

Government of Pakistan
Benazir Income Support Programme

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BISP HOLDS INTERACTIVE SESSION TO COMMEMORATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

EMPOWERING WOMEN EMPOWERS NATION. MARVI MEMON

MEDIA AND BISP ADOPTS CHARTER FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

ISLAMABAD: We must make the economy work for women so that women can contribute towards economy. Empowering women empowers nation. Underinvestment in women is the biggest lost opportunity. Women need empowerment, we are proud to be the largest empowerment programme with prime focus on women. This was stated by Minister of State and Chairperson BISP MNA Marvi Memon while speaking at an interactive session held to commemorate International Women's Day 2016.



Minister of State and Chairperson BISP, MNA Marvi Memon speaking at an interactive session to commemorate International Women's Day at BISP secretariat. (Dated: March 05, 2016)

Besides being a social safety net, BISP has a strong focus on women empowerment. BISP strives to bring its beneficiaries in direct contact with ruling elite, media and women role models. So that BISP beneficiaries are able to define a meaningful life for themselves. An interactive session

organized at BISP secretariat was attended by BISP beneficiaries and leading lady journalists. Meher Bokhari, Samina Waqar, Tanzeela Mazhar, Memona Arif, Vilma, Fauzia Khan, Huma Iqbal, Rafia Shabbir and others graced the occasion. Asma Sherazi and Galeeda joined in via telephonic conversation.

Chairperson BISP added that women make immeasurable contributions to the society. Their contribution as entrepreneurs, educators, scientists, artists, soldiers and head of states cannot be undermined. March is a month to reflect on progress already made, to call for change and acknowledge courage and determination of women who have played an extraordinary role. Fortunately BISP has a long list of success stories to celebrate and much more is in the making.



Lady journalists and BISP beneficiaries joined Minister of State and Chairperson BISP MNA Marvi Memon in an interactive session to commemorate International Women's Day at BISP secretariat. (Dated: March 05, 2016)

Chairperson BISP acknowledged the courage of the beneficiaries with which they are coping with the ordeals of daily life. She reiterated that despite the fact that abilities of women are undervalued, we have role models of high stature. If we start valuing women; no one can imagine the betterment it would bring on social, political and national canvass.

Chairperson BISP reiterated that BISP is trying its level best to empower its beneficiaries. BISP intends to harness entrepreneurial potential of its beneficiaries through E-commerce. BISP E-Commerce initiative would provide market access to beneficiaries making them self-reliant. Chairperson BISP highlighted that it is a positive sign that one lakh beneficiaries have already started their own businesses benefiting from PM Interest Free Loan Scheme.

Lady journalists commended chairperson BISP on her tireless efforts for the poorest women. They mentioned that a positive momentum is being observed among BISP beneficiaries since she

assumed office. Chairperson has been successful in instilling hope and passion among BISP beneficiaries.

BISP beneficiaries narrated the change BISP has brought in to their lives through cash grants and other initiatives. They highlighted that they feel financially empowered as the stipend serves to meet their basic needs of food and shelter. They aim to start their own businesses as well benefiting from Prime Minister Interest Free Loan.



Minister of State and Chairperson BISP MNA Marvi Memon taking calls of beneficiaries from all over Pakistan at Radio Pakistan. (Dated: March 05, 2016)

Chairperson BISP stressed that gender equality and women empowerment has been a marathon and the government is undertaking serious efforts to guarantee women rights .BISP is a shining example of government's commitment towards its women. The Chairperson reiterated that in today's world we cannot afford to squander the abilities of half of our population as women empowerment is the key to economic sustainability and better living standards.

In the end Charter for Women of Pakistan was unveiled. Women media community pledged to support BISP efforts for dignity and empowerment of the most vulnerable women and projection of women role models. It was pledged to highlight the issues pertaining to domestic violence, injustice, equal pay, gender parity, nutrition, adult education, immunization, family planning, interest free loans and safety of women at workplace and home. Media women assured that they would play

their part in making BISP E-commerce a success and connect corporate sector with the vulnerable by advocating corporate social responsibility. BISP beneficiaries thanked Prime Minister for his PM Health Insurance, Waseela-e-Taleem, interest free loans and BISP cash grants. They highlighted that it is just because of these praiseworthy initiatives that they feel dignified and empowered.

The session concluded with a resolve that women should believe in themselves and strive for the best of their abilities. It is high time to reshape misperceptions, realize hidden potential, stand up for rights and media has the major role to play in this struggle. Chairperson BISP concluded by saying that each of us can be a leader within our own spheres of influence and should commit to take pragmatic steps to accelerate gender equality. Under International Women's Day 2016 theme "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it Up for Gender Equality" government pledges to take concrete steps to help achieve gender parity.

Later, Chairperson BISP connected with the beneficiaries from remote areas via live radio broadcast. Beneficiaries from all over Pakistan including AJK, GB and FATA apprised the chairperson of the problems faced by them. Replying to queries, Chairperson stated that since she assumed office last February, she has been trying to make BISP more efficient. She expects a re-survey transition, payment transition and a graduation transition this year. She assured the live callers that their complaints would be redressed at the earliest.