

Observation of GBLA 8th Session

Gilgit, April 22, 2016. The 3rd sitting of the 8th session of Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative assembly was held today while Deputy Speaker GBLA chaired the full session. The members of the assembly were scheduled to sit in the assembly lobby at 11:00 AM. Session started at its scheduled time, continued for 1 hour and 40 minutes, and adjourned at 12:40 PM.

Five official bills and one resolution was presented to the House; the bill on Regulation of Charity Institutions was referred to Select Committee, and 4 bills on Temporary Resident, Sensitive Installation Security Establishment, Development and Health Institutions, and Medical College Governing Body were passed by the House. One resolution on Improving Mobile Network Services was adopted by the House.

Key Observations of House Proceeding:

Bills and resolutions:

Parliamentary Secretary for Legislation Mr. Aurungzeb Advocate introduced the following bills in the order of the House:

- Gilgit-Baltistan Temporary Resident Bill 2016.
- Gilgit-Baltistan Sensitive Installation Security Establishments Bill 2016.
- Gilgit-Baltistan Regulation of Charitable Institutions Bill 2016.
- Gilgit-Baltistan Development and Health Institution Bill 2016.
- Gilgit-Baltistan Medical College Governing Body Bill 2016.

Further Mr. Aurungzeb presented a Resolution for improving mobile network service in Gilgit-Baltistan which was adopted by the House after deleting the terms "3G and 4G".

General Observations on representation:

- At the start of the session, 17 members (52%) of the assembly were present in the House while 4 members joined the session later.
- Total number of women members of the assembly was 3 (50%) at the beginning of the session while 2 members joined the session later.
- 4 out of 6 parliamentary secretaries and 3 out of 4 chair persons of standing committees were present in the House for the full session.
- Leader of the Opposition along with the Opposition members walked out from the House in the beginning of session.
- Chief Minister was present in the House for full session.
- 6 out of 7 ministers were present for the session.
- 12 members were absent during the session and their application for leave was not recorded before the House.

Representation and Responsiveness:

In the beginning of the session the House witnessed a walkout by opposition members. They boycott the session for not reading and presenting bills in Urdu language.

All the bills were presented in the House in absence of the opposition, who had walked out earlier. Thus, the bills were presented, debated and approved in absence of the opposition.

Referring to the Select Committee recommendation Mr. Aurganzeb Khan, submitted request to the House that the Temporary Resident Bill 2016 and Sensitive Installation Security Establishments Bill 2016 should be approved without any changes. As a response, the Deputy speaker solicited the House at large and members present in the House approved both the Bills loudly.

The Bill on Gilgit-Baltistan Regulation of Charitable Institutions 2016 was referred to the Select Committee for further review by the Deputy Speaker as this bill was introduced to the House for the first time.

Mr. Aurangzeb Khan, Parliamentary Secretary GBLA, also presented two more Bills; the Gilgit-Baltistan Development and Health Institution Bill 2016 and the Gilgit-Baltistan Medical College Governing Body Bill 2016. Commenting on these bills, the Chief Minister complimented the effort of the concerned members and officials in tabling such significant bills. He brought a fact into attention that GBLA could only approve schemes to the limit of 40 million. He further said that approval of these Bills is of vital importance to sign MoU with the Federal Government for larger projects and schemes.

The Deputy speaker asked the members as they meet the requirement of the quorum, for the recognition of these bills. On a positive response of completion of the quorum both the Bills on Development and Health Institutions and Medical College Governing Body were unanimously approved by the members present in the session.

In the order of the House Parliamentary Secretary for Legislation Mr. Aurungzeb requested the Speaker to grant additional day to the Select Committee on Child Protection Bill, current in review process, for conducting a survey to understand root causes of child labor. The Speaker accepted the request and granted 30 additional days for completion of the said survey.

Mr. Aurangzeb Khan presented a Resolution for Improving Mobile Network Service in Gilgit-Baltistan. Chief Minister Hafiz Hafeez ur Rehman informed the House that SCO lacks the required equipment for launching 3G and 4G services, and without installing the required equipment, SCO would not be able to take part in the auction for 3G and 4G services. He further suggested to remove the term 3G and 4G from the resolution.

Mrs. Rani Atiqa objected and said that other cellular companies are capable to provide 3G and 4G services so, it would not be prudent to wait for SCO to gear up the operations. The resolution was adopted by the House after deleting the terms 3G and 4G.

Outcome:

Five bills were introduced in the business of the House of which four bills were passed by the House while one resolution was adopted before the House.

Transparency:

The order of the day was restricted to the legislators whereas it was not available for the observers and others. The information on attendance of the legislators was not available for observers and general public.

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