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Press Conference of Chairperson BISP, Ms. Farzana Raja

Political terrorism is as bigger a threat to country as extremism, says Ms. Farzana Raja

Those who termed Kashmiri people as “saleable commodity” should apologize; the allegations on BISP are reflective of defeated mindset

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Ms. Farzana Raja has said that the recent statements of PML (N) leader Mian Nawaz Sharif regarding BISP not only reflect his ignorance but are also insulting for the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) as he has termed them “saleable commodity”. She said that Kashmiri People will never forgive him for this insult to them. She said that BISP is a completely apolitical programme which is serving the poorest of the poor of the country indiscriminately.



Islamabad: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Ms. Farzana Raja addressing a Press Conference held here at BISP Secretariat Islamabad. (Dated: July 03, 2011)

Ms. Farzana Raja said that PML (N) leaders are pointing fingers at this programme for the poor to avenge their defeat in the elections and hence, exhibiting their negative and anti poor mentality. She said this while addressing a press conference here at BISP Secretariat on Sunday.

The Chairperson of BISP said that the transparent mechanisms adopted by BISP are not only acknowledged by various prestigious international bodies but it has also been approved by the both houses of the parliament unanimously. Besides, she said, all the financial assistance disbursed among the beneficiary families in the first phase of the programme has been made on the recommendations of all the parliamentarians.



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Chairperson BISP said that the apolitical nature of the programme could be proved from the fact that Rs. 47 Billion have been disbursed in the first phase of the programme among the beneficiary families recommended by the representatives of the political parties other than PPP while only Rs. 25 billion have been distributed on the recommendations of member parliaments belonging to PPP. Out of these Rs. 47 billion, she said, approx. Rs. 15 billion have been distributed among the recommended families

by PML (N), Rs. 15.5 billion among PML (Q), Rs. 4.5 billion among MQM and Rs. 3 billion among the recommended families by ANP.

Ms. Farzana Raja said that Pakistan is not only threatened by terrorism but also by political terrorists whose politics is just limited to controversial statements. Such elements have nothing to offer for the poor masses of the country. She said that during election campaign in AJK, Mian Nawaz Sharif did not say anything about Kashmiri people on their sufferings and instead, he only attempted to malign Pakistan Army. Chairperson BISP said that on the directions of the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, she distributed the forms of BISP among the elected members of AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan herself during the first phase of the programme.



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She said that former PM AJK Raja Farooq Haider is also toeing the same line adopted by Mian Nawaz Sharif and he has forgotten the fact that while receiving BISP forms, he was quite applicative of BISP and termed it a very useful programme. She said that the people of Pakistan in all four provinces will also reject such negative mindset in next elections. She said that the financial assistance disbursed under BISP cannot be stopped or held as the payment mechanism is automated.

In response to a query, she said that that government is not afraid of any alliance of undemocratic forces against it. She said that the government would continue its policy of national reconciliation. However, it should not be taken as a weakness of the government and reactionary forces must revisit their negative approach.

Ms. Farzana Raj said that BISP is practical manifestation of the dreams of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and it is being expanded successfully. She said that Rs. 65 billion have been allocated in the Federal Budget for the BISP while availability of funds has been insured as per requirements of the programme. She said that various international donor agencies are also willing to extend their support to BISP in its poverty alleviation objectives and it is being expected that the programme would be extended further with the help of funds obtained from these international bodies.