

3 Bills Passed, 5 Resolutions Adopted



29th Session Report

National Assembly of Pakistan

February 12-26, 2016

The National Assembly passed three government bills, adopted five resolutions and discussed two Motions under Rule 259 during 29th session which was prorogued on Friday. The Prime Minister also visited the House once after three months. The session was requisitioned by the Opposition to discuss the matters related to privatization of Pakistan International Airlines and reduction in the petroleum prices while the session continued from February 12 to February 26, 2015.

Session Time, Attendance and Agenda

The House met for 36 hours spanning over 11 sittings, including two Private Members' days and addressed three quarters of the

agenda listed on the Orders of Day. The Speaker presided over 42% of the session while the Deputy Speaker chaired 49% of the proceeding. A member of Panel of Chairpersons also presided over for three percent of the session time. The remaining five percent of the time was consumed in prayer breaks and suspensions due to lack of quorum. The Deputy Speaker attended the entire session while the Speaker and the Leader of the Opposition each were present in eight sittings. There were 39 lawmakers present at start and 46 at adjournment of each sitting on average. While the Prime Minister attended the 8th sitting for 40 minutes.

**Prime Minister
attended one
sitting during
the session.**

Legislation

The House passed three government bills in last two sittings of the session, including the National University of Sciences and Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2016, the Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government (Amendment) Bill, 2015, and the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Bill, 2015. The government also laid before the Assembly the Private Power and Infrastructure Board (Amendment) Ordinance, 2015. The lawmakers belonging to MQM introduced three Private Members' bills, including the Dowry and Bridal Gifts (Restriction) (Amendment) Bill, 2016, the Service Tribunals (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and the National Commission on the Status of Women (Amendment) Bill, 2016. These bills were sent to relevant standing committees for further deliberations.

Resolutions

The House adopted three government and two Private Members' resolutions while three Private Members' resolutions were not taken up due to absence of relevant lawmakers. The Assembly granted 120 days' extension to the Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government (Amendment) Ordinance, 2015 and the Special Economic Zones

(Amendment) Ordinance, 2015 through two separate resolutions. The House also resolved to work wholeheartedly for implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. Through Private Members' resolution, the House recommended the government to establish a NADRA registration center at new Sabzimandi Bhadal, District Sialkot and start PIA flights for all districts of Balochistan.

Reports

The government laid four documents before the House, including the Quarterly Report of the State Bank on Economy of Pakistan, the Annual Report of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan for the year 2014-2015, the Scheme of Amalgamation of KASB Bank Limited with Bank Islami Pakistan Limited and the Fiscal and Debt Policy Statements for the year 2015-2016. The Standing Committees of the National Assembly also presented six periodical performance reports and two reports on legislative proposals.

Amendments in Rules of Procedure

The House approved an amendment moved by MQM to amend sub-rule (4) of Rule 225 of the Rules of Procedure concerning the

number of lawmakers required to requisition the meeting of a committee of the House. Following the amendment, one fourth of total membership of a committee may requisition a meeting of that committee. Another motion to amend the Rule 18 was defeated in the House.

Motions under Rule 259

There were six Motions under Rule 259 on the agenda but the House discussed only two. The remaining four motions could not be discussed due to the absence of relevant lawmakers. Moved by PPPP lawmaker, the House discussed situation arising out of non-reduction of oil prices in accordance with the International Market and implementation of The Pakistan Essential Services (Maintenance) Act, 1952 in Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). Eighteen lawmakers took part in the discussion that consumed seven hours and 39 minutes and spread over four sittings. The House also took up a motion regarding increasing pollution in the country and six lawmakers discussed it for 17 minutes.

Motion of Thanks

According to the Assembly's Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, the President's Address to the Parliament may be discussed by means of a motion of

thanks. A motion of thanks to the President for his address to the Parliament on June 4, 2014 was pending on the agenda of the House since July last year. However, the discussion on the motion concluded during this session. Eight lawmakers discussed the motion for 89 minutes in two sittings.

Questions

Legislators asked 573 questions during 29th session, including 337 starred and 236 unstarred. The rules require the government to answer a starred question orally as well as in writing while the unstarred questions are to be replied only in writing. However, the National Assembly took up only one quarter (87) of the starred questions appearing on the agenda. Meanwhile, only 60% (142) of 236 unstarred questions were replied. The questions of legislators were addressed to 34 government ministries and departments with highest number of questions to the Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control (86) followed by Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatization (63), Petroleum and Natural Resources (50), Capital Administration and Development Division (40), Foreign Affairs (38).

The legislators belonging to PPPP asked 165 questions, PML-N (127), PTI (99), MQM (93), JI (43), JUI-F (27), PkMAP (3) and

AJIP (1). The independent legislators also asked 15 questions. All these questions were asked by only 62 members, including 30 males and 32 females.

Calling Attention Notices

The House took up 18 Calling Attention Notices (CANs) on matters relating to health, commerce, security, development, education, census, housing and availability of clean drinking water. The concerned ministers or parliamentary secretaries made statements on the issues raised through CANs.

Points of Order

Lawmakers raised 114 Points of Order consuming five hours and 14 minutes. They discussed various issues related to the governance, security, development and business of the House.

Quorum

The legislators belonging to PTI pointed out quorum thrice during the session. The sitting was adjourned on two occasions while once the proceeding remained suspended for 25 minutes. A PPPP lawmaker also pointed out quorum once but it was found complete on counting.

Walkout

The House witnessed 10 instances of walkouts during the session. The Opposition parties jointly staged three walkouts against the killing of PPPP worker in Azad Jammu & Kashmir and the partisan behavior of the Deputy Speaker. The fourth largest parliamentary party MQM staged three walkouts independently against increase in medicine's prices, delay in completion of development projects in Karachi and ban on media to broadcast the speeches of party's Chief Altaf Hussain. Three lawmakers belonging to treasury parties PML-N, JUI-F and PML-F also walked out during last sitting for reservations against the government. Meanwhile, the parliamentary party of QWP-S also staged one walkout.



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