**FAFEN Daily Factsheet: Sitting No. 1 of the 4th Joint Session of Parliament**

**Joint Sitting of Parliament Discusses Yemen crisis**

ISLAMABAD, April 6, 2015: Starting 45 minutes behind the schedule, the joint session of the Parliament debated the security situation arising out due to the crisis in Yemen during its first sitting on Monday, says the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN).

Adopting a motion sponsored by the Minister for Defence, the House debated the Yemen crisis for two hours and 23 minutes. Six lawmakers, including the Defence Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Parliamentary Leaders of MQM, JUI-F and Deputy Parliamentary Leader of PTI in the National Assembly and Minister for SAFRON, took part in the debate.

The Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, Chairman Senate, and the Deputy Chairman Senate, among others, attended the sitting.

Following are some key observations of the parliamentary business:

**Members’ Participation in House Proceedings**

* The joint sitting lasted four hours.
* The sitting started at 1145 hours against the scheduled time of 1100 hours, witnessing a delay of 45 minutes. It was adjourned at 1240 hours to meet again at 1700 hours.
* The proceedings resumed at 1741 and continued till 2046 hours.
* The House had a prayer break of an hour and 29 minutes.
* The Speaker chaired the entire sitting while the Deputy Speaker was not present. The Chairman Senate attended the sitting for 108 minutes while the Deputy Chairman for 68 minutes.
* The Prime Minister and his counterpart, the Leader of the Opposition, attended the sitting for 57 minutes and 236 minutes respectively. The Leader of the House in the Senate attended the sitting for two hours and 112 minutes while the Leader of the Opposition in Senate was present for three hours and one minute.
* Two-hundred and forty five legislators (55% of the total membership of 446 – 342 in NA and 104 in Senate) were present at the outset of the sitting while 93 (21%) were there at the time of adjournment. A maximum of 352 members (79%) were observed to be present at one point during the sitting.
* The Parliamentary Leaders of PML-F, PTI, APML, ANP, AMLP, BNP, JI, PML, JUI-F, QWP, MQM, PkMAP and PML-Z in the National Assembly attended the sitting.
* Nine minority lawmakers attended the proceedings.
* None of the legislators applied for leave.

**Representation and Responsiveness**

* Adopting a motion sponsored by the Minister for Defence, the House debated the Yemen crisis for two hours and 23 minutes.
* Six lawmakers, including the Defence Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Parliamentary Leaders of MQM, JUI-F and Deputy Parliamentary Leader of PTI in National Assembly and Minister for SAFRON, took part in the debate.

**Order and Institutionalization**

* Thirteen points of order consumed 48 minutes of the sitting time.
* MQM lawmakers resorted to walkout at 1810 hours, urging the Speaker not to let the PTI lawmakers sit in the House as they had already submitted their resignations in August 2014. However, they returned to the House at 1915 hours.
* JUI-F lawmakers walked out from the House at 1935 hours on the same issue. They left the House and did not return when the PTI Deputy Parliamentary Leader was allowed to speak on the Yemen crisis.

**Transparency**

* Information on members’ attendance was not available to the observers and the public.

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