

**05 August 2011**

## **Cash distribution to poor through Smart Cards Scheme**

### **President presides meeting on BISP**

President Asif Ali Zardari today advised BISP to distribute cash grants among the poor through Benazir Smart Cards (BSC) throughout the country instead of post offices to avoid delays and other complaints in the present delivery mechanism.

This he said during a briefing on BISP in the Presidency today which revealed that the BSC introduced in four districts of the country as pilot project had proved to be a huge success.

Spokesperson to the President Mr. Farhatullah Babar said that the President also asked NADRA to significantly reduce the charges of Benazir Smart Card so that it was easily affordable. The President also urged all the leading commercial banks to partner with BISP in introducing the Smart Card in all parts of the country and making it ATM friendly also.

The President appreciated the banks who have shown readiness to partner with BISP in implementation of Benazir Smart Card program. He applauded the efforts of all concerned in introducing this technology based solution to the poorest segment of the society saying that this would help the Government to implement a complete financially inclusive system to the poor.

Dr. Abdul Hafeez Sheikh, Federal Minister for Finance, Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Syed Naveed Qamar, Federal Minister for Water & Power,



President Asif Ali Zardari presiding over a high level meeting on Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) for Cash Distribution to poor through Benazir Smart Card here in President House. Chairperson BISP Ms. Farzana Raja, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, Syed Naveed Qamar, Mr. M. Salman Farooqi, Qamar Zaman Kaira and Mr. Yasin Anwar, Acting Governor State Bank are also present on the occasion.

Mr. M. Salman Faruqui, Secretary General to the President, Ms. Farzana Raja, Chairperson BISP, Mr. Yasin Anwar, Acting Governor State Bank, Mr. Qamar Zaman Kaira, Begum Shahnaz Wazir Ali, Spokesperson Farhatullah Babar, Chairman NADRA and other senior officials were present during the meeting.

Presidents/heads of commercial banks including HBL, NBP, Alfalah, Tameer, Summit, Al-Habib and UBL were also present during the meeting.

Farhatullah Babar said that due to various complaints in delivery mechanism of BISP benefits to the beneficiaries, BISP was directed to adopt more efficient and technologically advanced mechanism of delivering BISP funds through the BSC.

The meeting was informed that the various Banks have indicated their choices of districts of operations and Governor SBP would soon convene a meeting to decide allotments of districts to various banks.

The Spokesperson said that the President during the meeting appreciated BISP team for making the program a transparent, apolitical and largest social protection program of the country. He also appreciated objective targeting mechanism and Poverty Scorecard Survey to identify the deserving.

The President noted with satisfaction success of Benazir Smart Card Program in the pilot phase and saying that the success of the program has encouraged the Government to implement it across the country.

The President said that BSC was planned to be used not only for cash transfers but also for other BISP benefits like Health Insurance. The President also lauded the commitment and tireless efforts of Ms. Farzana Raja, Chairperson BISP.