

## **'BISP BENEFICIARIES WILL BE ENABLED TO EARN DECENT LIVING'**

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**LAHORE:** The federal government is providing financial assistance to 5.2 million households under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). The programme's objective is to gradually bring down the number by enabling beneficiary households to earn a decent livelihood for themselves, BISP chairperson Marvi Memon said on Saturday.

She was addressing a conference, DISCON 2016 Pakistan Conference of Commitment, arranged by the Rotary Club International-Rotary Ruryial Gujranwala.

Memon, also a state minister, said the BISP would extend all out support to other poverty reduction and women development initiatives in the country. "We want to empower our women and give them dignity and a purpose in life," she said.

She said a new survey of income-poor households in the country would be completed by the end of 2017. She said the BISP was working on a project to plug loopholes in the

disbursement of funds. She said that under the project biometric verification would be made mandatory receipt of funds.

Memon said the BISP was helping women entrepreneurs in rural and far-off areas market their handicrafts through online forums.

She agreed to let the Rotary International Club use the BISP database for better targeting in its philanthropy efforts.

She said the success of the BISP's operations was owed to the efforts of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar. The government's management of its finances had been praised by international financial institutions, she added. She said income-poor households would have found it hard to sustain themselves in the absence of BISP support.

Speaking to the media after the conference, she said the quarterly financial support to the beneficiary households had recently been increased from Rs4,500 to Rs 4,700.

On a question about the Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act, Memon said that all reservations on the law would soon be addressed. "I have complete confidence in Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif and the lawmakers in the Provincial Assembly," she said.

Rotary Club International Pakistan district governor Sajid Bhatti, Rotary Club Lahore district governor elect Mir Arif Ali, and Rotary Club Gujranwala's Rana Nasir Mehmood were also present.

*(Daily Times, Frontier Post, Patriot, Express, Dunya, Jinnah, Khabrain, Naibaat, Ausaf and Pakistan also carried the story and picture)*