

**GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
BENAZIR INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMME**

**PRESS RELEASE
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BISP IS PLAYING A COMMENDABLE ROLE IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION: MASOOD KHAN

BISP AJK WOMEN HAVE ALSO STRUGGLED FOR KASHMIR CAUSE: MARVI

"Poverty is a curse and BISP is playing a commendable role in poverty alleviation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K). The programme has achieved admirable results for poverty reduction, primary enrollment and women empowerment." This was stated by President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Masood Khan while speaking at plenary conference during which BISP Progress Report 2014-16 was presented.

Minister of State and Chairperson BISP MNA Marvi Memon, Deputy Speaker AJ&K Legislative Assembly Mr. Farooq Tahir, Minister for Works Ch Aziz, Minister for Education Barrister Iftikhar Gillani, Minister for Health Dr. Najeeb Naqi, Minister Forests Mir Ali Akbar, Minister for Social Welfare and Women Development Ms. Raja Noreen Arif, Secretaries of various departments, representatives of NGOs and civil society, journalists and BISP beneficiaries attended the event.

On the occasion, President AJK also said that his heart goes out for the pellet gun blinded Kashmiri people of Indian Held Kashmir (IHK) who despite curfew and Indian atrocities are taking to streets for their fundamental right of freedom. International community must take notice of human rights violation in IHK. He said that he would leave no stone unturned in raising the Kashmir cause at all forums.

Chairperson BISP paid tribute to the Kashmiri struggle and reiterated the support for oppressed Kashmiris in IHK. She stated that incumbent President and Prime Minister of AJ&K is a perfect combination that would extend moral and political support to Kashmir Cause at all forums till the issue gets resolved as per UN resolutions. She also appreciated the Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif for his superb advocacy of Kashmir issue at United Nations and all levels.

Talking about BISP, Ms. Memon stated that BISP has achieved many milestones in the last two years. 169,144 households of AJ &K receive BISP stipend on quarterly basis and 34,185 children have been enrolled in Mirpur, Bagh and Kotli under Waseela-e-Taleem (WeT) initiative. BISP has embarked upon Biometric Verification System (BVS) for bringing transparency and efficiency in payment mechanism. Pilot phase of new poverty survey to update National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) includes Mirpur (AJ&K). Updated NSER would be an asset for planning and development in the country and all departments of AJK government besides providing financial assistance to the needy.

The Chairperson reiterated that BISP is a unique programme that supports Sustainable Development Goals of poverty reduction, zero hunger, quality education and gender

equality. Primary objective is to empower women while instilling values of empowerment, dignity and promoting interprovincial harmony.

Chairperson BISP added that women are held in high esteem in Islam. The women should be given their due rights as per principles of Islam. She said that she takes pride in her beneficiaries who despite financial and social constraints are fighting for their rights.

The President distributed appreciation certificates among ten BISP beneficiaries from all across the AJ&K for their struggle against poverty. On the occasion, these beneficiaries stated that besides helping them financially, BISP has been pivotal in empowering them socially and economically.