



The National Assembly of Pakistan Gazette



April 2014

Jumaada al-Sani, 1435 A.H.



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Chief Editor's Note

The month of March bears a great historical importance. On 23rd March, the Muslims of India demanded a separate homeland by adopting a resolution in its three-day general session of All India Muslim League in Lahore on March 22–24, 1940, which called for the creation of 'independent states' for Muslims in north-western and eastern British India. This year, the Nation commemorated 'Pakistan Day' with great enthusiasm. The President of Pakistan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Speaker National Assembly and Deputy Speaker National Assembly in their Pakistan Day messages reiterated their determination to make Pakistan a strong democratic nation.

In National Assembly, March was a busy month, especially from the committee meetings point of view. An important event was the 5th meeting of Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage. The meeting was dedicated for discussing the importance of Pakistan's Mother Tongues, their National Language Status, and their role in creating inter-provincial harmony along with reviewing a Concept Paper on the National Language Commission. Over 35 speakers, Linguists, Experts and Academia had been invited from all over Pakistan for their valuable input on the subject. Balochi, Balti, Brushaski, Brahui, Hindko, Khowar, Kashmiri, Pahari, Pashto, Punjabi, Saraiki, Shina, Sindhi and other Mother Tongues were amply highlighted from participants representing the diverse areas of Pakistan.

The Hindu Marriage Act was also introduced in the House during March. This bill has significance as it is a very pertinent legislation for protecting the matrimonial rights of minorities. Moreover, Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatization elected Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja as the Chairman Standing Committee. It is hoped that Committee will play its constructive role in the upcoming budget.

Thank You

Ch. Mukhtar Ahmed



Pakistan Day Message of Honourable Member



I congratulate entire Pakistan and Pakistanis living all over the world on the auspicious occasion of Pakistan Day. This day is very important in our history as Pakistan Resolution was passed 74 years ago on the same day in Lahore Minto Park. This resolution played a vital role in the struggle for independence under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam and the banner of Muslim League. Today, we need to follow the same guiding principles of Quaid-e-Azam namely “Unity Faith Discipline” and turn this nation into a strong democracy. Pakistan is going through a tough time, facing various challenges like terrorism, violence, extremism and sectarianism etc. The present government is making serious and sincere efforts for resolving these problems. It is an occasion to reiterate our pledge towards those principles which led to the creation of Pakistan. Pakistan was made through democratic struggle and it is democracy which will lead this country to progress; a country where all people of various races, ethnicities and religion could live peacefully together and utilize their potential to make this country a strong democratic power.

Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani

MNA



LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

Session

National Assembly was summoned by the president to meet on Monday, the 24th March 2014 at 4.00 p.m. This is the 10th Session of the First Parliamentary Year of the 14th National Assembly. The session was in progress at the time of publication of the Gazette. The important legislative business of the 7th session is summarized herewith:

A. Bills

Bill Passed

One bill was passed by the National Assembly on 24th February 2014.

Federal Public Service Commission (Amendment) Act, 2014

The Bill seeks to amend the Federal Public Service Commission Ordinance, 1977 (XLV of 19 77) with the objective to attract the highly qualified and skilled persons to join the Commission. Presently, the members of the Commission, upon completion of term, are not eligible for further employment in the service of Pakistan. This is discouraging well qualified persons to join the Commission on one hand and is an impediment in benefiting from the experience of well qualified persons for the public service later on, if their further employment is required to a constitutional office in public interest.

Government Bills Introduced

No government bill was introduced in sittings of National Assembly in the month of March, 2014.

Private Members Bills Introduced

Two bills were introduced in National Assembly by private member. These bills along with their short introductions are listed below:

1. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2014

The Act is further to amend the Pakistan Penal Code (Act XLV of 1860), the Criminal Procedure Code (Act V of 1898) and the Qanun-e-Shahadat Order (Order X of 1984).

The object of this Bill is twofold: to amend the procedural and substantive law on rape so as to recognize and tackle the lapses and challenges in the investigation and prosecution of the offence; and to sensitize the law to the needs and vulnerabilities of the rape victim. The proposed amendments take direction from and are in line with the recommendations regarding the conduct of rape trials made by the Honorable Supreme Court of Pakistan in judgment reported in 2013 SCMR 203.



2. Hindu Marriage Act, 2014

The object of this Bill is to provide a special form of marriage and divorce among Hindus. The Provision of the said Act has also been applied to irretrievable break down of Marriages in Hindus. This Act is applicable to every person who is Hindu by religion in any of its forms.

B. Ordinances

No ordinance has been laid in February 2014.

C. Resolutions

The following two resolutions were moved in the National Assembly during the month of February.

1. The Government should provide National Identity Cards to the Citizens free of cost (March 4, 2014)

“This House is of the opinion that the Government should take steps to provide National Identity Cards to the citizens free of cost in the Country.”

2. Resolution moved on the occasion of International Women's Day (March 7, 2014)

On the occasion of international Women's Day in the year 2014, this August House

while recalling the Quote of the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah stating that "No nation can ever be worthy of its existence that cannot take its women along with the men. No struggle can ever succeed without women participating side by side with men", congratulates the Women Parliamentarians for actively and substantively performing their legislative, oversight and representative roles and working collectively for the women's socio-economic and political empowerment.

This House further appreciates the role of Women's Parliamentary Caucus that brings together women Parliamentarians on one platform, and helps join hands to promote and build consensus in the Parliament on issues related to the empowerment of women and other critical issues related to sustainable development of the country; and of being an inspiration for women parliamentarians across the world.

The International Women's Day provides an opportunity to the Women Parliamentarians to once again aspire change and commit to work towards equality and economic, social and political rights of women in line with the constitutional obligations and international commitments of the state of Pakistan.

CALLS ON

NA Acting Speaker Underlines the Need to Enhance Parliamentary and Economic Cooperation between Azerbaijan and Pakistan

Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Acting Speaker National Assembly has said that Azerbaijan and Pakistan were intertwined in bonds of religion, culture and history, therefore,



Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Azerbaijan. He expressed these views in a meeting with Ambassador of Azerbaijan H. E. Dashgins Shikarov during his visit to Embassy of Azerbaijan, Islamabad on 13th March 2014.

Murtaza Javed Abbasi said that both the countries have huge economic potential which needs to be exploited for mutual benefit. He said that huge investment opportunities were exist in Pakistan especially in energy, industry, technology and infrastructure sectors. He said



Acting Speaker Murtaza Javed Abbasi and Ambassador of Republic of Azerbaijan Dashgin Shikarov Shaking hand during visit to Azerbaijan Embassy, Islamabad

investors of Azerbaijan can be benefited from these opportunities. He said regular interaction between the political leadership, parliamentarians and people of both the countries would be helpful in exploring avenues of possible cooperation. The Acting Speaker said that parliamentarians of both the countries could also play an important role in creating better understanding between both the countries. He apprised the Ambassador that a Pak-Azerbaijan friendship group has been constituted in the National Assembly to further strengthening the relations between the Parliaments of both the countries. He also thanked Azerbaijan for gracious assistance during 2005 earthquake. He also suggested to declare Noshervan town in District Abbottabad and Noshervan town in Azerbaijan as a twin town.

Ambassador of Azerbaijan H. E. Dashgins Shikarov agreed with Acting Speaker said

that his government also strongly desires to have congenial relations with Pakistan. He said that a stable Pakistan was imperative for the peace in the region; therefore, it has always supported Pakistan on all regional and international forums. He assured the Acting Speaker of all out support of

Azerbaijan to meet the energy crises in Pakistan. He informed that negotiations between both the governments for setup of Five Thermal Power Projects in Pakistan were under process.

He was confident that the agreement in this regard will be signed soon. The Ambassador also apprised the Acting Speaker about the orphanages which have been established with the support of Azerbaijan in Pakistan. He presented an invitation on behalf of Deputy Speaker of Azerbaijani Majlis (National Assembly) to Acting Speaker to visit Azerbaijan.

"Turkey and Bahrain; Time-Tested Friends of Pakistan": says NA Speaker.

Wednesday, 19th March, 2014

Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has met H.E. Cemil Cicek, Speaker of Grand National Assembly of Turkey and Mr. Jamal Fakhro, Deputy Speaker of Shura Council of Kingdom of Bahrain on the sidelines of the 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) General Assembly meeting in Geneva.



Talking to the Turkish counterpart, the Speaker said that that friendship between the two brotherly countries is time tested and has roots in history. This fact cannot be



H.E. Cemil Cicek, Speaker of Grand National Assembly of Turkey presenting souvenir to Speaker, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq after meeting at Geneva

denied that Turkey has always been a friend in need and stood by Pakistan in difficult times. The Speaker underlined the need for enhanced interaction between the parliamentarians of both the countries for further cementing the fraternal relations between the two countries. He said that parliamentarians of the two sides could play a meaningful role in the region as “parliamentary diplomacy could enable the real policy makers to understand each-others’ points of view, better. “Turkey role in October 2005 Earthquake in AJK and KPK was commendable and would always be remembered”, he added.

Mr. Cemil Cicek assured Sardar Ayaz Sadiq of his country’s continued and unflinching support to Pakistan in diverse fields. He termed the friendship between his country and Pakistan, “a historic association that was deeply imbedded in the hearts and minds of the people of both the countries”. He also

recalled that Turkey had always endorsed Pakistan’s initiatives, such as the forming of the PAECO and in the same spirit would also support the candidature of Ms. Shazia Rafi. He assured that Turkey would seek the support of other countries as well. He also requested Pakistan that in its capacity as a Member of the IPU, it should help Turkey in getting the observer status for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Ms. Sibel Siber Speaker of the Turkish Cyprus was also present during the meeting.

Later, talking to the Deputy Speaker of the Bahrain Legislature, the Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that Pakistan and Bahrain enjoy close and cordial relations based on mutual trust and understanding. He said that interaction between parliamentarians of both the countries could add substance to the existing relations besides providing opportunities for exchanging views and sharing experiences. The Speaker admired the recent visit of King of Bahrain His Majesty Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to Pakistan which reflects rejuvenating relations between two brotherly countries.

By reciprocating the support for the Pakistan’s Candidate for Secretary Generalship of IPU, Ms. Shazia Rafi; the Deputy Speaker of Bahrain assured that Bahrain would support Pakistan’s candidate. He also extended an invitation to visit Bahrain on behalf of the Speaker of Bahrain.

Speaker Balochistan Assembly Calls On Speaker NA

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly has said that that democracy has taken roots and all the progressive political forces were on same page on all important national issues. He said this while talking to Speaker Balochistan Assembly Mir Jan



Muhammad Jamali who called on him in the Parliament House, on 24th March.

During the meeting, matters relating to the Parliamentary Business, Committee System and important issues of national and public interest were discussed. The Speaker shared his vision about the austerity measures, electrification through solar and establishing paperless environment in the National Assembly with his provincial counterpart. He also shared the proactive and vibrant Parliamentary Friendship Groups established in National Assembly.

Both the Speakers discussed holding of Speaker's Conference in Islamabad in near future. During the meeting, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali asked the Speaker National Assembly of his support for capacity building of Members and staff of Balochistan Assembly through Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS).

Kazakh Envoy Calls on Speaker NA

Speaker, National Assembly has said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Kazakhstan and strongly desire to further strengthen those relations through enhancing parliamentary and economic cooperation. He said that both the countries were tied in everlasting

bonds of religion, history and culture. He said this while talking to the Ambassador of Kazakhstan Mr. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev,

who called on him in the Parliament House on 25th March.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that Pakistan and Kazakhstan shared views and perceptions on global issues and supported each other on regional and international forums. He said that it was heartening to note that both the countries were desirous for peace and prosperity in the world. He said that both the countries ought to strengthen their parliamentary linkages through enhancing interaction between both the legislatures. The Speaker was pleased to note that interaction between parliamentarians from either side through Pak-Kazakhstan Parliamentary Friendship group could bring both the brotherly countries more closer. The Speaker proposed for an enhanced interaction between business communities of both the countries for mutual benefit. He said that immense potential for investment exists in oil exploration, energy generation, agriculture and other sectors of economy.

Ambassador of Kazakhstan Mr. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev thanked the Speaker for his kind remarks and said that his country also

values its friendship with Pakistan and was keen to strengthen its relations and enhance cooperation with Pakistan in all sectors of the economy. He agreed that parliamentary friendship

groups could play a vital role in enhancing bilateral relations. He said that interaction between business communities of both the



H.E. Mr. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev, Ambassador Republic of Kazakhstan called on Speaker NA, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House on 25.03.2014



countries could generate economic activity on either side.

Members of National Youth Assembly Call on Deputy Speaker NA

Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National Assembly has said that youth is real asset of the country and its active participation in the politics is imperative for strengthening the democratic process in the country. He said that youth can play vital role to strengthen the democracy in the country through its active participation in political process. He expressed these views while talking to the members of National Youth Assembly, on 25th March at Parliament House.

The Deputy Speaker said that continuity of democratic process is essential for the prosperity and progress of the country. He opined that the real politics needed a lot of efforts and hard work. He said that challenges

confronted by the country at present was due to disruption of democratic process in past. They underlined the need for joint efforts for strengthening the democracy. He apprised the participants about the political system in Pakistan

and structure and functioning of the National Assembly and its standing committees.

Later, the Additional Secretary (Legislation) briefed the participants of the meeting about the organizational setup, formation and

working of National Assembly and its Standing Committees. The Members of the Youth Parliament also posed various questions which were replied by the Deputy Speaker, National Assembly and the Additional Secretary (Legislation).

Mr. Hanan Abbasi, President, National Youth Assembly thanked the Deputy Speaker for providing opportunity to the Members of the Youth Assembly for a comprehensive briefing about the functioning of Parliament. He also apprised the Deputy Speaker about the functioning of National Youth Assembly. He invited the Deputy Speaker to participate in Session of the National Youth Assembly.

Parliamentary Cooperation to Bring Pakistan and Tajikistan Closer: Says NA Speaker

Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has said that a sustainable progress

has been registered in Pakistan-Tajikistan relations in different spheres though; strengthening parliamentary linkages would add substance to the existing bilateral relations. He was talking to Ambassador of

Tajikistan Mr. Mr. Jononov Sherali called on Speaker in Parliament House, on 26th March.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations



H. E. Mr. Jononov Sherali, Ambassador of Tajikistan called on Speaker NA, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House on 26.03.2014



with Tajikistan since both the countries were intertwined in eternal bonds of religion, culture and history. He said that Pakistan strongly desires to enhance its bilateral, economic and parliamentary ties with its brotherly country. He said that parliamentarians of both the countries through Pak-Tajikistan Friendship group could play an important role in creating better understanding between both the countries.

The Speaker said that huge economic potential exists on either side which needs to be exploited for mutual benefit. He said that regular interaction between the political hierarchy and trading communities of both the countries would be helpful in further exploring avenues of possible cooperation. He said that Tajikistan can help Pakistan in addressing the energy crisis in the country.

Ambassador of Tajikistan Mr. Jononov Sherali

thanked the Speaker for his kind words and said that his government also strongly desires to have congenial relations with Pakistan. He said that a stable Pakistan was imperative for the peace in the region; therefore, his government would continue its support for Pakistan on all regional and international forums. He informed the Speaker that Tajik Legislature was also keen to cement its ties with Parliament of Pakistan. He said that Tajik and Pakistani business communities were in regular

contact and has inked various agreements for mutual cooperation. He also apprised the Speaker about the recent developments in respect of import of energy from Tajikistan.

Russian Ambassador Calls on Speaker, National Assembly

The Speaker has observed that Pakistan-Russian relations were becoming multifaceted and acquiring greater depth due to engagement of political hierarchies and business communities of both sides. He said that strengthening of parliamentary linkages would bring Pakistan and Russia, closer. He

said this while talking to Ambassador of Russia Mr. Alexey Yurievich Dedov who called on the Speaker in Parliament House, on 27th March.

The Speaker said that Pakistan considers Russia a valuable friend who has been partner in economic and infrastructure development in

Pakistan. He said that constant engagement from either side has added depth to the existing relations. The Speaker said that he would always endeavour to strengthen the ties between the legislatures of the two countries. The Speaker informed the Ambassador that Pakistan-Russia Friendship group has been established in National assembly and interaction between parliamentarians through this forum could play an important role in creating better understanding between both the countries.



Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly shaking hand with H.E Alexey Yurievich Dedov, Ambassador of Russia who called on him at Parliament House on 27.03.2014



Recalling his recent interaction with his Russian Counterpart in Geneva, the Speaker said that cooperation and interaction at international forums could bring friendly parliamentarians more closer. The Speaker pointed out that power generation and oil exploration sectors were the strength of Russia, therefore both the countries could enter into joint ventures for mutual benefit. He also called for diversification of the existing collaboration between both the countries.

Ambassador of Russia Mr Alexey Yurievich Dedov thanked the Speaker for his kind words and said that his government also strongly desires to have congenial relations with Pakistan. He informed the Speaker that Russian legislature also keen to cement its ties with Parliament of Pakistan. He said that Russian and Pakistani business communities were in regular contact and has inked various agreements for mutual cooperation. He said that Russia would certainly help steer Pakistan out of the present energy crisis in the country. He also reiterated the invitation of Russian Speaker to Sardar Ayaz Sadiq to visit Moscow.

A Group of Students of London School of Economics Call on Deputy Speaker

The Deputy Speaker National Assembly Murtaza Javed Abbasi has said that Pakistani youth were highly talented,

competent and hardworking and they have proved their abilities across the globe. He expressed these views while talking to a group of students of London School of Economics who called on him in Parliament House on 27th March.

The Deputy Speaker said that democracy in Pakistan was gaining strength and democratic institutions in the country were functioning smoothly. He said that incumbent Government has set its priorities for the welfare of the people of the country. He said that provision of education, health care and social amenities were the top



Group of Students of London School of Economics Calling on Deputy Speaker National Assembly Murtaza Javed Abbasi at Parliament House on 26.03.2014

the government. He apprised the students about the constitutional history of Parliament as well as working and functioning of the National Assembly and its standing committees. He said that the standing committees are important organs of the Parliament and play vital role in legislation, besides overseeing the policies of concerned Ministries. He also appreciated the contributions of overseas Pakistanis for the development and progress of the country.

The students of London College of Economics took keen interest in legislative procedure and posed various questions about the working and functioning of National Assembly. Later on they also witness the proceedings of the House.



German Ambassador Meets NA Speaker

Ambassador of Germany Dr. Cyrill Nunn called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Parliament House, on 28th March morning.

Talking to the Speaker, Dr. Nunn said that he availed this opportunity to meet him and inform about the visit of the Chairman German Bundestag to Pakistan. He said that German Chairman will be visiting Pakistan during the last week of April, 2014. He further said that Chairman Bundestag was undertaking this visit since Germany attaches immense to Pakistan.

Referring to the historical association of Pakistan with Germany, the Speaker said that Pakistan also attaches importance to its friendship with Germany and both countries enjoy excellent cooperative relationship at political and official levels and between their peoples.

The Speaker said that the visit of his German Counterpart along with his delegation would be adding another chapter in bilateral relationship besides providing fresh opportunity to revive active cooperation between the legislative bodies of the two countries. He was happy to note that MNAs were enthusiastic to join Pak-German Parliamentary Friendship Group in the National Assembly.

Future Rests in the Hands of the Youth and Takes Charge of the Country: Says NA Speaker

Friday, 28th March, 2014



Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Speaker NA shaking hand with Dr. Cyrill Nunn Ambassador of Germany who called on him at Parliament House on 28.03.2014

Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly has said that future of the country rests in hands of the youth and our young people has all the capabilities and potential to steer the country out of present challenges. He expressed these views while meeting with a group of students of Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) in Parliament House, on 28th March.

Talking to the group, the Speaker said that education is essential for the growth and development of any country and only those nations have made progress who accorded top priority to their education sector. He said that nation has lot of expectations from its youth and they should equip themselves of modern time technology and work hard to coup with challenges confronted to the country and to come up the expectations of the nation.

The Speaker said that Pakistan is facing menace of terrorism and extremism which has disrupted civic life of citizens and economic activity in the country. "We are committed to peace and stability and elimination of extremism and terrorism in the country as well as in the region" he added. He said that all the political parties in



Pakistan are on the same page on the issues of national importance. He called upon the youth of the country to come forward and join hand for the prosperity and development of the country.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq shared with the students about the composition, working and functioning of the National Assembly and its Standing Committees. He also expressed that unnecessary expenditures have been curtailed keeping in view of the financial situation in the country. He also informed regarding the steps taken for austerity

measures in the secretariat while adopting the electrification requirements through solar energy with the support of donors and establishing paperless office.

He also shared the proactive and vibrant Parliamentary Friendship Groups

mechanism which has been established in National Assembly. The Speaker informed about the National Assembly's Strategic Plan through which the capacity of the Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff would be enhanced. At this moment Speaker also informed them about the introduction of subject/course on Parliamentary Practices

and Legislative Drafting in universities and educational institution all over the country.

After detail discussion, the Speaker also responded to the various questions raised by the students. The group thanked the Speaker for facilitating them

to visit National Assembly. Later, they witnessed the proceedings of the Session of National Assembly. Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, MNA was also present on the occasion.



Group photo of Students from Lahore University of Management Sciences, Lahore with Speaker NA Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House on 28.03.2014

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Reforms held on 1st March, 2014

A meeting of the Standing Committee on Planning, Development & Reforms under the Chairmanship of Mr. Abdul Majeed Khan Khanankhail, was held on 1st March, 2014 at the site office Nelum Jhelum Hydro

Power Project, Muzaffarabad to have briefing on physical progress of Neelum Jhelum Hydro Power Project (NJHPP). The Chief Executive Officer of NJHPP apprised the Committee that Neelum Jhelum Hydro Power Project has an installed capacity 969 MW and will generate 5.15 billion units of electricity annually and will contribute about Rs.45 billion to revenue per annum. The Committee was further apprised the first



Unit of NJHPP will be operational by December, 2015. However, \$500 million are required for timely completion of the project.

2. The committee directed that all out efforts should be made to make the 1st Unit of NJHPP operational by 31st December, 2015 and work on transmission lines be completed at the earliest. The committee also recommended that ban on the recruitment of technical staff for NJHPP be lifted with immediate effect.

3. The meeting was attended by MNAs Mr. Qaisar Jamal, Ms. Asiya Nasir, Ms. Shazia Ashfaq Mattu, Dr. Asma Mamdot, Ch. Jaffar Iqbal, Mr. Iftikhar uddin, Nadeem Abbas Rabaira & Ms Shaheen Shafique Chairman WAPDA, Project Director NJHPP and other Senior Officers of Ministry of Planning and Development also attend the meeting.

MS. Shaza Fatima Khawaja elected Chairperson of Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatization; NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker congratulate newly elected Chairperson of the Standing Committee.

The meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatization held in Parliament House, Islamabad on 6th March for election of its Chairperson.

Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, MNA has been unanimously elected the Chairperson of Standing Committees on Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatization. Ms. Nafeesa Shah, proposed the name of Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja while the other members of the Committee seconded it.

Additional Secretary (C), National Assembly Shahid Hussain Jillani has conducted the election of the Chairperson. He congratulated newly elected Chairperson of the Standing Committees on behalf of Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi Deputy Speaker, National Assembly and assured her National Assembly Secretariat's full cooperation for smooth functioning of the Standing Committee.

The newly elected Chairperson thanked the members of the committee for reposing confidence and trust in her by electing her Chairperson Standing Committee and assured them to make all out efforts to come up to their expectations and to make the proceedings of the Committee meaningful and result oriented with their cooperation.

Meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs

A meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs was held on 7-03-2014 at 2:00 p.m in Committee Room # 7, in National Assembly Secretariat, Islamabad under the Chairmanship of Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, MNA, in order to have an interactive discussion/session on Pakistan's Foreign Policy with the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Riaz Muhammad Khan, Former Secretary Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fazal-ul-Rehman, Director Strategic Studies Institute Islamabad and Dr. Akram Shaikh, Former Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission/Honorary Professor in NUST, Islamabad presented their point of view and re-iterated the need for Pakistan to enhance its relationship with China in Economic Sector, Water Sector and creation of the economic corri-doors from Gawadar to Kashghar were identified as the key focus



areas that should be pursued through our bilateral relations with China.

The Committee Members thanked the Panel of Experts for their frank and candled opinion.

The Committee also expressed its concern on the recent terrorist activity in China and expressed complete support and cooperation to the People of China in all respects. The recent terrorist incident in China was strongly condemned by the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Mian Najeebuddin Awaisi, Mr. Muhammad Khan Dahi, Makhdoom Khusru Bakhtyar, Rana Muhammad Afzal Khan, Dr. Shireen Mehrunnisa Mazari, Ms. Naeema Kishwar Khan and Mr. Mehmood Khan Achakzai MNAs attended the meeting.

Fifth meeting of the Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage

Fifth meeting of the Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage was held on 13th March at 2:00 p.m. in Committee Room No.7, Parliament House, Islamabad. The meeting was presided over by Ms. Marvi Memon, MNA/Chairperson on of the Standing Committee.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the history and importance of Pakistan's Mother Tongues, their National Language status, and their role in creating

inter-provincial harmony along with reviewing a Concept Paper on the National Language Commission.

Over 35 speakers, Linguists, Experts and Academia had been invited from all over Pakistan for their valuable input on the subject. Balochi, Balti, Brushaski, Brahui, Hindko, Khowar, Kashmiri, Pahari, Pashto, Punjabi, Saraiki, Shina, Sindhi and other Mother Tongues were amply highlighted from participants representing the diverse areas of Pakistan.

Common Confusions between 'National Language & Official Language' and 'Language & Dialect' were eloquently addressed. It was established that a National Language is a language which is the Mother Tongue of people; and enjoys use in the political, social, and cultural realms. National Languages are mostly multiple for one country. Whereas, an official language is one which is used for the operations of the Government. Official Languages are mostly one or maximum two. Consequently, National Languages are symbolic and Official Languages are pragmatic. Similarly, there is a distinction between Language and Dialect on the basis of 'mutual intelligibility.

It was reiterated during the meeting that the importance of National Language was imperative in National

Harmony. Member of the Standing Committee agreed that Language is the main source of communication, so it is also the



Ms. Marvi Memon, Chairperson Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting & National Heritage, chairing the Committee meeting at Parliament House on 13.03.2014



best means to bring divergent people together. Developed countries have declared their major Mother Tongues as National Languages. This has helped reduce differences between different types of people living in one Country. The Committee was informed that National Languages were generally multiple in numbers as can be observed globally. A few amongst the many Countries having multiple National Languages were, China (9), India (22), Belgium (3), Namibia (11), Singapore (4), South Africa (13), Spain (5) and Switzerland (4). This has been a major contributor in nation building.

It was agreed in the meeting that it was high time that habitants of the same society should use their languages for unity and better understanding between each other. Pakistani society is a hub of ancient languages. Unfortunately, Pakistan since its inception, instead of recognizing & celebrating linguistic diversity, started its journey by denying the distinct historical status of these languages. Diversity and recognition of these languages will be the path for nation building, which is acutely required.

The Committee further discussed a working paper on the concept of the National Language Commission as envisioned by Pakistan Muslim League (N) President, Honourable, Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, in PML (N) manifesto. The PML (N) manifesto states, "Pakistan currently has many mother tongues but only one national language which is Urdu and one official language which is English. In most nation states, all major mother tongues are national languages. A National Language Commission will be set up by the PML (N) Government to develop criteria for giving the status of national languages to all

major languages." The Concept Paper incorporated the Vision of National Language Commission as, "to establish a National Language Commission which protects and promotes Mother Tongues of Pakistan, giving them National Language Status & as a result enhances nation building, education and productivity of Pakistan."

The objectives of the Commission were outlined as:-

- to develop criteria to give status of National Language to all major Mother Tongues of Pakistan
- to strengthen the Mother Tongues & ensure their longevity in the National narrative
- through these, Mother Tongues/proposed National Languages, enhance inter-provincial harmony
- through these, Mother tongues/proposed National Languages, enhance learning capabilities of Pakistanis & their productivity
- promote national languages and their teachings
- to scientifically conduct language planning, policy, survey through research.

The Standing Committee also passed following Resolution unanimously:

1. We appreciate the importance in according Pakistan's major mother tongues like Balochi, Balti, Brushaski, Brahui, Hindko, Khovar, Kashmiri, Pahari, Pashto, Punjabi, Saraiki, Shina, Sindhi the National language status.
2. We will not allow the linguicide in Pakistan of its rich Mother Tongues.



3. We understand that all Mother Tongues of Pakistan belong to all of Pakistan rather than just one particular area.
4. We agree that all Mother Tongues are rooted to Pakistan's soil in entirety and thereby derive their National status. Their promotion and this National status will root out sense of deprivation, prejudices and create inter provincial harmony.
5. We agree that cultural and linguistic diversity is an asset for Pakistan, which will promote education, learning and productivity.
6. We understand that this will improve inter-provincial harmony and create a national narrative much required for nation building in Pakistan.
7. We support the establishment of a National Language Commission which will ultimately decide which major Mother Tongues of Pakistan should be declared as national based on internationally accepted criteria. It will develop a language policy, fully researched, conduct language scientific survey and conduct language planning.
8. We appreciate the efforts of all those Pakistanis who have made contributions for this noble and nation building cause of National Language status, since inception of Pakistan.
9. We commit to seeing the legislation of the National Language Bill through the proper legislative routes in the tenure of this National Assembly at the earliest.
10. We commit to also protecting the endangered Mother Tongues of Pakistan through the National Language Commission.

It was decided that the Resolution will be sent to the Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Human Rights so that at time of review of "The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2014", it should assist the Standing Committee. The Committee Members thanked the Experts for their valuable and enlightening input.

Mian Muhammad Farooq, Mr. Muhammad Tallal Chaudry, Mr. Waseem Akhtar Shaikh, Mr. Tahir Iqbal Ch., Ms. Parveen Masood Bhatti, Ms. Ghulam Bibi Bharwana, Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, Ms. Arifa Khalid Pervez, Syed Amir Ali Shah Jamote, Mr. Imran Zafar Leghari, Ms. Belum Hasnain, Dr. Muhammad Azhar Khan Jadoon, and Ms. Naeema Kishwer Khan, MNAs and senior Officers of Ministry of Information, Broadcasting & National Heritage and its attached Departments.

Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, Chairman Kashmir Committee expresses his best wishes for Syed Ali Shah Gillani, Chairman, All Parties Hurriyat Conference

Chairman Kashmir Committee, Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman has expressed his best wishes and prayers for early recovery of Syed Ali Shah Gillani, Chairman All Parties Hurriyat Conference from illness. He said that the veteran leader is the soul of freedom movement of Kashmir. All Pakistan express their concern on his illness. The honorable Chairman had specially requested all Pakistanis to pray for his health.

NA Business Advisory Committee Discusses Agenda for the 10th Session of the National Assembly

The House Business Advisory Committee of the National Assembly met in Parliament House, on 25th March afternoon with Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly in



the chair to discuss the business for the 10th Session of the National Assembly.

After discussion, it was decided that the current session of the National Assembly will continue till 8th April, 2014 and sittings of the National Assembly will be held in morning except Monday. It was further decided that National Assembly would take up question hour, calling attention notices and other matters of public importance for discussion apart from legislation during the

NA Speaker Constitutes Oversight Committee on NA Strategic Plan

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly has constituted, a "Strategic Plan Oversight Committee" (SPOC) of the National Assembly. Notification to this effect has been issued by the National Assembly Secretariat, on 27th March.

The committee comprises of MNAs Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, Dr. Azra Fazal



Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly chairing the meeting of Business Advisory Committee at Parliament House on 25.03.2014

current session.

The meeting was attended by Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker, Mr. Zahid Hamid, Minister for Science & Technology, Ch. Muhammad Barjees Tahir, Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Sheikh Aftab Ahmed, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs/Chief Whip of the Pakistan Muslim League (N), Jam Kamal Khan, Minister of State for Petroleum & Natural Resources, MNAs; Mr. Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani, Dr. Arif Alvi, Mr. Iqbal Muhammad Ali Khan, Sheikh Salahuddin, Moulana Muhammad Khan Sherani, Sahibzada Tariq Ullah, Syed Ghazi Gulab Jamal and Dr. Shireen Mazari.

Pechuho, Ms. Asiya Nasir, Mr. Asad Umar, Mr. Zahid Hamid, Mr. Muhammad Pervaiz Malik, Ms. Saman Sultana Jafri and Mr. Omar Ayub.

The committee has been mandated to oversee the development of the strategic plan according to the established SMART goals and strategic framework of the National Assembly, review the progress made on the above-mentioned plan on quarterly basis and assess the performance of the strategic plan.

Furthermore, the committee would ensure the implementation of the strategic plan in line with the set timelines. The committee would also submit its report alongwith the recommendations on monthly basis to the Honourable Speaker. This Strategic Plan was designed for enhancement of the capacity of the Parliamentarians and



parliamentary staff as well as to make the Parliament vibrant, paperless, Green and

environment friendly.

PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP GROUPS

PFGS Plays Pivotal Role for Enhancement of International Trade: Says NA Speaker

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly has said that the Parliamentary Friendship Groups (PFG) in the National Assembly were playing their pivotal role to enhance trade and economic activities in the country through strengthening ties with other Parliaments of the World. He expressed these views in a meeting with a six member delegation of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry headed by Mian Tariq Misbah, Acting President LCCI at Parliament House, on 6th March. Miss Shaza Fatima Khawaja MNA, Ms. Yasmeen Rehman Former MNA and Mian Misbah-ur Rehman Former President LCCI were also present on the occasion.

The Speaker said that the awarding of GSP-Plus status by the European Union was good omen for Pakistan's economy and it will boost the economic activities in the country

besides creating more jobs opportunities. "I am proud to share with you that GSP-Plus status to Pakistan by the European Union is the landmark achievement of the diplomatic interactions, parliamentary diplomacy and government's effort" he added.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq told the delegation that the government was introducing investment friendly policies. This is fact that we are facing law and order situation and acute power shortage, however, I assured you we will overcome these hurdles collectively and courageously, he said.

Earlier the delegation informed the Speaker that due to law and order situation, power shortage and gas load shedding reduced the capacity of production of industries. The Speaker said that the Parliament and the government would extend every possible help to the business community and traders for smooth and effective running of their business and trade activities.

FOREIGN VISITS AND DELEGATIONS

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Leads Delegation to 130th Assembly of IPU Held At Geneva, Switzerland

Monday, 10th March, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly attended 130th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) being held from 16 - 20 March 2014 at Geneva, Switzerland.

The Speaker, National Assembly led the Parliamentary Delegation comprising MNAs; Mrs. Arifa Khalid Pervaiz, Syed Naveed Qamar, Mr. Shafqat Mehmood, Maj ® Tahir Iqbal, Mr. Khalid Maqbool, Mr. Raza Hayat Harraj, Senators; Mian Raza Rabbani, Mr. Farooq H. Naek, Mr. Baz Muhammad Khan, Mr. Karamat Hussain Niazi, Secretary, National



Assembly and Mr. Amjad Pervaiz, Secretary Senate.

The members of the delegation participated in the Assembly of the IPU and its related meetings. They also met their counterparts on sidelines of the Assembly from 159 countries and exchange views and experiences.

The IPU Assembly conversed upon the contributions of parliaments for making a nuclear-weapon-free world, efforts towards risk resilient development taking into consideration demographic trends and natural constraints besides the role of parliaments in protecting the rights of children, in particular unaccompanied migrant children, and in preventing their exploitation in situations of war and conflict.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Meets Saudi and Kazakh Counterparts in Geneva; Seeks Saudi and Kazakh Support for Pakistan's Candidate for IPU Secretary Generalship

Tuesday, 18th March, 2014

Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has met with H.E. Dr. Abdullah Bin Mohammed Bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh, Speaker of Majlis Ash-Shura Council of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and H.E. Nurlan Z. Nigmatulin, Chairman of the Mazhilis, House of Representatives of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the sidelines of the 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) General Assembly meeting in Geneva, according to a message received from Switzerland. During these meetings, a number of issues of common interest between the brotherly countries and ways of strengthening relations were discussed in cordial atmosphere.

Talking to the Saudi counterpart, the Speaker said that Saudi Arabia is the sincere

friend of Pakistan and the whole nation greatly values Saudi support during natural calamities and crisis in Pakistan. The Speaker expressed his desire to further intensify cooperation between the two Legislatures. During the meeting, the two sides discussed cooperation prospects for the two countries and ways to develop and support them in all areas. They also discussed latest developments on regional and international levels.

Later, talking to the Chairman of the Kazakh Mazhilis Nurlan Z. Nigmatulin, the Speaker underlined the need for diversifying cooperation between Pakistan and Kazakhstan for mutual benefits of both the nations. The Speaker emphasized the need for enhancing cooperation and interaction between the parliaments and parliamentarians of both the countries for exchange of views and experiences. He also invited Kazakh leadership to suggest avenues of possible cooperation and assured Parliament's complete facilitation in this regard.

Chairman Nurlan Z. Nigmatulin thanked Pakistan for its support to the Kazakhstan's candidacy for the United Nations Security Council non-permanent seat for 2017-18. He praised Pakistan's role in the region and noted that both sides had contributed through forums like the Shanghai Dialogue, CIS, OIC and ECO. He said that the geopolitical situation of Pakistan allows it to be an important trade and economic partner of Kazakhstan.

On this occasion, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq also sought Saudi and Kazakh support for the Pakistan's Candidate for Secretary Generalship of IPU, Ms. Shazia Rafi. Both the counterparts assured their full support and cooperation in election of Secretary General of IPU.



OTHER NEWS

NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Congratulated Pakistan Cricket Team on Its Victory

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly and Mr. Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National congratulated the national cricket team of Pakistan over their glorious victory in the one day match of Asia Cup 2014 against India in Shere Bangla National Stadium, Dhaka Bangladesh on Sunday, 2nd March 2014.

They praised Captain Misbah ul-Haq for his astute captaincy and lauded the performances of Shahid Afridi, Mohammed Hafeez and the entire team.

The Speaker and the Deputy Speaker hoped that Pakistan cricket team will continue to perform well to bring more laurels for the country and nation.

NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Condemn the Incident of Firing and Bomb Blast in Islamabad

Monday, 3rd March, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National Assembly have strongly condemned the incident of firing and bomb blast at F-8 Kachehri, Islamabad and expressed profound grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives.

In their separate statements, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker termed it a barbaric and shameful act of terrorism. They said that the elements involved in such activities were playing with the lives of innocent people and enemies of humanity and the country.

They were confident that the culprits involved in such activities will not be spared and will be brought to justice.

They prayed to Almighty Allah to rest the souls of martyred in eternal peace and sympathized with bereaved families. They also prayed for early recovery of injured.

NA Speaker for Devising Policies to Ensure Women's Rights

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly has said that International Women's Day provides us with an opportunity to acknowledge the social, economic and political accomplishments of women in different walks of life in line with the country specific-national and international commitments. He expressed these views in his message on International Women Day being commemorated throughout the world on 8th March 2014.

He said that there is no denying the fact that participation of the womenfolk is imperative for socio-economic development of a state and society. No headway in this regard can be made without their visible and active participation, he added.

The Speaker said that women in our society are confronting severe problems regarding education, healthcare and employment. He said there is a need to change the mindset and perception of people to protect women rights and to bring them into main stream.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq call upon the civil society, NGOs, international development partners, media, corporate sector and



particularly the women themselves to come forward and play their role for protection of women's rights.

National Assembly of Pakistan, in collaboration with Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

The National Assembly of Pakistan, in collaboration with Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), observed for the first time in Pakistan, "the Commonwealth Day" at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services on Monday, 10th March 2014.

The theme of the event was 'Team Commonwealth'. People; from all walks of life especially the youth; were

prominently represented at the August occasion. The program also included a 'Youth Declamation Contest' where specifically the young participants debated on the spirit of 'Team Commonwealth'.

The guest of honor was Akram Zaki, a former senator, who held many important portfolios including the former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. While recalling his participation in the struggle for Pakistan, he shed some light on the key role played by Youth, who worked day in and day out under the leadership of the founding father Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to convert the dreams of Dr. Allama

Muhammad Iqbal into reality. He read some invigorating lines of his own poetry, urging the youth to adopt the path of hard work, rationality and self-accountability.

Honorable Ms. Marriyam Aurangzeb, MNA, was the Chief Guest of the event. She delivered an eloquent speech encouraging the young blood to come into the main stream and fully utilize their strengths to play a prominent role for the prosperity of this country. She commended the vision of the Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for particularly focusing on youth, stressing on the need to harness the great potential present in our young

generation and to divert their energies for the betterment of our beloved homeland. She concluded her speech by informing the audience about the new initiatives

being taken by the Parliament

viz energy conservation and Young Parliamentary Associate program, highlighting the magnitude of available opportunities to the youth to become a part of the policy making.

The program also included a briefing presentation on the description of commonwealth along with a quiz competition which became a source of great interest for the audience. The program was concluded by a musical performance by the young musicians.



Winners of declamation contest on observance of Commonwealth Day along with Chief Guest Honourable Marriyum Aurangzeb, MNA at PIPS, Islamabad on 10.3.2014



NA Speaker and Acting Speaker Condemn the Bomb Blast in Quetta

Friday, 14th March, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Acting Speaker National Assembly strongly condemned the bomb blast in Quetta on 14th March.

In their separate statements, the Speaker and Acting Speaker expressed profound grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives and sympathized with bereaved families. They termed it a barbaric and shameful act of terrorism and said that the elements involved in such activities were playing with the lives of innocent people and wanted to disrupt peace in the country. They were confident that the culprits involved in such heinous activities will not be spared and will be brought to justice.

They prayed to Almighty Allah to rest the souls of martyred in eternal peace and for early recovery of injured.

WPC Express Concern on the Rulings of Council of Islamic Ideology

Wednesday, 19th March, 2014

Members of Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) expressed severe concern on the rulings of Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) declared in the last week. The recommendations of CII are quite alarming.

The Chairman of CII demanded amendment in the National Marriage Law so that men seeking to remarry did not require a written permission of their first wives. Secondly, the legislation which prohibited underage marriages was dubbed as un-Islamic by the CII. It should be noted that the law is completely in line with the Muslim Family Law and the Constitution of Pakistan.

In the present scenario, it can be witnessed that instances of domestic violence are on the rise, women are forced to self-immolate, rape cases and acid crimes have increased significantly and the child abuse has reached alarming heights, decrees of such controversial nature by CII do no good but aggravate the situation.

Marriage is a mutual contract; adolescents at an early age cannot discreetly decide about their marriage, therefore puberty should not be a condition for marriage. Abolishing laws which ensure minimum age for marriage would mean exploitation and abuse particularly for young girls.

Members of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus believe that both these verdicts are a blatant violation of women rights, international commitments and the Constitution of Pakistan.

Inclusion of progressive Islamic scholars in the CII is important so that it interprets laws in line with the 21st century for protection of women right and of whole nation at large.

Parliament of Pakistan is the supreme institution. Women legislators from the platform of Caucus reaffirm their commitment to stand firm against all anti-women practices and determine to leave no stone unturned to ensure that no anti-women legislation is passed in the parliament which deprives them of their basic rights.

NA Speaker & Deputy Speaker Greets Nation on Pakistan Day

Saturday, 22nd March, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National Assembly have greeted the nation on the auspicious occasion of Pakistan day and said



that March 23 has a special significance in the history of Sub-Continent.

In his separate congratulatory messages to the nation, the Speaker said that 74 years ago, on this day the Muslim of South Asia, under the leadership of Quid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in Lahore, resolved to work for an independent Muslim State. The Lahore Resolution which came to be known as Pakistan Resolution, imparted a new vigor and impetus to the movement of independence giving Muslim's a new sense of purpose and direction.

He said that the Quaid-e-Azam embodied Islamic principles of tolerance and humanism which encourage him to rally around, not only Muslim public opinion but also support from other minorities to demand and create a separate Muslim homeland. "It is a tribute to his leadership and honesty of purpose that within short period of seven years he secured Pakistan against heavy odds through peaceful means" he added. The Speaker reiterated that while celebrating Pakistan day it is incumbent upon us to resolve the spirit of national unity and follow the Quaid's guiding principles of unity, faith and discipline.

The Deputy Speaker said that this Resolution gave an ideal to the Muslims and united them for the attainment of a shared objective. It was such an epoch-making event, which changed the course of history for the Indian Muslims.

Both the leaders assured the nation that the Parliament and present democratic government are committed to preserving our great cultural heritage, distinct political and civilizational identity in the light of the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. We are making our earnest efforts to bring about economic and social revolution

in keeping with the spirit of the Pakistan Resolution.

Women MPs Assigned Oversight of Maintenance and Uplift of Parliament Building

Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq chaired maiden meeting of the Committee to Oversee the Parliament Building Maintenance and Uplift, in Parliament House, on 26th March. The meeting was attended by Members of the Committee, Special Secretary (A) National Assembly Secretariat and Officers of the Capital Development Authority (CDA).

The Speaker said that the pitiable cleanliness and maintenance of the Parliament House by the CDA has necessitated constitution of this Committee. He said that despite allocation of substantial budgetary allocation for the purpose, CDA has not been able to properly maintain the premises. He asked the Members to conduct visits to different parts of the Parliament House and suggest measures for proper cleanliness and maintenance of the Parliament Building, infrastructure and facilities within its precincts.

The Members thanked the Speaker for assigning them the task and assured him that they would try to amicably fulfill their responsibilities. As per ToRs, the Committee has been assigned the task to inspect the Parliament House on weekly basis and submit report on status of cleanliness and maintenance of the building, infrastructure, lawns, lounges, library, cafeteria, staff canteen, car parking and security of the Parliament House.

The Committee comprises of MNAs Ms. Nafeesa Khattak, Ms. Seema Mohiuddin, Ms. Rida Khan, Ms. Saman Sultana Jafri,



Ms. Asiya Nasir, Ms. Zahra Wadood Fatimi, Ms. Farzana Qamar, Ms. Asiya Naz Tanoli, MRs. Shahida Rehmani, Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb, MS. Romina Khurshid Alam and Sajida Begum.

Parliament to join “Earth Hour 2014” Celebrations on 29th March, 2014

Friday, 28th March, 2014

A milestone in state's response to the cause of energy conservation has been met by the historic personal endorsement of the Honourable Speaker, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq of the National Assembly to the Earth Hour 2014.

At the occasion the Honourable Speaker also talked about the existing energy conservation initiatives of the Parliament prominent being Parliament endeavour to go green thus becoming the first ever legislature in the World to opt for solar energy completely, Green Parliament Programme with WWF-Pakistan. Furthermore the initiative of less Parliament and Automation also promises an environment friendly commitment.

Honourable Speaker confirmed that the lights of the Parliament will be switched off to show Parliament's Commitment of joining hands with the World for energy conservation, combating impacts of climate change and global Warming.

NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Condemn Attack on Raza Rumi

Saturday, 29th March, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National

Assembly have strongly condemned the attempt on life of senior Anchorperson of Express TV Raza Rumi.

In their separate statements, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker expressed their grave concern and shock over attack on Raza Rumi's car in which his driver Ghulam Mustafa lost his life. They said that such ghastly attack could not deter media persons from raising voice against terrorism and injustice. They called for thorough investigation into the incident so that culprits behind this cowardly act could be apprehended and brought to justice. They express their sincere condolence to the family the Driver Ghulam Mustafa, while wishing fast recovery to the Raza Rumi and his guard.

NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Felicitate Newly Elected Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami

Monday, 31st March, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly have congratulated Sirajul Haq on his election as Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami.

In their separate statements, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker said that the election of Mr. Sirajul Haq was the evidence of trust and confidence of members (Arakans) of Jamaat-e-Islami reposed in his leadership. They express the hope that newly elected Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami will play a pragmatic role for promotion of democratic values and strengthening democratic institutions in the country. They prayed for his success.



PERSPECTIVE

Our Healthcare Seriousness

Ashtar Hussain



The doctor asked me to get my X-ray from the hospital X-ray centre. When I went to them, a rush of the patients was waiting including men, women, old age people and children. Most of them I saw were in miserable conditions, both from illness as well as poor life. They were all lost in worries and were waiting anxiously for the X-ray films to be brought in order to have their advised X-rays. When I ask the person sitting behind the glass wall about the problem, he angrily answered that X-ray films are not available at the moment. “When the films are expected to be available?”, I asked the person. “It depends; perhaps today, tomorrow or day after tomorrow”, he replied.

You might have imagined about a hospital in one of the remote areas of Pakistan, but it is not one of them. This was the incident I came up with that day – March 20, 2014 – at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), Islamabad. I was shocked and annoyed with that, as I had left my office for few hours for my checkup. I did not get my X-ray so could not get proper treatment. Angrily I left the hospital worried and depressed.

Different thoughts were mounting onto my mind, the moment I saw so many patients in such conditions waiting for their X-rays. Most of them seem to be from poor families, as the upper class people seldom use to come to the government hospitals for their

treatments. If even they come, they have such connections that they need not to wait for such hectic process. Among those waiting patients, I thought that there would be patients from different areas and villages far from Islamabad. Some of them might be working in such places where they get wages of less than PKR 10,000/- per month. Some of them might be from areas, where they depend solely on their persistent farming. While last but not the least, some of them would be daily wagers, who would have sacrificed their daily wage for the treatment of themselves or of their beloved ones. In such circumstances, what pain they bear is no more to be described in words. On one hand, they do not get proper checkup and treatment, while on another hand they have to come some other day while going through all the process and spending their money.

The situations are far worse than this in other hospitals in general while in the hospitals in the rural areas in particular. Each coming day, there come issues in the health services. Hospitals are fewer, with less number of doctors and nurses available. The machinery is rarely available for carrying out different tests in most of the hospitals, along with the fewer other resources. According to the Ministry of Finance (2012-13), per doctor, per nurse and per bed, the population is 1127, 14406 and 1786 people respectively, while according to the World Bank data (2011), 0.7% of the GDP is spent on healthcare which is alarmingly low to fulfill the requirements.



In contrast to the government hospitals, the private hospitals are getting established with the advanced modern equipments. The doctors are also highly qualified in the private hospitals. The progress in the private hospitals is much appreciable, and provides major services in this sector, but it is well-known phenomena that treatment in these hospitals is very much expensive. The questions arise about the poor, how to get treated in the private hospitals? According to the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), almost 58.7% population lives below the poverty line, with its 46% of rural population and 18% of the urban populace (Sumra, 2014).

In such circumstances, where the democracy is newly established and people have expectations from the current government, initiatives must be taken to come up with the issues. The current democratic government must abolish the traditional practices in the pace of development. The government is urged to take strategic decision for the

improvement in the general welfare of the people. The healthcare, among so many other issues, is of course one of the biggest challenges for the government to be achieved. In order to take steps for the solution of the problems in the healthcare, strategic decisions must be taken; both in short-run as well as in long-run. In short-run, the existing policies must be implemented with the proper utilization of already less budget, proper check and balance system, and the existing hospitals must be equipped with all technical resources. In the long-run, the proportion in budget must be increased for the healthcare, with employment of more doctors, construction of new hospitals and research centers, medical colleges, nursing schools, and last but not the least, government must take steps for the general health insurance in the country. With the elimination of corruption from all sectors, especially in the healthcare sector, we can achieve all the goals gradually. Long live Pakistan!

(The author is a Young Parliamentary Associate at National Assembly of Pakistan)

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