**FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 7 Session No. 15 of the National Assembly**

**Low Attendance NA Sitting Takes up Two CANs**

ISLAMABAD, October 29, 2014: Starting 30 minutes behind the schedule, the National Assembly continued to witness low attendance as 55 legislators (16%) were present at the start and 63 (18%) at the adjournment of 7th sitting of 15th session on Wednesday, says the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN).

The House took up two calling attention notices (CANs) regarding an alarming increase in the number of polio cases and the failure of Employees Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) to increase pension as announced by the federal government.

The Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs laid the Gas Infrastructure Development Cess Ordinance 2014. The Prime Minister and the Speaker did not attend the sitting while the Leader of the Opposition was present for an hour and 20 minutes.

Following are some key observations of the House proceedings:

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

* The National Assembly met for two hours and 20 minutes.
* The sitting began at 1130 hours against the scheduled time of 1100 hours witnessing a delay of 30 minutes.
* The Deputy Speaker chaired the sitting as the Speaker was absent.
* The Prime Minister did not attend the sitting while the Leader of the Opposition was present for an hour and 20 minutes.
* Fifty-five lawmakers (16%) were present at the outset and 63 (18%) at the adjournment while a maximum of 115 members (34%) were observed to be present at one point during the sitting.
* The parliamentary leaders of MQM, PML-Z, JI, ANP, QWP, BNP-A and APML attended the sitting.
* Seven minority members attended the sitting.
* Eleven lawmakers applied for leave.

**Output**

* The Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs laid the Gas Infrastructure Development Cess Ordinance 2014.

**Representation and Responsiveness**

* Sponsored by five PPPP female lawmakers, the House took up a CAN regarding an alarming increase in the number of polio cases in Pakistan compelling the International Monitoring Board (IMB) to advise the government to engage the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to eradicate polio virus.
* Sponsored by five PML-N lawmakers, the House took up a CAN regarding the failure of Employees Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) to increase the amount of pension as announced by the federal government.
* The House took up 10 out of 21 questions (requiring oral as well as written replies) while the members also asked 18 supplementary questions.

**Order and Institutionalization**

* One point of order consumed 19 minutes of the proceedings’ time.

**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 quorum was visibly lacking at various stages of the sitting. However, it was not pointed out by any of the legislators.

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