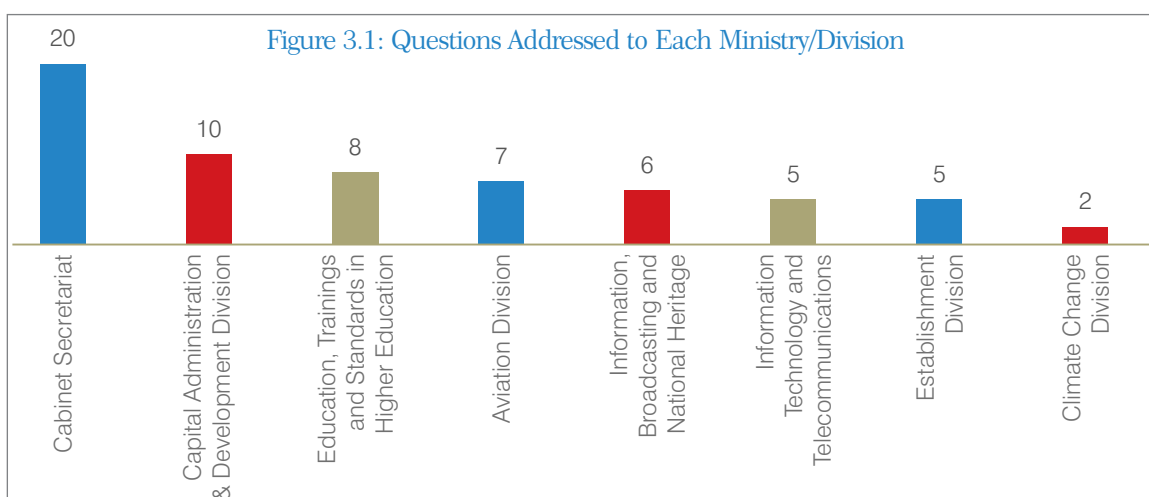
The House observed only one question hour during the budget session. The question hour in the remaining sittings was suspended under Rule 288 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the National Assembly till the passage of the Finance Bill. The members posed 63 questions (26 starred and 37 un-starred) to the government, of which 52 were fully answered. Nine questions did not receive any response while two were transferred to another ministry.

Table 3.1: Details of Questions: Party & Gender-wise Analysis

Party	Questions submitted by Female Members	Questions Submitted by Male Members	Total Questions	Female Members posing Questions	Male Members posing Questions	Total Members posing Questions
PML-N	18	7	25	9	4	13
PTI	6	10	16	2	5	7
PPPP	6	3	9	3	2	5
MQM	-	6	6		4	4
Jl	2	3	5	1	2	3
JUI-F	2	-	2	1		1
Total	34	29	63	16	17	33

Interestingly, most of the oversight was done by members of governing party (PML-N) itself as they posed 25 questions. PTI legislators submitted 16 questions, followed by PPPP (nine), MQM (six), Jl (five) and JUI-F (two).

The participation of male and female members remained equal as 17 male and 16 female lawmakers submitted the question. However, female members participated more actively as they submitted 34 (54%) questions compared to 29 (46%).



Twenty out of 63 questions were submitted to the Cabinet Secretariat Division, of which 16 received answers. CADD received 10 questions and responded to half of them, while six out of eight questions addressed to the Ministry of Education, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education were fully



answered. The Aviation Division received seven questions, followed by Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage (six), Information, Technology and Telecommunications (five), Establishment Division (five) and Climate Change Division (two).

3.2 Calling Attention Notices (CANs)

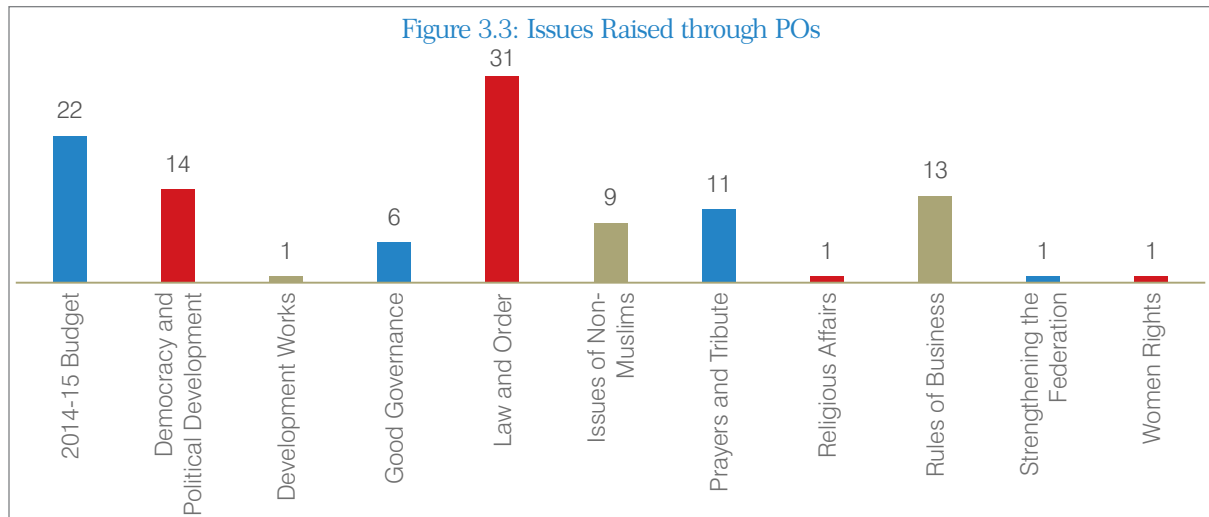
According to Rule 88 of the Rules and Procedure, “a member may, after question of privilege and adjournment motion, if any, with the previous permission of the Speaker, call the attention of a Minister to any matter of urgent public importance and the Minister may make a brief statement or ask for time to make a statement at a later hour or date: Provided that no member shall give more than one such notice for any one sitting.”

Only two CANs were moved by a male and a female member during the budget session. Both notices, directed to Cabinet Secretariat, were not taken up. A PTI lawmaker raised the issue of water shortage in Islamabad through one CAN, while another was moved by a PML-N lawmaker and highlighted shortage of teachers, non-payment of salaries to teachers working on ad-hoc basis and missing syllabus in books provided by the National Book Foundation in Islamabad model schools and colleges.

3.3 Points of Order

A Point of Order (PO) exclusively relates to the interpretation or enforcement of the Rules of Procedure. However, the members while speaking on POs mostly discuss national, regional and local issues.

The lawmakers raised 110 POs which consumed 5% of the session's time. Thirty-one POs dealt with issues of law and order, followed by the 2014-15 budget (22), democracy and political development (14), rules of business (13), prayers and tributes (11), issues of non-Muslims (nine) and good governance (six). Lawmakers also raised one PO each on women rights, strengthening the federation, religious affairs and development works.



The members condemned the killings of Pakistan Awami Tehreek workers in Model Town, Lahore on POs regarding law and order and also spoke on the murder of MQM legislator Tahira Asif, demanding an inquiry into the incident.

As many as 49 members – 40 male and nine female – spoke on the POs. Fifteen members belonged to PML-N, eight each were from PPP and PTI while six legislators from MQM, five from JUI-F, three belonging to JI, two from PkMAP, one independent member and one belonging to AMLP also spoke on the POs.

3.4 Protests, Walkouts and Boycotts

The House witnessed one protest and five walkouts that consumed 6% of the session time. An independent member from FATA, a PTI legislator and a BNP lawmaker staged separate walkouts for not getting representation in a committee established for IDPs, the Chair's disapproval to speak on the budget and insufficient time given to express views on the Finance Bill respectively.

The entire opposition staged walkouts on two occasions - once against the killings of PAT workers in Lahore and another time to condemn the attack on an MQM lawmaker. In addition, an independent member staged a protest to express his reservations on the budget and for not taking a prayer break in the first sitting.

Session Time, Members' Attendance and Participation

4

This section covers the detail of the session time as well as members' attendance, maintenance of quorum and participation of lawmakers.

4.1 Session Time

The budget session comprised 14 sittings (from June 3 to June 21, 2014) and lasted for 83 hours and 28 minutes. On average, each sitting started 32 minutes behind the scheduled time with a maximum delay of 70 minutes in the first sitting. Eleven percent of the total time was consumed in prayer breaks. The longest sitting (eleventh) observed a break of an hour and 27 minutes.

Table 4.1: Session Time and Delay

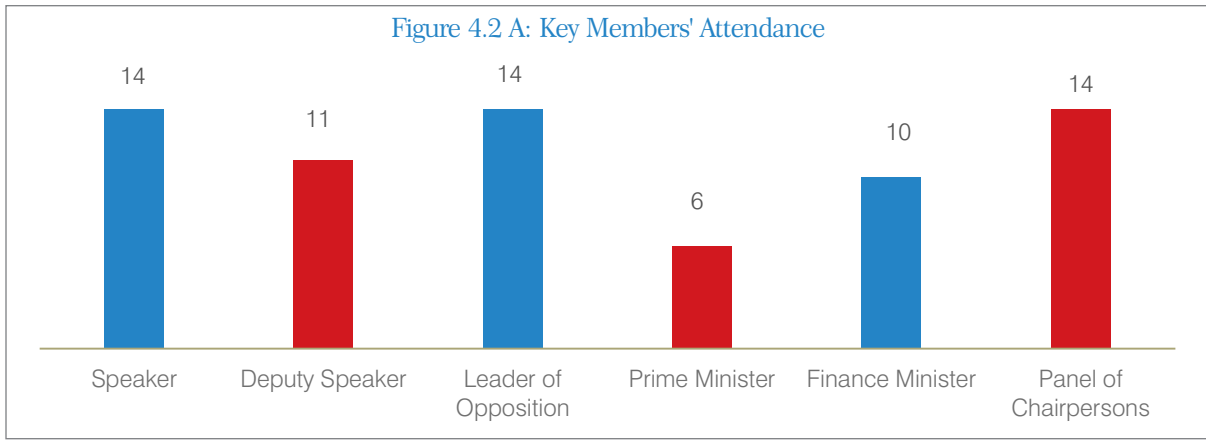
No.	Date	Delay (Minutes)	Duration	
			Hours	Minutes
1	June 3, 2014	70	2	15
2	June 6, 2014	14	1	36
3	June 9, 2014	45	2	37
4	June 10, 2014	28	7	43
5	June 11, 2014	30	6	10
6	June 12, 2014	20	6	40
7	June 13, 2014	14	7	10
8	June 14, 2014	15	6	10
9	June 16, 2014	25	6	17
10	June 17, 2014	5	9	35
11	June 18, 2014	69	10	26
12	June 19, 2014	39	9	7
13	June 20, 2014	35	0	27
14	June 21, 2014	40	7	15
Total		Average delay 32 minutes	83 hours and 28 minutes	

The session witnessed a contrast in time consumption, as the eleventh sitting lasted 10 hours and 26 minutes wherein the House discussed the demands for grants for the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs besides the Cabinet Division. On the other hand, the thirteenth sitting lasted for only 27 minutes consumed mainly by member's condolence speeches in the wake of MQM lawmaker Tahira Asif's murder.

4.2 Members' Attendance

Since the National Assembly does not make the members' attendance record public, FAFEN conducts a headcount of legislators at the beginning, at the end and at a time when maximum members are present in each sitting. The presence of the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition is also documented during the proceedings.

The Leader of the Opposition attended the entire session, while the Prime Minister attended only six out of 14 sittings. The Finance Minister attended ten sittings and remained present for 30% of the entire session. Although the Chairman was present in all sittings at some point, he presided 52% of the session. The Deputy Speaker chaired 31% of the session while the remaining proceedings were presided by the Panel of Chairpersons.

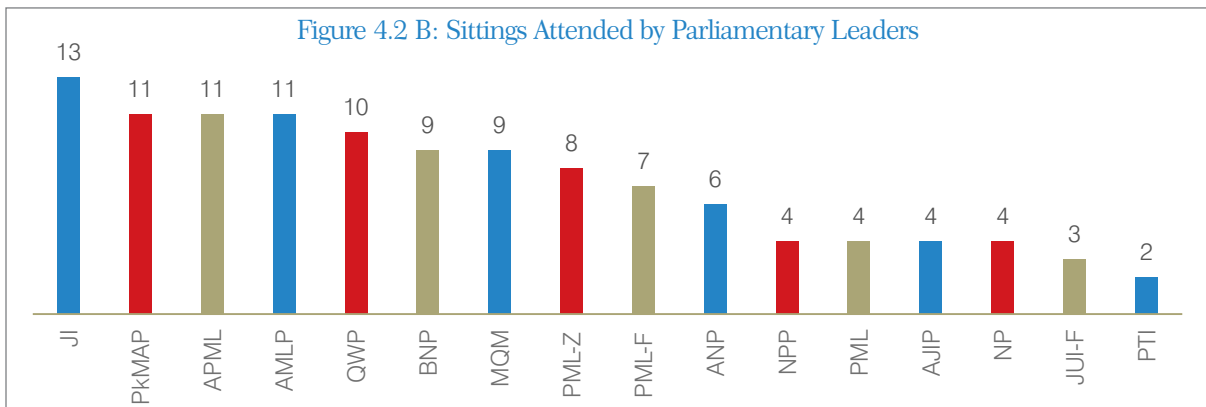


On average, 67 members (20% of 340) were present at the start of each sitting, while 72 (21%) were seen at the outset. Furthermore, only six out of the 10 non-Muslim members were present in each sitting on average.

The highest attendance of lawmakers was observed in the first sitting in which the Finance Bill was presented. The tenth sitting had the lowest presence of members as only seven lawmakers were seen at the start while 41 were present at the time of adjournment.

The parliamentary leader of JI attended 13 sittings, followed by leaders of PkMAP, APML and AMLP (11 each). The QWP leader was present in 10 sittings, followed by leaders of BNP and MQM (nine each); PML-Z (eight); PML-F (seven); ANP (six); NPP, PML, AJIP and NP (four each); JUI-F (three) and PTI (two).

Despite the low attendance, the quorum (less than 1/4th membership) was called only once by a PTI member that led to the sitting's suspension for 45 minutes.



4.3 Members' Participation

FAFEN observes the MNAs' participation against three categories; lawmakers who submit agenda, those who debate it and those who take part in both activities.

As many as 180 (53%) MNAs participated in the House proceedings during the session. Twenty-four members submitted agenda items, 69 took part in the debates while 87 took part in both activities. The members on reserved seats for women and non-Muslims were more active as 63% members participated in the assembly business as compared to 136 (nearly 50%) elected members.

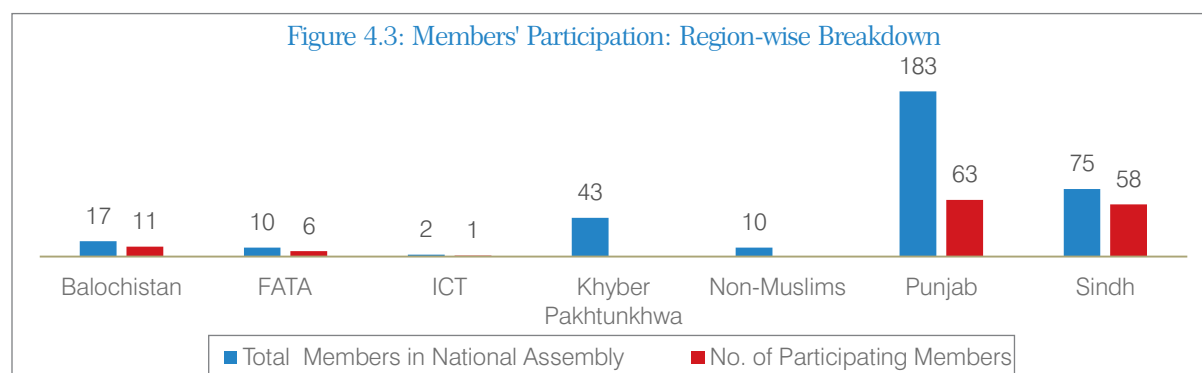
PML-N members were mostly inactive during the session as only 59 (31%) out of 190 members participated in the House business. On the other hand, 12 out of 13 JUI-F members took part in the assembly proceedings, followed by three out of four PkMAP lawmakers and both members of NPP. Three out of seven independent lawmakers and one out of five PML-F members also participated in the proceedings. Meanwhile, the sole member of National Party did not participate in the House business.

Table 4.3: Party-wise Breakdown of Members' Participation

No.	Political Party	Members Submitting Agenda Items	Members Taking Part in Debates	Members Taking Part in Both Activities	% of Members Submitting Agenda Items	% of Members Participating in Debates	% of Members Taking Part in Both Activities	Total Members in the House
1	PML-N	8	43	8	4%	23%	4%	190
2	PPPP	8	3	25	17%	7%	54%	46
3	PTI	2	7	24	6%	21%	71%	34
4	MQM	3	4	15	13%	17%	63%	24
5	JUI-F	2	4	6	15%	31%	46%	13
6	IND	0	2	1	0%	29%	14%	7
7	PML-F	0	1	0	0%	20%	0%	5
7	JI	0	0	4	0%	0%	100%	4
8	PkMAP	0	2	1	0%	50%	25%	4
9	NPP	1	1	0	50%	50%	0%	2
10	ANP	0	1	0	0%	50%	0%	2
11	PML	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	2
12	AJIP	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	1
13	AMLP	0	0	1	0%	0%	100%	1
14	APML	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	1
15	BNP	0	1	0	0%	100%	0%	1
16	NP	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	1
17	PML-Z	0	0	1	0%	0%	100%	1
18	QWP	0	0	1	0%	0%	100%	1
Total		24	69	87	7%	20%	26%	340

The opposition benches demonstrated varied participation; with 36 (78%) out of 46 PPPP lawmakers debating and submitting agenda. All PTI lawmakers except one participated in the House business besides 22 (92%) out of 24 MQM members. Furthermore, all members of JI, AMLP, BNP, PML-Z, and QWP participated in the session in one way or the other. Out of two ANP members, one shared his views on House deliberations.

Gender-wise, female lawmakers were generally more active than their male counterparts, with 44 (64%) female and 136 (50%) male lawmakers participating in the assembly business.



Despite their significant representation, lawmakers from Punjab appeared disinterested in the House business as only 63 (34%) out of 183 members participated in the House while 58 (77%) out of 75 MNAs from Sindh took part in the assembly proceedings.

Legislators from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were most active in terms of participation, with 36 (84%) out of 43 members submitting agenda and participating in the debates. Among other regions, 11 (65%) out of 17 members from Balochistan, six (60%) out of 10 legislators from FATA and five (50%) out of 10 non-Muslim members took part in the House business. Of the two members from ICT, one participated in the budget session.

GLOSSARY

Adjournment Motion

A motion to adjourn the business of the assembly for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of recent and urgent public importance.

Chairperson

In relation to a sitting, any person who is presiding at that sitting.

Calling Attention Notice

A notice by which a special question of public importance involving law and order may be raised.

Chair

The presiding officer at a meeting of the house.

Committee

A parliamentary committee constituted under rules of procedure, comprising various members of parliament.

Deputy Speaker

When the office of Speaker is vacant or Speaker is absent or is unable to perform his functions due to any cause the Deputy Speaker acts as the Speaker of the House.

Leader of the Opposition

"Leader of the Opposition" means a member who, in the opinion of the Speaker, is the leader of the majority of opposition members for a certain time period.

Legislation

The process of crafting law.

Member

A member of the assembly and for purposes of moving or opposing a bill, an amendment, a motion or a resolution, includes a minister.

Minister

May refer to the Prime Minister a Federal Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary in respect to any function delegated or entrusted to him by a minister.

Opposition

The party or parties who do not belong to the governing party.

'Orders of the Day'

"Orders of the day" means the list of business to be brought before the assembly on any day.

Point of Order

Relates to the interpretation or enforcement of parliamentary rules of business or articles of the constitution that regulate the business of the assembly. The mover of a point of order raises a question which is within the cognizance of the chair.

We wish to extend our acknowledgment to the National Assembly Website for material contributions presented in the Glossary.

Private Member's Bill

A proposed law introduced by a private member.

Proceedings

The actions taken by the house or by a committee, the most important parts of the proceedings are the decisions that are taken.

Quorum

Quorum is the minimum number of members of assembly necessary to conduct the business of the assembly. Under Article 55 of the Constitution 1/4th of the total membership of the assembly is required for quorum.

Question Hour

A time fixed under the rules for asking and answering questions.

Resolution

A motion for the purpose of discussing and expressing an opinion on a matter of general public interest.

Starred Question

A question that requires an oral answer in addition to a written reply.

Sitting

A meeting of the assembly on a day.

Table

The table of the house.



About FAFEN

Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) is a nationwide network of 42 Pakistani civil society organizations. It has been working since 2006 to strengthen democratic systems and promote active citizenship and is now governed by Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA). With its primary mandate to observe elections and seek reforms to improve the quality of elections, FAFEN managed unprecedented long-term voter education and election observation initiatives that got 20,000 Pakistani citizens from every district of the country directly involved in the general election process in 2007-08.

In 2013, FAFEN deployed more than 40,000 trained, non-partisan long- and short-term observers to monitor all phases of general election. FAFEN election observation has yielded valuable insights into the quality of the electoral process and enabled generation of critical recommendations for reforms in the constitutional, legal and procedural frameworks that govern elections in Pakistan.

In addition to its vibrant Electoral Oversight, Research and Reforms Program, FAFEN has developed innovative techniques to observe the functioning of Parliament and Provincial Assemblies in order to advocate for parliamentary reforms for a more accountable, transparent and responsive legislative governance. Under its Parliament Oversight, Research and Reforms Program, FAFEN directly observes and objectively reports on the proceedings of all elected Houses in Pakistan.

FAFEN mobilizes and facilitates citizens engagements with elected and public institutions across Pakistan as a prerequisite for strengthening democratic accountabilities as part of its Electoral Governance Oversight, Research and Reforms Program. These activities fit in with the core FAFEN's objective of promotion of active citizenry—a critical ingredient of a vibrant democratic system.



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