

March 22, 2012

FEDERAL CABINET APPRECIATES BISP's SUCCESS STORY

Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, while addressing the Cabinet today which he chaired here today, said that Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) was a pride of the nation, which had earned a worldwide recognition as an effective social safety programme and the developing countries have been advised by the UN Secretary General to replicate the same.

The Prime Minister constituted a committee consisting of Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Chairperson BISP, Minister for Interior and Prime Minister's Special Assistant in the Social Sector to formulate a strategy to create awareness among the people about the programme as an effective instrument of women empowerment as per vision of Shaheed Mohtrama Benazir Bhutto.

The Prime Minister and the entire Cabinet expressed their appreciation of Chairperson BISP Ms Farzana Raja for making it as a glaring success story for its reach, efficiency and above all the empowerment of women, which would raise their status in the social setup and help them play their meaningful role in the national development.

The Prime Minister also directed the Federal and the Provincial Ministers to visit different parts of the country once a month and meet the party workers at the gross roots level in order to address their grievances. They should not be merely Ministers of their constituencies but that of an entire country, the Prime Minister said.

Earlier Chairperson BISP Ms. Farzana Raja briefed the Cabinet about BISP Programme and its achievements in eradicating extreme and chronic poverty and contributing to women empowerment.

The BISP Chairperson informed that 6 million families were benefiting from this programme through direct financial assistance of Rs.1000/- per month to the female heads of the family.

The Chairperson apprised the Cabinet that 20,000 families had been selected through balloting and they would qualify for 'Waseela-e-Haq' programme of BISP.

She further said that about 1,50,000 people had been selected who would be imparted technical training in demand-driven fields.

She said that Prime Minister would inaugurate 'Waseela-e-Sehat' Insurance cover in Faisalabad. It would be a pilot project covering 75000 families.

Under 'Waseela-e-Taleem' scheme, 3 million children of 6 million families of BISP beneficiaries would be enrolled for education. These are those children who had never gone to school.

She said that foreign donors were taking keen interest in this programme and had committed sufficient financial assistance to fund this programme.

The Chairperson said that this programme had earned worldwide appreciation as one of the success stories of social safety programme.

The UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon, termed this programme as a role model for other countries, the Chairperson said. The President of World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the US Secretary of State had also commended the reach, efficiency and effectiveness of the programme to meet the imperative of social safety programme.

The Chairperson appreciated the Ministry of Interior and NADRA for providing database to verify the record of the potential beneficiaries. Its hallmark is transparency and third party validation, Ms Farzana Raja said.

The Chairperson further informed the Cabinet that the financial resources to implement BISP were being provided by mobilizing support of international donors who are readily agreeing to extend support after seeing the reach and achievement of the programme since its inception.

The Cabinet was briefed on Consumer-Price Index in the country to oversee/discuss the trend of prices of essential commodities. It was informed that the prices of 5 items namely Garlic, Chicken, Egg, Onion and Potatoes decreased during the week which ended on the 15th of March 2012, while the prices of 23 kitchen items remained unchanged. The Cabinet was informed that 25 items registered a trend of rise during the same period.

The Cabinet gave approval, in principle, to start negotiations and for signing of the Inter-Governmental Agreement between the Governments of Pakistan and Italian Republic for Euros 57.75 million support for CDCPII.

The Agreement on transfer of offenders between Pakistan and Uzbekistan was awarded approval by the Cabinet.

The Cabinet gave its approval in principle to start negotiations and signing of the Agreement between SAARC Disaster Management Authority and NDMA about South Asia Disaster Knowledge Network.

It also approved in principle to start negotiations with the Ev-K2-CNR on Memorandum of Understanding on Climate Change and Adaptation Measures.

The Cabinet observed one minute's silence over the death of Mr. Akram Masih Gill's father, Minister of State for Interfaith Harmony.