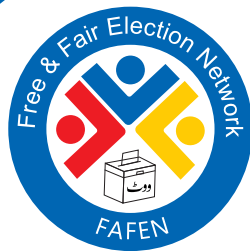


PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF PUNJAB

# FAFEN PARLIAMENT MONITOR

9<sup>th</sup> SESSION

April 22 – May 3, 2019



**FREE AND FAIR ELECTION NETWORK**

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Session  
Number

9

Working  
Days

12

Actual  
Sittings

9

Working  
Hours

14

Hours & 14 Minutes

# Punjab Assembly Addresses 93% Agenda during Ninth Session

## ■ 78% Lawmakers Remain Inactive during Session

Nearly 78% of the legislators did not participate in the proceedings of the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab during ninth session that continued between April 22 and May 03, 2019.

As many as 81 lawmakers or 22 percent of the total 369 including 23 women and 58 men participated in the proceedings of the House by contributing to the agenda and/or participating in debates. The participating lawmakers included 46 of PML-N, 25 of PTI, five of PPPP, four of PML and one of PRHP.

The remaining 288 (78 percent) lawmakers including 50 women did not participate in the proceedings throughout the session. The non-participating members included 158 members belonging to PTI, followed by PML-N (118), PML (six), four independent lawmakers and PPPP (two).

The House addressed 93 percent of its scheduled business during the session which included nine government bills, an amendment to the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, five resolutions, nine Calling Attention Notices (CANs), as many Adjournment Motions (AMs), four Zero Hour Notices, two Privilege Motions (PMs) and 79 starred questions. Additionally, the House adopted a supplementary resolution during the proceedings.

The House spent three hours and three minutes (21 percent) on Points of Order discussing issues related to governance, law and order and House business.

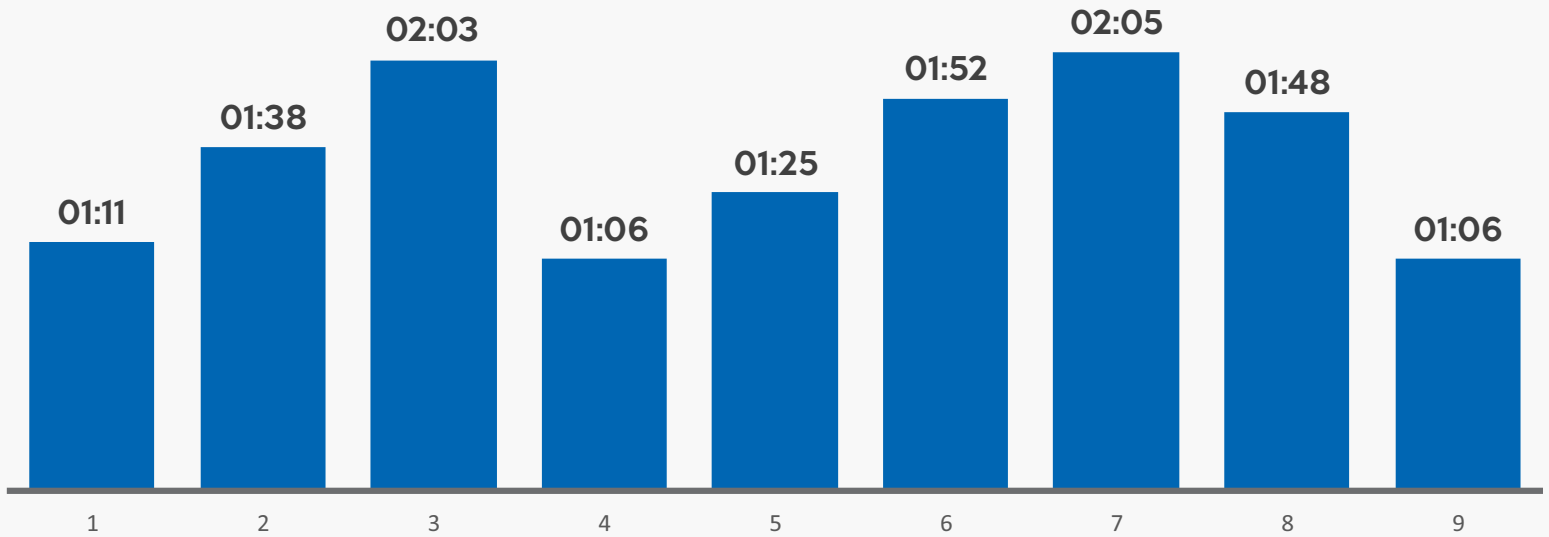
As many as 210 lawmakers, on average, were marked present during each sitting of the ninth session. The opposition lawmakers staged four protests and two walkouts over the issues related to business of the House, suspension of House membership of a PML-N lawmaker and interruption of treasury lawmakers during a PML-N lawmaker's Point of Order. Moreover, they identified the quorum six times that led to suspension of the proceedings for 34 minutes and an early adjournment of sitting.

### 1 Session, Duration and Attendance

According to the headcount conducted by FAFEN observer, an average of 55 (15 percent) lawmakers, were present at the start and 100 (27 percent) at the adjournment of each sitting. The cumulative duration of the sittings was 14 hours and 14 minutes. Each sitting, on average, started an hour and 54 minutes behind the scheduled time and lasted an hour and 35 minutes.

The Speaker attended five sittings and presided over the session for six hours and 59 minutes (49 percent of the proceedings) while the Deputy Speaker attended six sitting sand chaired the session for four hours and 31 minutes (32

# SITTINGS DURATION (hh:mm)



## KEY MEMBERS ATTENDANCE

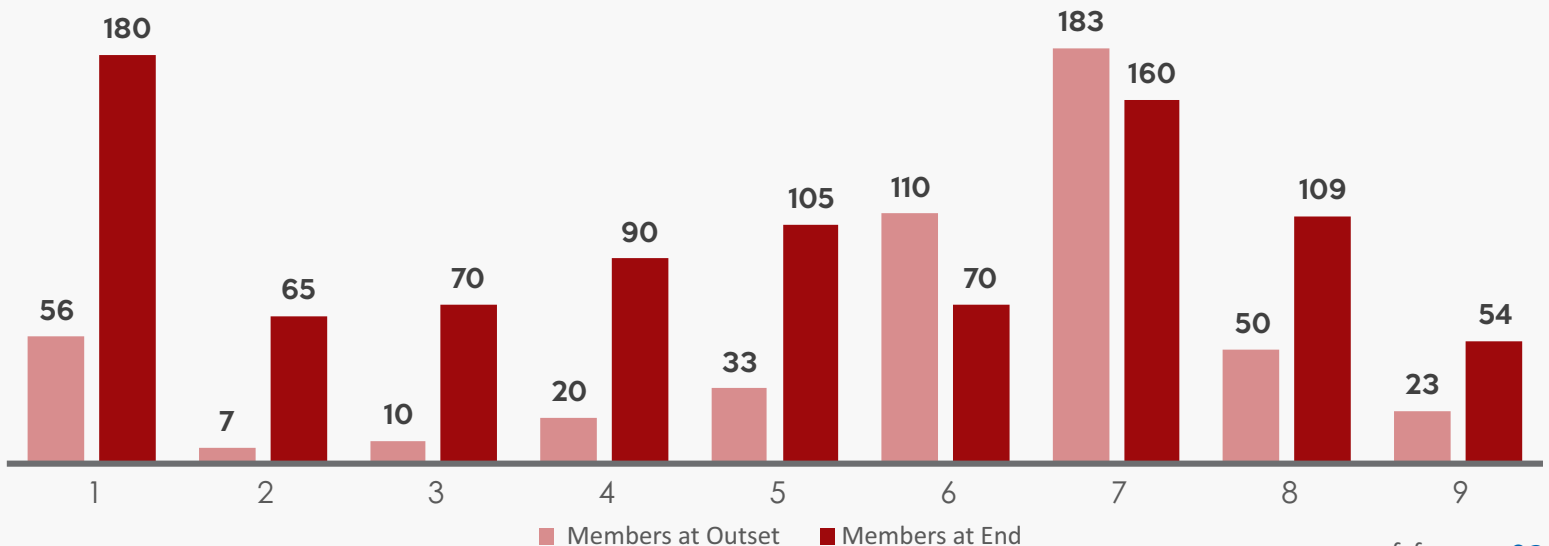


\* A member of Panel of Chairpersons presided for two hours & 44 minutes (19% of the proceedings).

## PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS ATTENDANCE



## MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE



Average Delay

1

Hour & 54 Minutes

Members at Outset (Average)

55  
present

Members at End (Average)

100  
present

Maximum Members (Average)

210

percent of the proceedings). In addition, a Member of Panel of Chairpersons belonging to PTI chaired the session for two hours and 44 minutes (19 percent of the proceedings).

The Leader of the House (Chief Minister) did not attend any sitting during the session while the Leader of the Opposition remained present in one sitting for 55 minutes (six percent of the total proceedings).

The parliamentary leader of PPPP attended seven sittings while the sole member of PRHP was present in six sittings. Other political parties in the House including PML, PML-N and PTI have not notified their parliamentary leaders so far.

## 2 Assembly Output

This section deals with the legislative business, resolutions, amendment to the rules, reports and documents presented before the House during the session.

### 2.1 Legislation

The legislative business of ninth session comprised six government bills and two ordinances. According to the Rule 91 (6) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Punjab Assembly, Ordinance laid before the Assembly under clause (2) of Article 128 of the Constitution shall be deemed to be a Bill.

The House approved two bills while six were referred to the relevant committees for further consideration. A brief description of the passed bills is as follows:

#### 2.1.1 Passed Government Bills

##### 1 The Punjab Local Government Bill, 2019

This bill aims at reconstituting and revamping local government system in Punjab and to assign develop political, administrative and financial responsibility and authority to the elected representatives of the local government.

**Date of Introduction:** April 22, 2019

**Date of Presentation of Committee Report:** April 26, 2019

**Date of Consideration and Passage:** April 30, 2019

##### 2 The Punjab Village Panchayats and Neighbourhood Councils Bill, 2019

This bill aims at institutionalizing and strengthening civic engagement for non-political action in Punjab by constituting village Panchayats and urban neighbourhood councils.

**Date of Introduction:** April 22, 2019

**Date of Presentation of Committee Report:** April 26, 2019

**Date of Consideration and Passage:** April 30, 2019



8

Total Bills

2

Government Bills

2

Ordinance Introduced

6

Government Bills Introduced

### 2.1.2 Introduced Government Bills

The House witnessed introduction of four government bills in the House and a brief description of the passed bills is as follows:

#### 1 The Punjab Minimum Wages Bill, 2019

This bill provides for consolidation of laws regulating minimum rates of wages for workers in various categories.

- **Date of Introduction:** April 22, 2018
- **Status:** Referred to concerned Standing Committee

#### 2 The Alternative Dispute Resolution Bill, 2019

This bill aims at ensuring inexpensive and expeditious justice system by means of an alternative dispute resolution system.

- **Date of Introduction:** April 22, 2018
- **Status:** Introduced and Referred to concerned Standing Committee

#### 3 The Punjab Animal Health Bill, 2019

This bill provides for prevention, control, containment and eradication of animal diseases to meet the international standards of import and export of animals and animal products.

- **Date of Introduction:** April 22, 2018
- **Status:** Introduced and Referred to concerned Standing Committee

#### 4 The Provincial Employees' Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 2019

It aims to protect the wages of the employees as determined by the government.

- **Date of Introduction:** April 22, 2018
- **Status:** Introduced and Referred to concerned Standing Committee

#### 5 The Punjab Zakat and Ushr (Amendment) Bill, 2019

It provides to cater the situation when the tenure of district Zakat and Ushr committee expires and assigns the functions of such Committee to the Deputy Commissioner or any other officer in the district administration in BPS 18 or above.

- **Date of Introduction:** April 22, 2018
- **Status:** Introduced and Referred to concerned Standing Committee

#### 6 The Punjab Medical Teaching Institutions Reforms Bill, 2019

It provides for improved medical education and to enhance responsiveness and efficiency for provision of quality healthcare services in public sector hospitals.

- **Date of Introduction:** April 29, 2018
- **Status:** Introduced and Referred to concerned Standing Committee

1

Amendment  
Taken Up

6

Total  
Resolutions

3

Resolutions  
Adopted

23

Reports  
Presented

## 2.2 Amendment in the Rules of Procedure

The House approved an amendment in the Rules of Procedure of Assembly moved by Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs. A brief description of the amendment is as following:

### **Establishment of Public Accounts Committees for Local Governments:**

The House approved amendments in Rule 176, 177 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, 1997 providing for constitution of a separate Public Accounts Committee for the Local Governments.

### **Meetings of Public Accounts Committees:**

The House approved amendment in Rule 179 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly that meetings of the PAC shall be conducted on every tenth day of the month to dispose of the pending business of the committee. For meeting more than three days a week, it will have to seek approval from Speaker.

## 2.3 Resolutions

The private members moved six resolutions during the session. The House adopted three of these resolutions while remaining three resolutions were deferred due to absence of the relevant ministers.

Two of the adopted resolutions condemned the incident of terrorism in Sri Lanka and anti-Islamic content in O-level books while another resolution demanded the federal government to ensure respect of Islamic teachings on television channels while broadcasting programs during the Holy month of Ramadan.

Three other deferred resolutions sought exemption to senior citizens from paying public transport fares, increase in the rates of fertilizers and restriction on private educational institutions from copying identical uniforms, books and stationery with other schools. The private members' resolutions were moved by lawmakers belonging to PTI and PML-N.

## 2.4 Reports

The House witnessed presentation of 22 audit reports during the session. These reports on previous government's development projects were referred to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) for further review.

Moreover, the Standing Committee on Local Government and Community Development presented its report on the Punjab Local Government Bill, 2019 and the Punjab Village Panchayats and Neighbourhood Councils Bill, 2019. The House also granted two-month extension to the Special Committee-II for presenting report about its overall business addressed so far. The House did not take up three other reports appearing on the agenda.

123

Starred Questions

150

Supplementary Questions

44

Questions Not Taken Up

20

Question Disposed of

### 3 Representation, Responsiveness and Government Oversight

This section gives statistical as well as qualitative overview of legislator's interventions in the House – Calling Attention Notices (CANs), Questions, Adjournment Motions (AM) or any other motions – for the oversight of government and to articulate issues of public interest and importance.

#### 3.1 Questions

According to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Punjab Assembly, the first hour of a sitting of the House is reserved for asking and answering of question by the members.

The List of Questions scheduled for answers during the session included 123 Starred Questions. A Starred Question requires oral as well as written reply. The House took up 58 (47 percent) Starred Questions for oral answers during the nine Question Hours held during the session. Of the remaining 65 questions, 20 (16 percent) were not discussed during the proceedings due to absence of the movers or the concerned ministers, while 44 (36 percent) were not taken up due to shortage of time. The remaining questions were kept pending till the prorogation of the session. In addition, the lawmakers asked 150 supplementary questions.

The questions appearing on the list were addressed to nine departments of the government and their break-up was as following:

Ministry/Department	Questions
Primary and Secondary Health Care Department	23
Schools Education Department	21
Higher Education Department	16
Forestry, Wild Life and Fisheries and Information and Culture Department	15
Local Government and Community Development Department	13
Food Department	12
Housing, Urban Development and Public Health Engineering	11
Agriculture Department	6
Industries, Commerce and Investment Department	6

#### 3.2 Call Attention Notices

The Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs responded to six out of nine Call Attention Notices (CANs) appearing on the agenda. These CANs were related to law and order situation in the province and highlighted the crime incidents in Kasur and Sargodha, Lahore, Rajanpur and Sahiwal.

Three of the CANs, appearing on the agenda were disposed of due to absence of the movers. These notices were regarding robbery and murder incidents in Lahore and firing incident in Rajanpur. Lawmakers belonging to PTI raised six CANs while PML lawmakers sponsored two CANs.

9

Calling Attention Notices

6

CANs Taken Up

3

CANs Disposed of

10

Adjournment Motions

### 3.3 Adjournment Motion

The government ministers responded to three out of ten Adjournment Motions (AMs) during the session. These motion were about lack of paramedical staff in Tehsil Headquarter Hospital, Pattoki, non-payment to paramedical staff and radiologists at MS Jinnah Hospital Lahore and non-appointment of headmasters in six high schools of Rawalpindi. These AMs were raised by lawmakers belonging to PTI.

Meanwhile, the House deferred six AMs appearing on the agenda while an AM regarding sale of unhealthy meat in Kasur remained unaddressed during the session. As many as 10 lawmakers – four each of PML-N and PTI and two of PPPP– exercised their right to raise matters of public importance through AMs.

The MPs raised five Zero Hour Notices during the session to highlight the matters of public importance. These were mostly about the issues being faced by the employees of various government departments in Jampur, Kasur and Faisalabad. The government responded to four of these notices while one notice regarding increase in fee structure of Medical and Dental College was deferred due to absence of the relevant minister.

## 4 Order and Institutionalization

Order and institutionalization are important for an efficient and productive legislature. This section provides information about Points of Order, Questions of Privilege, Quorum and any instances of walkout, protest or boycott during the proceeding.

### 4.1 Question of Privilege

The House referred two Question of Privilege (QoP) raised by the lawmakers belonging to PPPP and PTI to the committee. These questions were about misbehavior of Chief Development Engineer, WAPDA and the Food Officer with them.

### 4.2 Points of Order

Lawmakers spoke on 107 Points of Order (POs) during the session, consuming three hours and three minutes of the proceedings (21 percent of the session). The issues highlighted in POs were related to the House Business, law and order, education and governance.

### 4.3 Walkout/Protest

The opposition lawmakers staged four protests and two walkouts during the session. The lawmakers belonging to PML-N protested in the House against unsatisfactory reply to their questions during Question Hour and non-permission by the Chair to speak on various parliamentary interventions. The entire opposition also protested against the government's motion to consider amendment in the Assembly's Rules of Procedure without its prior inclusion in the List of Business.



107

Members raising Points of Order

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2

Question of Privilege

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5

Zero Hour Notices

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6

Instances of Identification of Quorum

PML-N and PPPP lawmakers staged walkout for 45 minutes in fifth sitting against the suspension of House membership of a PML-N lawmaker. Likewise, the seventh sitting also witnessed opposition's walkout against the Chair's refusal to allow debate on Local Government Bill, 2019.

#### 4.4 Quorum

The lawmakers belonging to PML-N identified the lack of quorum six times during the proceedings. On the first instance, the proceeding had to be adjourned while it was suspended for 34 minutes on the second occasion. The quorum was found complete upon headcount on third instance while the Chair also ignored the quorum on three occasions.

## ABOUT FAFEN

- FAFEN is one of the most credible networks among civil society organizations working to strengthen citizens' voice and accountability in Pakistan since 2006.
- FAFEN has harnessed information technology for real-time monitoring, facilitation and technical backstopping of partners for effective and result-based program delivery.
- FAFEN is the only civil society group to have been invited by the Judicial Commission to present the evidence of illegalities and irregularities documented through the course of General Elections 2013 observation. The systemic and procedural issues identified by FAFEN have been acknowledged by the Commission in its detailed findings.
- FAFEN's recommendations for electoral reforms have contributed to finalization of the Elections Act, 2017 and helped improve the quality of public and political discourse on elections. Leading political parties and media houses extensively use FAFEN's election findings and analysis to build upon the cases for reforms.
- FAFEN's advocacy for parliamentary transparency, accountability and reforms has shaped public discourse on parliamentary reforms. Improved citizens' access to parliamentary information, including daily public release of parliamentarians' attendance records can be directly attributed to FAFEN's work.
- FAFEN deployed around 18,000, 40,000 and 20,000 non-partisan and trained observers for the systematic observation of the General Elections 2008, 2013 and 2018, respectively.
- With more than 25,000 followers on Twitter and around 143,000 on Facebook, FAFEN is considered to be one of the most reliable sources of electoral and parliamentary information in the country.

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This report is based on direct observation of the proceedings of the Punjab Assembly conducted by PATTAN Development Organization – a member organization of FAFEN. Every effort has been made to keep this report, which deals with on-floor performance of the Members, accurate and comprehensive. Errors and omissions are excepted.