

NEWS TODAY

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1. CORRUPTION FORCES GOVT TO FRESH BISP SURVEY

Published in The Nation

ISLAMABAD - The government has decided to conduct a fresh survey of the Benazir Income Support Programme in the entire country in an attempt to scrutinise fake accounts and corruption by staff of this department.

According to officials, in the first phase three districts of Balochistan including Kech, Naseerabad and Qila Saifullah will be audited.

The door-to-door survey will start from Naseerabad in September 2016 and entire phase is expected to be completed by March 2017. The survey is expected to be completed in the country by March 2018.

In Punjab, the survey will be conducted in Faisalabad, Bahawalpur, Layyah and Chakwal districts. Except Bahawalpur, where desk approach is used, the door-to-door survey will be conducted in other districts.

In Sindh, Sukkur will be surveyed by desk approach while Thatta and Jacobabad will be covered by door-to-door exercise.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Lakki Marwat and Charsadda will be surveyed door to door while Haripur would be surveyed by desk approach.

In Balochsitan, Killa Saifuallah and Kech will be surveyed by door-to-door approach while Nasirabad will be surveyed by desk approach.

Gilgit in Gilgit Baltistan, Mirpur in Azad Kashmir and Mohmand Agency in FATA will be surveyed by door-to-door approach.

According to officials, this survey had already been started in Haripur in June 2016, using desk approach. It is expected to be completed in November 2016. The exercise in Bahawalpur, Sukkur and Naseerabad will be initiated in August 2016 and are expected to be completed in November 2016.

According to the officials, the decision of survey has been taken after growing number of complaints about fake accounts and alleged corruption by the BISP staff.

Seven employees has been suspended so far on charges of corruption while 112 employees were show caused and seven cases have been forwarded to FIA for criminal proceedings.

According to the BISP data, during audits, 125,714 suspicious beneficiaries were found and suspended.

2. ENHANCING DIGITAL INCLUSION WITH 30,000 SMARTPHONES PROVISION AMONG BISP BENEFICIARIES

Published in Pakistan Observer

Islamabadô The government, considering importance to enhance financial and digital inclusion, would provide around 30,000 smartphones with Rs250 balance per month among Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) beneficiaries.

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The smartphones having 3G services would be provided in un-served and under-served areas of Balochistan and FATA under a programme which would be funded by Universal Service Fund (USF) as the government has upgraded its scope. The distribution of smartphones among the BISP beneficiaries with launch of upcoming broadband projects for providing 3G services in Balochistan and FATA.

Sources at Ministry Information Technology and Telecommunications on Sunday said the latest reports have revealed that Pakistan scored 69 percent on financial and digital inclusion and remained at 14th position among 26 emerging or third world countries.

Further they would also be given Rs250 balance every month, training, besides different apps to increase mobile adaptability including a know how of e-commerce etc. The BISP beneficiaries would get information about the amount they are receiving from the government which would mitigate the fraud chances.

The sources said pilot project would cover Sibi, Harnai, Barkhan, Loralai-Zhob, Musakhel, Sherani-Kalat, Kharan/Washuk, Kohlu Dera Bugti, Kohistan and entire FATA with all 7 Agencies.

BISP has already launched e-commerce facility for promotion of handicraft skills of BISP beneficiaries, aimed at providing them better access for their products in national and international markets.

The objective is to alleviate poverty in rural and semi-urban areas of Pakistan by supporting rural based micro and small enterprises. Market access to the products of marginalized

segments will contribute in their welfare and the effects of such measures will also give boost to the economy of Pakistan.

Regarding USF Board's meeting, the sources said it has taken in to consideration important upcoming projects including approval of 40 tele-centres, small lots, establishment of computer labs initially in 100 Girls Schools run under Islamabad Capital Territory Administration.

According to official documents, USF Company has been mandated to provide telecommunication coverage to un-served and under-served areas across Pakistan. Different programmes have been designed and multiple projects have been undertaken to achieve the goals set forth by federal government.

Under the USF program broadband programme was initiated to provide broadband internet services in urban areas of 2nd and 3rd tier cities.

USF has provided internet connectivity to 449,896 subscribers in 406 towns and established 1328 educational broadband centers and 369 community broadband centers.

However, with the evolution of 3G/4G ecosystem objectives of this programme have been merged into the rural telephony and e-service programme.

Rural Telephony & e-Services (RTeS) programme has been the main programme of USF whereby both last mile and backhaul components of telecommunication infrastructure have been provisioned in un-served areas. APP

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(Business Recorder and Pakistan Today also carried the story)

3. MARVI INSPECTS BISP'S REGISTRATION DESKS IN HARIPUR

Published in Daily Times

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Chairperson Marvi Memon paid a surprise visit to Haripur for spot checks where registration desks for BISP's new poverty survey have been set up.

The purpose of the visit was to ensure the smooth registration process of the families in the survey through on spot inspection and feedback from people and the officials.

The pilot phase of BISP's new poverty survey started from Haripur in June this year where desk approach of self-registration has been adopted, said a news release issued on Sunday.

According to the press statement, BISP has set up 52 operational counters at 31 operational sites in collaboration with NADRA. At least 25 percent of the expected registration has been completed till date and by October this year registration process will be completed in Haripur, it said.

The BISP chairperson visited the registration desks in the union councils of South Haripur, Sarai Saleh, Alikhan, Sikandarpur, Khalabat Township and Tarbela.

She inspected the sites and interacted with people, coming for registration, for their feedback. She instructed the officials

concerned to facilitate the people in registration process.

She also informed people to contact BISP in case of any complaint at BIP hotline no 0800-26477.

Marvi also visited press club in Haripur where she talked to reporters about the new poverty survey of BISP. The pilot phase of resurvey includes 16 districts across the country, she informed.

"Desk approach will be employed in four districts, while in 12 districts, door-to-door approach will be utilised. Desk approach survey would start in Bahawalpur on August 31 and in Naseerabad and Sukkar, it will be initiated in the first week of September this year," Marvi said.

At least 12 districts of door-to-door survey in pilot phase include Jacobabad, Thatha, Mohmand Agency, Gilgit, Muzaffarabad, Layyah, Chakwal, Faisalabad, Kech, Qila Saifullah, Lakki Marwat and Charsadda, she said.

Door-to-door survey in these 12 districts will start in mid October and it will be completed by the end of February 2017, she added. National roll out of resurvey will be followed by the pilot phase.

The minister reiterated that in order to make the new poverty survey fool proof and to overcome the inclusion and exclusion errors, BISP has adopted Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) instead of Paper Assisted Personal Interviews (PAPI).

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The poverty score card has been revised and two approaches of resurvey like desk approach and door-to-door approach have been adopted so that no deserving family is missed out.