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**FAFEN Preliminary Report on 18th session of the National Assembly**

**NA Session: Almost Half of Agenda Left Unaddressed**

* **Prime Minister absent during entire session**
* **55 MNAs present at the start, 44 at the end of each sitting**

ISLAMABAD, February 13, 2015: The 18th session of the National Assembly concluded on Friday without passing any legislation and left 46% of its agenda unaddressed, says Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) in its preliminary report.

The session, comprising nine sittings, started on February 2 and concluded on February 13, 2015. On average, each sitting lasted two hours and 28 minutes and started with a delay of 31 minutes.

Since the National Assembly Secretariat does not share the attendance of lawmakers with the public, FAFEN conducts a headcount at the start and end of each sitting and documents the actual time spent by the members (including the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader) on the floor of the House.

Lawmakers’ attendance remained low throughout the session – with an average of 55 (16%) members present at the start and 44 (13%) at the end of each sitting. The Prime Minister did not attend any of the sittings, while the Opposition Leader was present for 59% of the proceedings in seven sittings. The sixth and ninth sittings were adjourned due to lack of quorum pointed out by PML-N and JI legislators respectively.

The Speaker presided over 68% of the session, while 28% of the proceedings were chaired by the Deputy Speaker. The House observed two prayer breaks that consumed 4% of the session.

Four private bills – namely the Pakistan Courier Services Regulatory Authority Bill 2015, the Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill 2015, the Compulsory Education of Arabic Bill 2015 and the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2015 (Amendment in Article 31) – were introduced during the session.

Additionally, three government bills – the Offences in Respect of Banks (Special Courts) (Amendment) Bill 2015, the Islamabad Subordinate Judiciary Service Tribunal Bill 2015 and the Pakistan Health Research Council Bill 2015 – were also introduced and sent to the relevant standing committees for further deliberations.

The House rejected the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2014 moved by a JUI-F lawmaker for want of two-thirds majority, while the Disabled Persons (Employment and Rehabilitation) (Amendment) Bill 2015 was not taken up during the session.

The House adopted four out of nine resolutions during the session which condemned the suicide blast in Shikarpur, expressed solidarity with the people of Kashmir and demanded the extension of Electoral Rolls (Amendment) Ordinance 2014 and Delimitation of Constituencies (Amendment) Ordinance 2014 for 120 days.

The House took up only one out of seven motions under Rule 259 to debate the situation arising from the petrol crisis in the country. Five lawmakers – one each from PML-N, PPPP, MQM, JI and PkMAP – participated in the debate for 79 minutes (6% of the session).

Seven out of 10 calling attention notices addressed to the Ministries of Finance, Railways, Cabinet Secretariat and Water and Power were taken up during the session. In addition, a report prepared by the Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Human Rights regarding the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2014 was also presented.

On the other hand, the fiscal policy statement and the debt policy statement for 2014-15 and the periodic reports of the Standing Committee on National Food Security and Research and Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination for December 2013-June 2014 were not presented during the session.

Similarly, amendments proposed to Rules 48, 69 and 112 of the National Assembly’s Rules of Procedure were also left unaddressed.

The House took up 68 out of 242 (28%) starred questions appearing on the agenda, while the lawmakers raised 92 supplementary questions during the session. The members also spoke on 69 points of orders that consumed 28% of the session.

Three walkouts and two boycotts were witnessed during the session that consumed 7% of the session time. A JUI-F lawmaker walked out of the House for two minutes to protest the rejection of the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2014. In addition, four walkouts and boycotts were jointly staged by the opposition and treasury members against the increase in GST on petroleum products.

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