



## **1. BISP JOINS HAND WITH ONLINE SHOPPING PORTAL**

*Published in The News, April 19, 2016*

Islamabad: Benzir Income Support Programme (BISP) plans to collaborate with Cheezmall, a Chinese online shopping website, to promote the products of BISP beneficiaries.

Modalities in this regard were discussed in a meeting of BISP with Cheezmall officials. A delegation of Cheezmall called on Chairperson BISP Marvi Memon on Monday to give a briefing on their proposal regarding online promotion and sale of BISP beneficiaries' products at international level.

Cheezmall, originating from China, is an online shopping website created by professionals of E-Commerce who have past experience of managing and running Alibaba, a global leader in the field. In order to replicate the successful model of Alibaba, Cheezmall utilises expertise of Alibaba for training of their managers. It started its operation in Pakistan last year.

Speaking on this occasion, Marvi Memon, said that investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards poverty alleviation and financial inclusiveness. She said that BISP has discovered a way to financial empowerment of its beneficiaries through E-Commerce and it intends to harness entrepreneurial potential of its beneficiaries by marketing the products of poor women.

Cheezmall CEO Aurangzeb Khan, Marketing official Nino Zhao, Director Sourcing Maggie Cheng, Senior Marketing Executive Haider

Qazi and Business Development Manager Awais Maqbool represented the Cheezmall.

BISP Chairperson was assisted by Secretary BISP Muhammad Saleem Ahmed Ranjha and BISP management during the meeting.



Chairperson BISP reiterated that through BISP E-Commerce, the products of beneficiaries are already available online giving international recognition to the traditional products of the country. She further added that market access to the handicrafts of marginalized segments would contribute in their welfare.

Cheezmall CEO Aurangzeb Khan stressed the need to establish strong vendor base in Pakistan and said that BISP beneficiaries would be unique vendors for the Cheezmall. He said that Cheezmall is highly interested in promoting these poverty ridden women.

Cheezmall delegates presented their business and marketing plan for maximizing the profits for beneficiary products. It was discussed that Cheezmall would undertake pilot initiatives in seven districts of the country covering all the regions equally. It was discussed that Cheezmall would deal directly with the beneficiaries; BISP being only the facilitator.

Chairperson BISP directed BISP E-Commerce team to further discuss and evaluate the Cheezmall proposal and business model so that



an efficient and transparent mechanism of including BISP beneficiaries in the E-Commerce set up may be established.

*(The Nation, Pakistan Observer, Business Recorder, Frontier Post, Patriot, Express, Nawaiwaqt and Naibaat also carried the story and picture)*

## **2. PAKISTAN TO PERFORM DUE ROLE ON CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES: DAR**

Published in Business Recorder, April 19, 2016

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday said Pakistan will perform its due role at international fora on issues of climate change.

He was talking to a 4-member delegation of International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) led by its Director General, David Molden which called on him.

The minister said government was according due importance to environmental protection and climate change issues.

Ishaq Dar appreciated the efforts of ICIMOD and desired that the organization should co-ordinate with ministries concerned for implementation of its projects in Pakistan.

Director General ICIMOD informed that ICIMOD was a regional organization engaged in providing technical assistance and sharing knowledge on climate issues and environmental stability.

It serves eight regional member countries of the Hindukush Himalyas-Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan. The organization is based in Nepal, he added.

Climate change and other issues related with the environment have an increasing influence on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and livelihoods of the mountain people, Molden remarked.

He said ICIMOD aims to assist mountain people to understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of the new opportunities while addressing upstream-downstream issues.

The meeting was attended by Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program, Marvi Memon, UN Resident Coordinator, Neil Buhne and other senior officials of Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs Division, Ministry of National Food Security and BISP.

## **3. BISP NEWS**

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*(Also Published in Jinnah)*



## 4. Social Security

### WB MAY EXTEND PAKISTAN \$100M LOAN FOR BISP

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Social security

# WB may extend Pakistan \$100m loan for BISP

Preparatory mission of the lender already in the country

By A SHAHBAZ RANA  
ISLAMABAD

The World Bank may extend a \$100 million loan to supplement Pakistan's efforts in reaching out the poorest of the poor through its largest social safety net, the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP).

The preparatory mission of the Washington-based lending agency has already reached the country, which will meet different stakeholders, according to the officials. The officials said that loan preparations are expected to be completed by end of this year.

If approved by the WB board, it will be the third financing by the global lender. WB has already extended two loans, amounting to \$200 million. It gave the second loan of \$150 million in March 2012, which was originally planned to be closed in June this year. However, the World Bank has granted six months extension aimed at facilitating the government in initialising the work on the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER). The registry will become the base for enrolling poorest people in BISP.

"In view of the good progress on BISP, WB is working with the government

#### PREVIOUS ASSISTANCE

## \$210m

have already been loaned to Pakistan by the World Bank

in preparing a follow-on safety net programme," said a spokesman of the WB country office.

Economic Affairs Division (EAD) officials said that the \$100 million loan proceeds would be used for the NSER survey, conditional cash transfers, improving management information system and ensuring better monitoring of the programme.

WB said its assistance for BISP is in line with the lender's priorities defined under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The fresh loan will help reduce poverty, ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities.

WB said it stays committed to supporting Pakistan in advancing the social

protection agenda as part of its on-going economic and subsidy reforms, which insulate the poor from any adverse impacts by providing income support as well as access to human development. WB had initially supported BISP through a \$60 million loan.

BISP has established a NSER through the use of an objective targeting system, hosting a database of more than 27 million households. However, the data requires up-gradation due to concerns of inclusion of ineligible people and also many more people have fallen below the poverty line.

According to a recent revision in the poverty measurement methodology and release of poverty numbers, around 29% of Pakistan's population of 59 million live below the poverty line and a significant proportion is vulnerable to poverty due to any adverse natural or idiosyncratic shock.

BISP will launch the new survey in June this year, which will be completed by end of 2017. BISP has also rolled out the Co-responsibility Cash Transfers (CCT) programme, linking cash transfers to primary school education, which is currently being implemented in 32 districts.

*(Also published in Business Recorder)*