

Government of Pakistan
BENAZIR INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMME
(Media, Communication & Outreach Wing)
(F-Block, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad)

[PRESS RELEASE]

ISLAMABAD, Jan 26 (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi, Thursday said the incumbent government had announced a targeted subsidy for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) beneficiaries to extend relief through providing essential food items at subsidized rates.

Addressing a press conference flanked by Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Shazia Marri, the SAPM said under the package, the beneficiaries could buy a 10-kilogram flour bag for Rs 400, sugar for Rs 70 per kg, and ghee for Rs 300 per kg with per monthly limit of 5 kg each.

The beneficiaries could send their Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) numbers on 5566 through SMS and then purchase the above food items from the nearby Utility Store, he added.

He said the beneficiaries could register their complaint, if any, at the toll-free helpline number 0800-05590.

Highlighting the BISP's contributions, the SAPM said about Rs 70 billion had been disbursed among the 2.8 million flood-hit people through a transparent mechanism.

He said the first-ever dynamic survey was going to be launched soon to bring more deserving persons under the umbrella of the BISP.

The quarterly payments of Benazir Kafalat and Benazir Education Stipends were underway, he said, urging the beneficiaries to get registered complaints if an illegal deduction was made.

Criticizing Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan for his "unrealistic" speeches, Kundi said the government could arrest the PTI chief, however, it did not believe in political victimization.

"Imran Khan's dialogues can be used in movies but they are impractical. The system through which Imran Khan was imposed on the nation has been infected with a virus," he said.

The SAPM said the PTI had always targeted state institutions and politicized every matter. Its leader Chaudhry Fawad Hussain was arrested in a first information report lodged by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), he added.

Kundi said unlike the PTI which had made U-turns on many issues, the PPP was ready to contest local government and general elections.

He urged the institutions to investigate unprecedented corruption that had taken place in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province during the last 10 years.

Shazia Marri, on the occasion, said Pakistan was facing the economic crisis due to the ineffective policies of the previous PTI government. However, the present coalition government was striving hard to put it back on the right track.

She urged all the political parties to sit together and find out a viable solution to the prevailing economic crisis for providing relief to the masses.

Shazia Marri said all the claims of positive economic indicators made by the PTI government were merely an illusion. The real indicator to gauge economic development was the living standard of the people and the availability of their basic necessities.

Terming the recent floods another major challenge, she said the government had to divert a big chunk of resources toward the rehabilitation of flood-affected population.

She criticized Imran Khan for using abusive language against his political opponents. "Nobody is above the law and will be treated in accordance with the country's law."

Imran Khan and his followers, she added, were persistently instigating the people for violence while the country needed stability.

She said there was not a single political prisoner during the last government of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the party still pursuing its that legacy of not victimizing political opponents. “PPP leader Asif Ali Zardari has always pursued the policy of reconciliation and tried hard to bring all the political parties on a single platform in the larger national interest.”

To a question, SAPM Kundi said Fawad Chaudhry was arrested not on political grounds as an FIR was registered by an institution against him for inciting the public to violence against it.