

1. 'IN LARGER INTEREST'

BISP BOARD APPROVES DE-CREDITING POLICY

Published in Express Tribune, Feb 26, 2016

'In larger interest'

BISP board approves de-crediting policy

Money obtained will be used to meet the operational expenditures of the income support programme

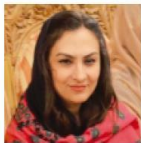
A OUR CORRESPONDENT
ISLAMABAD

Benazir Income Support Programme on Thursday approved the proposed de-crediting policy 'in the larger interest of its beneficiaries' as it granted approval to spend the de-credited amount to meet operational expenditures.

The decision was taken during the BISP's 25th board meeting chaired by BISP Chairperson Marvi Memon. This was the fourth BISP board meeting since Memon assumed office in February last year.

Under the BISP - launched in July 2008 with the immediate objective of cushioning negative effects of slow economic growth, food crisis and inflation on the poor - Rs1,500 per month is transferred to each eligible family.

However, under the new



"We will make sure that the whole country is covered equally in the National Socio Economic Registry update

BISP Chairperson Marvi Memon

policy the transferred amount will be taken back or de-credited, if it is not taken out of the bank account within a specified time, ie, one year.

During her welcome note, the BISP chairperson shared recent initiatives undertaken by the organisation. "As the BISP is ready to update National Socio Economic Registry (NSER), we would make sure that the whole of the country is covered equally in the NSER update," she said. Memon said the technologi-

cally superior solutions would be employed to maximise the accuracy for NSER updation, adding that "we are moving towards dynamic registry for the first time in history."

The board members were provided with detailed briefing by the management on the progress on the NSER update, to be carried out in two phases.

In the first phase, survey in 16 districts throughout the country - including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK),

Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) and Federally Administrative Tribal Area (FATA) - will be initiated from June 2016. In second phase, there will be national rollout of the re-survey. It was further informed that principal approval for update had been granted by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar.

Since its inception, the BISP has grown rapidly and is the largest single social safety net programme in Pakistan's history. The number of beneficiaries has increased from 1.7 million households in 2008-2009 to approximately 4.7 million in December 2014.

The BISP's annual disbursements have risen from Rs16 billion in 2008-2009 to Rs65 billion in 2013-2014. This year, the disbursements to beneficiaries are expected to reach Rs90 billion, according to the BISP website.

highlighted recent initiatives of the support programme and briefly discussed the agenda for the meeting. She said it was encouraging that BISP was ranked 5th in targeting worldwide. As BISP was ready to update the National Socio Economic Registry, she said, it would make sure that the entire country is covered equally in the update. She said that technologically superior solutions would be employed to maximise the accuracy for the registry update. She said the support programme was moving towards a dynamic registry for the first time in the history. BISP board members were given a detailed briefing on the progress on the registry update that would be carried out in two phases. In the first phase, a survey would be conducted in 16 districts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas from June this year. In the second phase, there would be a national rollout of the resurvey. It was said that Finance Minister Ishaq Dar had given approval for the update. After thorough deliberations on the agenda, the board approved the recommended de-crediting policy in the larger interest of the BISP beneficiaries. The board also granted approval for the spent de-credited amount for the operational expenditure.

2. MARVI HIGHLIGHTS BISP INITIATIVES AT BOARD MEETING

Published in Daily Times, Feb 26, 2016

ISLAMABAD: Marvi Memon, chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), on Thursday chaired the 25th meeting of the BISP board at the BISP Secretariat in the federal capital. It was the 4th board meeting since she assumed the office of the BISP chairperson in February 2015. Board members Dr Zeba A Sathar, Yawar Irfan Khan, Dr Sania Nishitar and Dr Ali Cheema, BISP Secretary Saleem Ahmed Ranzha and representatives of the Finance Division, EAD and Foreign Office also attended the meeting. In her welcome note, Memon



(Express, Dunya, Khabrain, Naibaat and Jinnah also carried the story and picture)



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3. MARVI BRIEFS ON 'E-COMMERCE' SCHEME

Published in The News, Feb 26, 2016

Islamabad: Minister of State and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Marvi Memon has urged the youth to come forward with innovative entrepreneurial ideas and join hands with BISP to boost the handicraft work of its beneficiaries through the E-Commerce. She was addressing the students and faculty at Quaid-i-Azam University here on Wednesday.

The BISP chairperson briefed the audience about the "E-Commerce" scheme that has been launched to empower the women economically. She said through new scheme the beneficiaries would send their handicraft work to local office of BISP. The staff would take the picture of work and displayed it on the webpage of BISP.

She said local handicraft would be showcased to enable women to earn their livelihood in a better manner. The BISP chairperson asked the students to help the vulnerable and poor by adding value to their products.

4. BISP BLOCKS SUSPICIOUS PAYMENTS TO 125,714 BENEFICIARIES: SENATE TOLD

Published in Pakistan Observer, Feb 26, 2016

Islamabad—Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenues here on Thursday was informed that Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) had identified 125,714 suspicious beneficiaries and blocked their payments. The committee met here with Senator Saleem H. Mandviwala in the chair was also informed that last year, BISP had conducted an audit in order to check the genuine beneficiaries. Chairperson BISP, Marvi Memon informed the

committee that a system was already in place where dead beneficiaries were marked and their payments are stopped. Besides, she said that BISP was in process of linking its payments withdrawal with biometric verification of the beneficiary moreover, adding it was in process of im-plementing approved 'Next to Kin' policy through which legal heirs of deceased beneficiaries will become beneficiaries as per procedure. She said BISP was also working on discourag-ing the role of middle man and launched social mobilization campaign in 32 districts to overcome such types of issues. Marvi Memon said that about 91 percent beneficiaries were receiving payments through technology enabled innovative payments mechanism like debet card, smart card and mobile banking and rest of the beneficiaries were getting their payments through post offices. She said that to bring transparency in payment system through post man, biometric machines would also be provided to postman for the identification of beneficiaries. Secretary, BISP informed the committee that departmental inquiries were also conducted and showcause notices were issued to 75 employees. He said about 450 offices were operational at tahsil level to facilitate the beneficiaries which were not sufficient as government has set a target to extend BISP out-reach to further 5.4 million families from existing 5.2 million. He said that currently, about 9,000 ATMs were used across the country for cash payments, adding that telecos, easy pasa and omini shops were also engaged in cash disbursement. "We are planning to enhance the facility centers by five times and biometric machines would also provided to postman to deliver cash to the doorsteps of the beneficiaries," he added. The Secretary said that about 7,000 sims were blocked on dubious SMS and Federal Investigation Agency were also in-volved to check such activities which had reduced the SMS ratio. Senate Committee appreciated the steps being taken by BISP for bringing transparency and efficiency in the support programmes to serve the vulnerable



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segments and assured its full help in this regard. The Senate body also approved the “Future Market Bill 2016”, after proposing the amendments in the bill of Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan. The Committee also discussed the special audit report of the Auditor General of Pakistan on clearance of circular debt of power sector of Rs. 480 billion. The committee discussed the anomaly in duty structure of paper and sent the matter to National Assembly standing committee on commerce to address the issues to protect and develop the local industry. The Senators, Nasreen Jalil, Kamil Ali Agha, Nuzat Sadiq, Mohsin Aziz and Sardar Fateh Muhammad Muhammad Hassani attended the meeting.—APP

(The Nation, Business Recorder, Daily Times, Dunya and Pakistan also carried the story).