



FAFEN Parliament Monitor

PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF BALOCHISTAN

Twenty Ninth Session

(09 - 28 December 2012)

Executive Summary

The 29th Session¹ of the Balochistan Assembly from December 12-28, 2011 saw no more than 25% of the total Members attend any of the sittings. On average, only 12 of the 65 Members attended each sitting.

There were wide time-variations in the duration of the sittings; the longest spanning an hour and 18 minutes and the shortest lasting only 10 minutes. Each sitting, on average, started 44 minutes late.

The participation of Members was also low because 43% of the total Members neither brought any agenda item nor participated in debates.

Twenty five Starred questions were submitted of which 14 were addressed while 11 were not taken up. All questions were submitted by PML. Of the total questions, five each were directed to Balochistan Water and Sanitation Agency (B-WASA) and Balochistan Development Authority; four each to the Ministry of Finance, Public Health Engineering and Secondary Education and three to the Transport Department.

The Assembly adopted one resolution moved by the government on the murder of Hafiz Ahmed Qamar in Karachi.

Sixty-two Points of Order were raised that consumed 93% of the total time. The Like Minded Group raised the highest number of 14 Points of Order, followed by JUI (12), PPPP (9), IND (8), BNPA (6), JUI and PML (5 each), ANP (2) and PMLN (1).

Under the Assembly rules, a Member can raise a Point of Order to point out any violation of the rules and procedure or to seek enforcement of certain rules required to regulate the business of the House. The Chair is required to give a ruling on it.

FAFEN categorized the Points of Order raised in 14 different subjects, of which the highest, 19, were related to the law and order situation. Eight Points of Order were regarding the performance of the communication and health departments while seven were about minority rights.

Moreover, four Points of Order were on democracy, three on energy crisis, two each on conduct of the House, criticism on PMLN, development funds, Frontier Corps and performance of the Punjab Assembly and one each on attendance of Members, Education (Madrassahs) and NATO forces.

¹ FAFEN observers were unable to observe the first sitting of the session.

The Assembly witnessed two boycotts/protests/walkouts. The National Party protested 20 minutes during the third sitting the murder of Dr Naseer Baloch while the Independent Members and the Like Minded Group walked out of the fourth sitting for three minutes over the judicial killings of Baloch people in the province.

Introduction

An essential component of democracy is publicly accessible information about the political decision-making processes, such as parliamentary deliberations among elected representatives. Citizens must have information about whether and how their representatives are performing in the Parliament in order to hold those elected leaders accountable.

The Parliament Watch Project (PWP), launched in 2008, aims at generating objective and statistically-sound information on parliamentary performance to foster informed engagement between the constituents and their elected representatives. Universal access to information on national legislative processes is an essential component of democracy. A society cannot be truly democratic until constituents know about the person they are voting for, and whether or not the elected representatives are fulfilling their responsibilities. Since there is a dearth of publicly accessible information on the political decision-making processes, such as parliamentary deliberations, the PWP is an effort to bridge this gap. This report will be a contribution towards creating a more informed citizenry and an increasingly responsible Parliament.

The PWP employs direct observation as one of the tools to evaluate parliamentary proceedings with the following indicators:

Transparency: Government's accountability requires transparency in decision-making and policy implementation. Transparency refers to the amount and quality of information available to the public as well as timely and clear information communicated within legislative bodies themselves. Inclusive and strong decisions can only be made when all legislators are well-informed on parliamentary proceedings.

Participation: Only the active and responsible participation of all the Members can make the business of Parliament meaningful. The participation can be judged through various indicators like attendance of parliamentary leaders and other Members and their active involvement in parliamentary discussion and activities.

Responsiveness: Parliament's responsiveness means Members' collective actions on the issues of public interests which are raised and discussed on the floor of the House through Legislation, Resolutions or any other agenda item. Responsiveness of Government to the public is measured in terms of parliamentary oversight and effective implementation of policy decisions. Parliament's executive oversight function is mainly carried out through Questions and parliamentary committees.

Parliamentary Output: Parliamentary output primarily comes in the form of Legislation and Resolutions. The quantity of such output is indicative of Parliament's efficiency. The quality of output is equally important. Considering Legislation on matters of national significance through careful debate and discussion is arguably a Parliament's chief and most important function.

Order and Institutionalization: Order and institutionalization of Members are important for an efficient and productive Parliament. Order may be measured, for example, by the conduct of Members and the Chair's effective management of parliamentary business. Institutionalization refers to Members' understanding and compliance with rules of procedure for parliamentary business.



This report is based on direct observation of proceedings of Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, conducted by CPD, a member organisation of FAFEN.

1. Session Time and Attendance

1.1 Session Time

The 29th session lasted four hours and 17 minutes. Wide time variations were observed in the duration of the sittings, the longest spanning an hour and 18 minutes and the shortest lasting only 10 minutes.

None of the seven sittings started on time with each, on average starting 44 minutes late.

Sr. #	Day	Date	Sitting No.	Delays	Hours	Minutes
1.	Monday	12th December 2011	1st	-	-	-
2.	Thursday	15th December 2011	2nd	42	1	18
3.	Saturday	17th December 2011	3rd	60	0	20
4.	Tuesday	20th December 2011	4th	55	0	52
5.	Friday	23th December 2011	5th	35	0	30
6.	Monday	26th December 2011	6th	15	0	10
7.	Wednesday	28th December 2011	7th	58	1	7
Total				Average 44 Minutes	4 Hours and 17 Minutes	

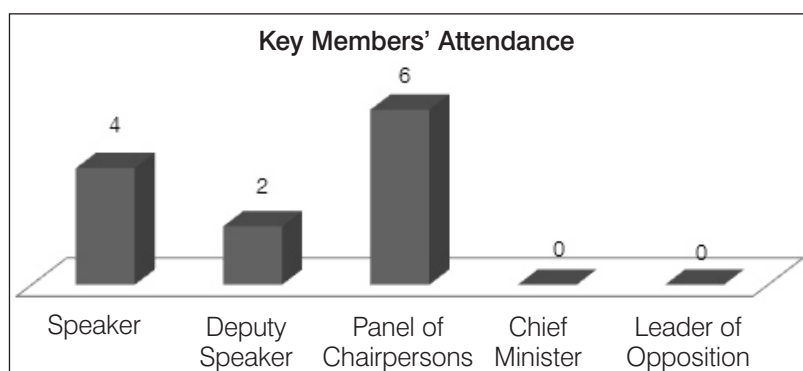
1.2 Members' Attendance

No more than 25% of the total 65 Members of the Assembly were present in any of the sittings. Since the record about Members' attendance is not made public, FAFEN conducts a headcount at the start and end of each sitting. On average, 12 Members were present in every sitting.

Sitting No.	Members Present at the Outset of the Sitting	Members at the End of the Sitting
1st	-	-
2nd	14	15
3rd	13	14
4th	16	13
5th	10	12
6th	2	2
7th	14	15
Average	12	12

1.3 Attendance of Key Members

Among key Members, those from the Panel of Chairpersons attended the most sittings (6), followed by the Speaker who attended four and the Deputy Speaker was present in two of the six sittings. The Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition did not attend any of the sittings.



2. Members' Participation by Party

Of the 65 Members in the Balochistan Assembly, 3% brought agenda items, 34% participated in debates while 20% not only brought agenda items but also took part in debates. Party-wise breakup shows that of the two Members who brought agenda items, one was

from PPPP while the other belonged to ANP. Of the 22 Members who only participated in debates, the highest (6) were from the Like-Minded Group, five from PPPP, four represented BNPA, three were from PML, two were Independent Members and one from PMLN.

Six Members from JUI, three from the Like-Minded Group and one each representing PPPP, PML, ANP and JUI (Ideological) brought agenda items and also participated in debates.

Party	Members Who Only Brought Agenda Items	Members Who Only Took Part in Debates	Members Who Participated in Debates and Brought Agenda Items	Percentage of Members Who Only Brought Agenda Items	Percentage of Members Who Only Participated in Debates	Percentage of Members Who Brought Agenda Items and Participated in Debates	Total No. of Members in Assembly by Party
Independent	0	2	0	0%	33%	0%	6
PPPP	1	5	1	7%	33%	7%	15
BNPA	0	4	0	0%	57%	0%	7
PMLN	0	1	0	0%	100%	0%	1
PML	0	3	1	0%	60%	20%	5
ANP	1	0	1	33%	0%	33%	3
JUI	0	1	6	0%	10%	60%	10
Like Minded Group	0	6	3	0%	46%	23%	13
PML (Opted Opposition Benches)	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	1
Independents (Opposition)	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	2
JUI (Ideological)	0	0	1	0%	0%	100%	1
NP	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	1
Total	2	22	13	3%	34%	20%	65

3. Resolutions

During the 29th Session, the Assembly adopted a Resolution about murder of Hafiz Ahmed Qamar in Karachi.

4. Questions and Responses

During the Session a total of 25 Starred questions were submitted, all of them by PML. Of the total questions, five each were directed to B-WASA and Balochistan Development Authority; four each to the Ministry of Finance, Public Health Engineering and Secondary Education and three to the Transport Department.

Fourteen questions were responded to by the respective ministries while 11 questions were not taken up.

The Transport Department, Ministry of Secondary Education and Ministry of Finance responded to all the questions directed to them. The Balochistan Development Authority answered one of the five questions, the Ministry of Public Health and Engineering responded to two of the four questions while there was no response from B-WASA to any of the five Starred questions.

Sr. No.	Ministry	Starred	Full Response	No Response	Total
1.	B-WASA	5	0	5	5
2.	Balochistan Development Authority	5	1	4	5
3.	Finance	4	4	0	4
4.	Public Health Engineering	4	2	2	4
5.	Secondary Education	4	4	0	4
6.	Transport Department	3	3	0	3
Total		25	14	11	25

5. Points of Order

Under the Assembly rules, a Member can raise a Point of Order to point out any violation of the rules and procedure or to seek enforcement of certain rules required to regulate the business of the House. The Chair is required to give a ruling on it.

As many as 238 minutes were consumed on the 62 Points of Order raised during the session - an average of four minutes per Point

of Order. Ninety three percent of the total Session time, (257 minutes) was spent on discussions on Points of Order. The most Points of Order (21) were raised during the second sitting while none was raised during the sixth.

Sitting No.	Points of Order	Time Consumed
1st	-	-
2nd	21	78
3rd	6	18
4th	12	52
5th	10	30
6th	0	0
7th	13	60
Total	62	238 (Minutes)

6. Themes Raised in Points of Order

The Members raised 62 Points of Order during the session. These were on 14 different issues, of which the highest, 19, related to the law and order situation. Eight Points of Order were regarding the performance of the communication and health departments while seven were about minority rights.

Moreover, four Points of Order were on democracy, three on energy crisis, two each on conduct of the house, criticism on PMLN, development funds, Frontier Corps and performance of the Punjab Assembly and one each on attendance of Members, Madrassahs and NATO forces.

Party-wise breakup shows that of the 62 Points of Order, the Like-Minded Group raised the highest number of 14, followed by JUI (12), PPPP (9), IND (8), BNPA (6), JUI and PML (5 each), ANP (2) and PMLN (1).

Sr. #	List of Issues	ANP	BNPA	IND	JUI	JUI (Ideological)	Like Minded Group	PML	PMLN	PPPP	Total
1.	Attendance of Members			1							1
2.	Communication		2				4	1		1	8
3.	Conduct of the House	1		1							2
4.	Criticism on PMLN	1	1								2
5.	Democracy								1	3	4
6.	Development Funds				1		1				2
7.	Energy			1	1			1			3
8.	Frontier Corps (FC)				2						2
9.	Health		1	1	2			1		3	8
10.	Law and Order		1	3	4	3	6	2			19
11.	Madrassahs (Education)					1					1
12.	Minority Rights				2		3			2	7
13.	NATO Forces					1					1
14.	Performance of the Punjab Assembly		1	1							2
Total		2	6	8	12	5	14	5	1	9	62

1. Protests, Boycotts and Walkouts

The Balochistan Assembly witnessed a walkout and a protest during the session. The National Party protested 20 minutes during the third sitting the murder of Dr Naseer Baloch while the Independent Members and the Like-Minded Group walked out of the fourth sitting for three minutes over the judicial killings of Baloch people in the province.

Sitting No.	Party	Reason	Time (Minutes)	Protest/Walkout/ Boycott
3rd	NP	The recent killing of Dr. Naseer Baloch	20	Protest
4th	IND Like Minded Group	Judicial killings of Baloch people in Balochistan.	3	Walkout
Total				23 Minutes

About FAFEN

Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), established in 2006, is a coalition of 42 leading civil society organizations, working to strengthen all forms of democratic accountabilities in Pakistan. Governed by Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA), FAFEN's key achievements are:

- Observed the public display of Pakistan's draft electoral rolls and conducted the country's first statistically-valid voters' list audit in 2007
- Deployed more than 18,829 trained, neutral Election Day observers nationwide to watch the February 18, 2008 polls and 264 long-term observers to monitor the pre-election process
- Fielded long-term observers nationwide and published 19 pre-election reports
- For the February 18, 2008, General Elections, FAFEN conducted 260 simultaneous Parallel Vote Tabulations (PVTs)- the largest effort in the world
- Conducted its first survey, Constituents Aspirations Survey, in December 2008 with a sample size of 3,124 respondents to get the description of the state of public opinion and also to get a deeper understanding of the values, attitudes and beliefs of people living in the constituencies
- Conducted mapping of organizations working for human rights within Pakistan
- Observed general elections at Gilgit-Baltistan in 2009 and by-elections in various constituencies of the Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2010
- Implemented a unique methodology to observe parliamentary proceedings under its Parliamentary Watch Project
- Monitors public institutions across Pakistan and issues monthly reports on the state and performance of educational, health and other local level institutions. In addition, monthly reports on prices, crimes, incidence of disease, caseload in lower courts and political and electoral violence are issued

FAFEN continues to implement robust programs in-between elections related to monitoring parliamentary affairs, connecting constituents to their elected representatives, monitoring the performance of public and elected institutions and advocating electoral and democratic reforms. FAFEN is also monitoring political and electoral violence, peace activities and promoting active citizenry through ongoing civic education activities across the country. FAFEN is currently implementing Supporting Transparency, Accountability and Electoral Processes in Pakistan in 200 National Assembly constituencies in 119 districts across Pakistan.

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