(4th Group, 10th Session)

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT

"QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWERS AND THEIR REPLIES"

to be asked at a sitting of the National Assembly to be held on

Sunday, the 20th October, 2024

1. ***Mr. Muhammad Mobeen Arif:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety be pleased to state:

(a) the detail of ratio of poverty in the country as on 30th June of each year for the last five years alongwith changes either positive or negative in said years;

(b) the number of the people which have spent their lives below poverty line;

(c) what steps are being taken by the Government to bring out such people from poverty; and

(d) whether the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) meet the task of bringing people out of poverty?

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety: (a) it pertains to Ministry of Planning, Development Special Initiatives (MoPDSI). The details of ratio of poverty relates to "Poverty - Estimation Committee" under MoPDSI.

(b) Same as (a)

(c) Ministry of Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety was created in 2019 with the mandate to formulate policies on poverty alleviation, social protection and social safety. In this regard various national initiatives such as; Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM), Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and Trust Volunteer Organization (TVO) are administered the M/o PASS. Furthermore, in order to bring people out of poverty, BISP provides quarterly cash, assistance to its beneficiaries. As part of BISP's efforts to graduate people from BISP's Kafaalat Programme, skill development initiative is also being undertaken in coordination with NAVTEC. Moreover, several' other organizations including Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) are dedicated to bring people out of poverty.

In 2021, 1.6 million beneficiaries graduated from the BISP-Kafaalat Program on account of higher PMT score than the eligible cut-off score. Re-certification process of existing 9.3 million Kafaalat beneficiary House Holds (HHs) is on-going. Based on re-certifications completed so far, 29% of beneficiary HHs are expected to exit/graduate from BISP's Kafaalat Program. Since the recertification process is not yet complete, the actual number of bencaries exiting/graduating, may vary.

(d) Yes, Same as (c)

3. ***Ms. Sharmila Sahiba Faruqui Hashaam:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety be pleased to state:

(a) what specific initiatives and collaborations will the Ministry undertake with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to address poverty reduction in Pakistan;

(b) how it will be ensured that these efforts are integrated with existing social safety net programmes and poverty alleviation strategies to maximize their impact on the most vulnerable segments of society; and

(c) what steps are being taken by the Government to accommodate the children with autism and other vulnerabilities in Pakistan's education system?

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety: (a) Currently, this Ministry has no collaboration with Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), regarding any initiatives related to poverty reduction in Pakistan.

(b) Same as above.

However, in case the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) approaches this Ministry for taking any initiatives regarding poverty reduction, Ministry will ensure collaboration and partnership in future endeavours to reduce poverty index in Pakistan.

(c) Currently, there are no initiatives or programmes specifically targeted for school children suffering from autism. However, following steps are being taken to address other vulnerabilities:

PBM Sweet Homes:

Pakistan Bait-ul Mal is administering (46) orphanages with the name of "PBM Sweet Homes" throughout the country. Every Home is accommodating 100 orphan children, with health and education facilities.

Orphan Widow, Support Programme (OWSP):

A family *cum* community based conditional cash transfer program for family of school going children, preferably girl, is provided financial support of Rs. 8000/- and R 12000/- subject to their school attendance report. At present, 1080 families are enrolled with this program.

School for Rehabilitation of Child Labour (SRCL):

Starting from 1995, (160) schools for rehabilitation are operational all over the country. School children involved in child labour are enrolled in every school and are being imparted free of cost education up to primary level.

Cochlear Implant:

Pakistan Bait-ul Mal is serving the deserving children with provision of cochlear implant with the help of public-private partnership. The children below the age of 05 years, requiring cochlear implant surgeries are provided financial assistance upto Rs. 2.15 million. From January to June, 2024, (1,103) surgeries for cochlear implant have been conducted with Rs. 1183.94 million expenditure incurred.

11. ***Khawaja Izhar Ul Hassan:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division be pleased to state:

(a) the post-wise names of civil servants appointed in Federal Government currently serving on quota of Sindh (Urban) since January, 2021 till to date; and

(b) the details of the last appointed civil servants/officers presently serving in Federal Government through Central Superior Services on Urban quota of Sindh during the above said period?

Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema): (a) The detail of Federal Government Civil Servants appointed against Sindh (Urban) quota since January, 2021 till to date, as per information received from 38 (thirty eight) Ministries' Divisions is placed at **(Annexure-A).**

(b) The details of officers recommended for allocation to various occupational groups through _Central Superior Services against Sindh Urban) quota since January, 2021 is at **(Annexure-B).**

(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)

20. ***Ms. Sehar Kamran:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Broadband/Interent Service Providers (ISPs) across the country;

(b) the year-wise and ISP-wise number of incidents of fault/disruptions of broadband/interent services in the country during the last five years alongwith the reasons for each incident; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) against these ISPs in each case?

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): (a) Details ISPs across the country are as under:

- Fixed Local Loop (FLL) Operators - 293
- Data CVAS Operators - 180

FLL operators provide internet services as well as can lay last mile media. Data CVAS licensees can only provide internet services using last mile media laid by FLL/infrastructure service providers.

(b) Pakistan is connected to international internet through 7 x Submarine cables. Details are as following:-

Ser No	Operator	Name of Cable	Utilized Capacity (GBs)
1	PTCL	SMW 3	10.8
2	PTCL	SMW 4	1501
3	PTCL	IMEWE	1822
4	PTCL	AAE-1	3122
5	TWA	SMW 5	1680
6	TWA	TW 1	1560
7	CyberNet	PEACE	440
	Total		10,146

Most of the disruptions occur due to submarine cable fault. Detail of major faults is as following:

Time	Submarine Cable/System	Type and Location of Fault	Impact	Resolution Time
17 Aug 24	AAE-1	Maintenance activity (250 Gbps reduction)	Ongoing disruption in internet services	By 27 Aug 24

31 July 24	PTCL System	Error in route configuration	Few hours	Resolved
17 June 24	SEA-ME-WE 4	Offshore Near Karachi (undersea cable cut) (1500 Gbps reduction)	Ongoing disruption in internet services	By end September 24
Feb 24	SEAMEWE 5	Egypt, land cable cut	Few hours	Resolved
April 23	AAE-1 (250 Gbps reduction)	France, land cable cut	Few hours	Resolved
Nov 22	SEAMEWE 5	Egypt, land cable cut	Few hours	Resolved
Feb 22	TW-1	400 Km off Karachi	3 months	Resolved
Dec 21	AAE-1	UAE, land cut	Few hours	Resolved
Feb 21	TW-1	Egypt, land cut	Few Hours	Resolved

(c) PTA has taken following steps in this regard:-

- PTA has issued an SOP on reporting major break downs in telecom Networks. As per PTA SOP, Submarine Cable fault is to be reported to PTA within two hour. If the effect of cable fault is significant, then a PR is published by PTA to make public aware of the situation. Thereafter, PTA monitors the traffic mitigation and repair activity. In case of terrestrial cut, the cable is restored within hours. However, in case of undersea cut, a special repair ship is required to be engaged and its crew has to be security cleared by LEA. Through PTA efforts standing security clearance has been obtained for two ships, saving months of security clearance time. Still repair ships have a tight schedule and take time to arrive for repair activity.

- PTA has updated Quality of Service Regulations in 2022 to keep pace with fast changing technology, increasing the threshold of system availability and download / upload speeds.

    - 7 x ISPs have been issued notices in July 24 for not meeting PTA KPI threshold during the survey conducted by PTA.

    - After a special ISP survey in Gwadar, a show cause notice was issued to PTO, in Feb 24 for failing to meet PTA KPI Threshold.

    - All ISPs across the country have been given notice in July 24 to upgrade the systems to meet PTA KPI threshold as given in Fixed Line QoS Regulations 2022.

- In addition, PTA also maintains a Complaint Management System (CMS) to handle consumer complaints including complaints pertaining to Quality of Service. PTA's complaint handling mechanism is customer focused, visible and accessible for all Telecom users. The complaint can be lodged through Toll Free Number 0800-55055 (Working hours 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM, 7 days a week), through online complaint form (https://complaint.pta.gov.pk/RegisterComplaint.aspx) or by using mobile application.

26. ***Ms. Nikhat Shakeel Khan:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety be pleased to state what steps are being taken by the Government to bring ease in disbursement of funds to women under Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP)?

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety: BISP disburses funds to its beneficiaries by opening their bank accounts in BISP partner banks. Beneficiaries can withdraw their payments by via Biometric Verification System (BVS) which is a very convenient and easy to use system as it requires only CNIC and biometric verification of the beneficiary. Recently, BISP has hired six new partner banks based on refined Payment Model with special focus on ease of access and dignity of beneficiaries.

The key features of the new Payment Model are as follow:

(1) Ease of access through withdrawal option at UC level.

(2) Diversification with six partner banks.

(3) Efficient complaints redressal through dedicated call center in each cluster as well integration of BISP and Banks' Complaint Resolution Mechanisms.

(4) Transfer of financial risk to the banks.

(5) Effective monitoring & frauds management.

137. ***Ms. Asiya Naz Tanoli:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government to deal with the situation arising due to climate change; and

(b) what further steps are being taken by the Government for plantation of trees and also for stoppage of cutting of trees?

Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination: (a) The Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) is mandated to frame climate change-related national policies, plans, strategies, and programs. While legislative authority on environmental matters has been devolved to the provinces after the 18th Constitutional Amendment, MoCC&EC continues to play a proactive role in coordination of national climate action and fulfilment of international environmental obligations in an effort to combat climate change.

Towards this end, MoCC&EC has undertaken a number of steps to address the impacts of climate change for a climate-resilient Pakistan. These include the formulation of 16 policies, plans, strategies and guidelines to address climate change **(Annex-I),** including:

I. **National Climate Change Policy (NCCP)**: The NCCP serves as the foundation for various sectoral policies, including the National Water Policy, National Renewable Energy Policy, National Food Security Policy, and National Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy. These policies collectively aim to strengthen cross-sectoral climate resilience.

II. **Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)**: Pakistan's Revised NDC of 2021 demonstrates a commitment to reducing projected emissions by 50% by 2030, with a significant reliance on international grant finance. The NDC is aligned with the NCCP and includes 59 identified priority projects with an initial estimated cost of USD 3 billion.

III. **National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2023**: The NAP focuses on enhancing resilience in sectors like agriculture, water management, and urban resilience. It includes initiatives such as climate-smart agriculture practices, sustainable land management, and improved urban planning for climate adaptation.

IV. **Draft Pakistan Policy Guidelines for Trading in Carbon Markets 2024** (approval in process): These policy guidelines aim to advance climate mitigation efforts through voluntary carbon markets, stimulating private sector investments in emission reduction initiatives.

V. **National Forest NFP 2015 aims to expand** national coverage of forests, protected areas, natural habitats and green areas for restoration of ecological functions and maximizing economic benefits while meeting Pakistan's obligations to international agreements related to forests.

As part of its mandate, MoCC&EC has also initiated a number of projects and programs that promote climate resilience and strengthen climate-preparedness **(Annex-II)**. These include:

1. **Living Indus Initiative**: This initiative focuses on resilience and ecosystem-based solutions within the Indus River basin, aiming to restore ecological health through nature-based solutions. It has been endorsed by UNEP as an Ecosystem Restoration Flagship program.

2. **Upscaling Green Pakistan Program (UGPP)**: The GPP aims to revive forestry and wildlife resources, with a target of planting 2.1 billion trees. An independent consortium reported a success rate between 75% and 95%.

3. **Climate Resilient Urban Human Settlements Unit**: This project aims to develop climate resilient safe & sustainable cities through community-motivated urbanization initiatives. The project is being implemented with collaboration of Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives and UN-Habitat.

4. **Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) II Project**: This project, supported by a GCF grant, addresses the risks associated with glacial lake outburst floods in Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through engineering structures and advanced weather monitoring systems.

5. **Transforming the Indus Basin with Climate resilient Agriculture**: In collaboration with FAO, this project focuses on enhancing climate resilience in Punjab and Sindh through climate-resilient agriculture and smart water management practices.

6. **Green BRT Karac**hi: Supported by ADB, this project aims to introduce a zero-emissions bus rapid transit system in Karachi, addressing congestion and pollution issues.

7. **Recharge Pakistan**: Executed by WWF, this project focuses on ecosystem-based adaptation in Sindh, Balochistan, and

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, promoting nature-based solutions and enhancing livelihood opportunities.

8. **Mangrove Restoration**: The Delta Blue Carbon Project in Sindh has rejuvenated 75,000 hectares of degraded mangroves, benefiting local communities and sequestering significant amounts of CO_2.

The above-mentioned measures reflect MoCC&EC's resolute commitment to proactively push Pakistan climate agenda forward at national and sub-national tiers of governance.

(b) Following steps are being taken by the Government for plantation of trees and stopping of cutting of trees:

1. Plantation of Trees:

A. **Upscaling of Green Pakistan Programme**:

The national flagship initiative, Upscaling of Green Pakistan Programme is under implementation with a target of planting 3.29 billion trees by 2028. So far planting/sowing/ distribution of 2.2 billion plants across the country has been achieved since 2019 **(details in Annex-III).**

B. **Seasonal Tree Plantation Campaigns**:

Nationwide plantations are carried out every year in two seasons *i.e.* Spring and Monsoon. 85.58 million plants have been planted / distributed during Spring Season 2024 (details in **Annex-IV**). Government has recently launched Monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign 2024 inaugurated by the PM on 7th August 2024 with target of 40.33 million plants across Pakistan.

2. **Prevention of cutting of trees**:

National Forest Policy (NFP) of Pakistan is being implemented since 2017 that emphasize on controlling illegal logging and ensuring sustainable use of forest resources. The Government has also revived the Federal Forestry Board to discuss and resolve issues that cause deforestation.

Furthermore, a mechanism for generation of carbon credits in forests *i.e.* Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) has been prepared for creating incentives of alternate energy source and prevention of cutting of trees by local communities.

The respective Forest Departments of all four provinces, AJK and GB are mandated to control cutting of trees. Provinces have revised the Acts and Rules (**Annex-V**) to improve cognizance of forest offences and to prevent change in use of forest land for other purposes.

Furthermore, Interprovincial Coordination Committee on illicit wood cutting and interprovincial Timber movement was constituted in June 2024 on directions of Coordinator to PM on Climate Change and EC, and consultative meeting held **(Annex-VI).**

(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)

138. ***Rai Hassan Nawaz Khan:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state:

(a) the details of spectrum auction made by Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA)/any other relevant authority since 2014 to till date indicating also the total revenue generated out, from the sale of the said spectrum;

(b) *whether it is a fact that tons of spectrum in five more bands is laying unused;*

(c) *if so, the time by which same shall be sold and more revenue would be generated thereof?*

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): (a) The details of Pakistan Spectrum Auctions' conducted by Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) since 2014 till date alongwith total revenue generated from the sale of the said spectrum is attached at **Annexure A.**

(b) Spectrum bands are introduced from time to time based on their recognition at global/ regional levels by International Telecommunication Union, device ecosystem development and bands adoption for latest technologies.

Above in view, 562 MHz spectrum is recently made available by Frequency Allocation Board in such bands suited for Next Generation Mobile Services (NGMS).

(c) PTA has already initiated the process for auction of the said spectrum. In this regard, an independent consultant is being hired in accordance with PPRA Rules. Bid Opening is on 2nd Sep. 2024. By virtue of the ToRs, the Consultant will engage with all stakeholders and recommend reforms for the sector along with the auction design, spectrum valuation, suitable 5G models etc. The consultant recommendations will be submitted to an Advisory Committee constituted under Chairmanship of Honorable Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, for subsequent issuance of necessary policy directions from GoP. Auction will accordingly be conducted in April 2025.

(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)

139. ***Ms. Sehar Kamran:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) *the details of year-wise outstanding receivables on account of monthly subscription by members alongwith operating profit/loss made by Islamabad Club, during the last five years; and*

(b) *the steps being taken by the Government to collect the outstanding receivables during the last five years?*

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a)

Receivable from Members against monthly Billing	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	61,479,734	**63,168,301**	**105,407,063**	**144,530,530**	**146,550,241**
Following is the aging analysis of receivable:					
past due (0 to 30 days)	11,256,939	10,113,245	19,890,313	29,831,101	31,801,402
past due (31 to 60 days)	7,549,711	3,802,732	5,839,551	10,102,684	10,302,482
past due (60 to 90 days)	9,203,516	1,844,514	1,633,809	3,064,047	3,487,896
past due (180 days)	9,142,036	859,089	653,524	939,448	981,887
Over due	282,807	12,634	-	-	-
Past due total	**37,435,010**	**16,632,214**	**28,017,197**	**43,937,281**	**46,573,667**
Not due (pertain to same month and will be due in next month)	24,044,724	46,536,088	77,389,866	100,593,249	99,976,574
Total receivable	**61,479,734**	**63,168,301**	**105,407,063**	**144,530,530**	**146,550,241**

The significant variance in receivables from members in FY 2021-22 compared to FY 2020-21 and 2019-20 was primarily due to the impact of COVID-19, which led to a complete lockdown from March to September 2020, along with partial lockdowns and restrictions on indoor facilities. This resulted in reduced usage of Club facilities by members and a subsequent decline in revenue. The increase in receivables in FY 2021-22 compared to FY 2020-21, and in FY 2022-23 compared to FY 2021-22, is attributed to higher revenue and enhancements in various Club charges, including monthly subscriptions, food and beverage prices, and other fees.

An Audit Para in the Auditor General's Report 2023-24, concerning receivables amounting to Rs. 105.407 million for FY 2021-22, is also pending discussion at the DAC level. A detailed response to the Para, along with all supporting documents, has been submitted to the Auditor General through the Cabinet Division.

Under the Islamabad Club Membership Regulations, 2022, the Club grants a three-month grace period for the payment of outstanding dues. However, a late fee of 2.5% is applied each month on the unpaid balance. After the grace period, the membership is suspended and can only be restored upon payment of all outstanding dues, along with a late fee of 2.5%. If a restoration request is not received within one year of suspension, the membership is permanently cancelled, and the outstanding dues are recovered from the member's proposer and seconder.

Operating profit/loss	*2019-20	*2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Net surplus / (Loss)	(66,378,062)	254,053,574	412,642,483	601,031,937	748,490,400
	*COVID 2019	*COVID 2019			

(b) The generation of monthly billing and receipts from members is an ongoing process. It's the usual billing cycle hence, not possible to reach at zero at any point in time. These are neither overdue accounts nor bad debts. Approximately 66% to 70% of the total receivables relate to the current month's billing, which is due by the end of the following month. The Club uses an automated system for bill generation and receipt recording, with individual member statements available at any time.

The Club ensures the timely recovery of outstanding dues, maintaining less than 1% of overdue unpaid amounts. Under the Islamabad Club Membership Regulations, 2022, the Club grants a three-month grace period for the payment of outstanding dues. After this period, the membership is suspended and can only be restored upon payment of all outstanding dues, along with a late fee of 2.5%. If a restoration request is not received within one year of suspension, the membership is permanently cancelled, and the outstanding dues are recovered from the member's proposer and seconder.

Following is the aging analysis of receivables from members during last five years:

Description	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	percentage of total receivable amount				
Current bill	39.12%	73.66%	73.42%	69.60%	68.22%
30 days	18.31%	16.01%	18.87%	20.64%	21.70%
60 days	12.28%	6.02%	5.54%	6.99%	7.03%
90 days	14.97%	2.92%	1.55%	2.12%	2.38%
180 days	14.87%	1.36%	0.62%	0.65%	0.67%
Over due	0.46%	0.02%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Total receivable	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Since no public or government funds are involved, and the receivables pertain to private members' money hence, do not fall under the scope of the Federal Government.

140. ***Mr. Zubair Khan Wazir:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state details of the projects awarded by Universal Services Fund (USF) for 3G and 4G mobile signals in District South Waziristan (Upper and Lower) alongwith reasons behind the delay in completion aforesaid project?

Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): USF launched its Broadband for Sustainable Development (BSD) South Waziristan Project in June 2019 to provide voice and broadband (3G/4G) data services targeting 343 mandatory mauzas, in the district of South Waziristan (Lower and Upper).

The project was to be completed within 2 years, as per contractual timelines. However, the project is facing delays due to adverse security situation and delayed permissions from local government and LEAs to access the area. As of now, the project is still under implementation.

141. ***Syed Rafiullah:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Federal Government is considering a proposal to regularize the services of contractual employees working

under different arrangements in various Ministries, Divisions and its Departments;

(b) if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons thereof?

Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema): (a) At present, there is no proposal under consideration in the Federal Government (Establishment Division) to regularize the services of contractual employees working under different arrangements in various Ministries, Divisions and its Departments.

(b) The legal framework for appointment and its procedure against civil posts has been laid down in the Civil Servants Act, 1973 and Rules made thereunder. Under Section 5 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973, the appointments against civil posts are required to be made in the prescribed manner. In terms of Section 2(1) (b) of the Act ibid, the contract employees do not fall within the definition of "Civil Servant".

142. ***Mr. Mohammad Ilyas Choudhary:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gwadar airport is operational at present;

(b) how many aircrafts would land and takeoff from said airport;

(c) whether it is according to the international standards?

Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif): (a) The Existing Gwadar International Airport is operational and the New Gwadar International Airport is yet to be operationalized, tentatively in December 2024

(b) The New Gwadar International Airport is compatible to cater to the legal Aircraft of the current fleet i.e., Airbus A-380. However, the number of Aircraft traffic may not be intimated at this stage and is interlinked to the overall development of the Gwadar region and the sustainability of the Country's economic conditions.

(c) Yes, the New Gwadar International Airport is constructed according to the International Standards.

144. *Ms. Sharmila Sahiba Faruqui Hashaam:
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination be pleased to state:

(a) the details on the alliance forged between Pakistan and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) for poverty reduction and climate action;

(b) what specific projects and initiatives are being planned under this alliance to address the pressing issues of poverty and climate change in Pakistan; and

(c) how this partnership will be helpful to the country for achieving its sustainable development goals and build protective resilience mechanism against the negative impacts of climate change?

Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination: (a) The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) is actively engaging with representatives from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to advance discussions on key areas of collaboration under the framework of Pakistan's Living Indus Programme.

(b) These discussions are focused on the following strategic priorities:

1. **Ecosystem Restoration**: Focuses on restoring wetlands, forests, and habitats to enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, and provide key services like flood control and carbon capture.

2. **Sustainable Agriculture**: Promotes eco-friendly farming practices that improve soil health, ensure food security, and reduce environmental impact.

3. **Community Resilience and Livelihoods**: Strengthens the resilience of communities along the Indus by supporting adaptive strategies and sustainable livelihoods to address climate impacts.

4. **Biodiversity Conservation**: Aims to protect endangered species and vital habitats in the Indus basin, contributing to biodiversity preservation and ecosystem stability.

(c) **Expected Outcomes and Benefits**

Environmental Benefits

- Improved water quality and availability in the Indus basin.
- Enhanced biodiversity and restored natural habitats.
- Increased carbon sequestration and climate regulation. Social and Economic Benefits
- Improved livelihoods and food security for local communities.
- Increased resilience to climate change and environmental shocks.
- Enhanced capacity for sustainable resource management. Strategic and Policy Benefits for AIIB
- Demonstrated leadership in innovative natural infrastructure investment.
- Contribution to global SDGs and climate action commitments.
- Strengthened partnerships with governments and international organizations.

145. *Ms. Shagufta Jumani:
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the total losses which sustained by Pakistani International Airline (PIA) on the grounds of delayed flights, alongwith reasons thereof;

(b) *what are the specific reasons of delay for such flights;*

(c) *what is the comparison statement of the ratio of flights delay of PIA with other airlines of the country and the region;*

(d) *whether it is a fact that such delay of flights of PIA is a result of poor management;*

(e) *if so, what steps are being taken by the Government to improve the flight operations and hold accountable responsible for such recurring flight delay?*

Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif): (a) The details of such losses cannot be determined. But, it hampers the reliability and reputation of the airline which of course leads to reduction in market share. However, PIACL is currently operating 70-80 flights per day to ensure that schedule integrity is maintained. This has resulted in an operating profit of PKR 6 billion in 2023 and PKR 4.0 billion in 2024 which shows that delays are being well mitigated.

(b) Ageing of aircraft, non-availability of spares due shortage of funds results into technical defects.

(c) During January-June, 2024, PIA's average punctuality *vis-a-vis* other Airlines is at **Annex-A.**

(d) The delays are not due to poor management but factually are due to ageing aircraft fleet.

(e) All efforts are being made to recover the grounded aircraft. PIA has recovered 02 A320s and 01 ATR aircraft during January 2024, which has made significant improvement in the reliability of schedule and minimized delays. The present fleet is 07 x B777, 12 x A320 and 03 x ATRs.

(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)

146. ***Shahzada Muhammad Gushtasap Khan:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division be pleased to state:

(a) *the number of Federal Government Officers of Grade-22 at present alongwith monthly salary thereof;*

(b) *the detail of their other perks and privileges, number of vehicles are their use alongwith number of staff are working at present;*

(c) *if the answers to part (a) and (b) above are in affirmative, the monthly expenditure incurred on each of the said officers?*

Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema): (a) The Establishment Division, inter alia, administers three occupational groups i.e., Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS), Police Service of Pakistan (PSP), and Secretariat Group (SG) and BS-22 officers of these occupational groups draw their salaries from the respective Ministries / Divisions, provincial governments and autonomous bodies etc. where they are posted. This Division *vide* OMs dated 26-08-2024 and 03-09-2024 requested the Accountant General Pakistan Revenues (AGPR), Commandant National Police Academy, Islamabad, Chief Secretary Government of Sindh and Provincial Police Officer, Government of Balochistan for provision of requisite information. The details provided by AGPR, Commandant National Police Academy, Islamabad, Chief Secretary Government of Sindh and Provincial Police Officer, Government of Balochistan have been placed at **Annex-A and B**.

(b) It is stated that no other staff has been attached with BS-22 officers posted in the Federal Secretariat except the routine office staff i.e. SPS/PS, APS, LDC, N/Q. Moreover, no BS-22 officer posted in the Federal Secretariat is availing official vehicle. Only those BS-22 officers who are posted outside of the Secretariat are entitled to official vehicle, details whereof are placed at **Annex-B** above.

(c) As at 'a' above.

(Annexures have been placed in the national Assembly Library)

147. ***Ms. Sehar Kamran:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) *the details of civil works executed for development of a lake at Cricket Ground in Islamabad Club during the last two years;*

(b) *the year-wise expenditure incurred on development of both lake and Cricket Ground; and*

(c) *whether it is a fact that the said civil works were performed in the absence of any approved civil works rules; if so, the reasons thereof?*

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) An Audit Para in the Auditor General's Report 2023-24, concerning receivables amounting to Rs. 105.407 million for FY 2021-22, is also pending discussion at the DAC level. A detailed response to the Para, along with all supporting documents, has been submitted to the Auditor General through the Cabinet Division.

No major civil work was executed in the lake area as a single project. The expenditures incurred consist of various distinct procurements and civil works carried out at different times throughout the year, focused on the development of lake and its surrounding areas, based on specific needs or urgent requirements. All procurements and works were conducted in compliance with Islamabad, Club's Procurement Regulations.

(b)

S. No.	Description	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
1	Cricket	-	11,596,002	170,574,613	4,558,969	-	186,729,584
2	*Lake	-	-	-	13,774,365	-	13,774,365
		-	11,596,002	170,574,613	18,333,334	-	200,503,949

* Expenditures on lake include development of lake and its surrounding area for other facilities like BBQ station and gazebo for banqueting. However, all such expenditure was recorded under the account head "Development of Lake" opened in general ledger (GL) for accounting purposes.

(c) All civil works were executed under Islamabad Club Procurement Regulations (an adaptation of PPRA Rules); made under the Islamabad Club Rules duly approved by the Federal Government. The procurement regulations encompass all procurements, including civil works.

148. ***Rai Hassan Nawaz Khan:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had formed National Commission on Government Reforms in 2008;

(b) if so, the purpose of establishing the said commission, indicating also the details of stakeholders which working under the said commission at Federal as well as Provincial levels; and

(c) the reasons for establishing the said commission?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) National Commission on Government Reforms, Prime Minister's Secretariat, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad (NCGR) was established in 2006 and was dissolved in 2018.

(b) <u>PURPOSE OF NCGR:</u>

The purpose of establishing the NCGR was as under: -

(a) the division of functions, responsibilities and accountabilities among the federal, provincial and local governments to avoid duplication, overlap and functional redundancy;

(b) maintaining appropriate size of government organizations at each tier of government including attach departments, autonomous bodies, public sector corporations and other entities in the light of responsibilities and functions assigned to each;

(c) improving the existing, institutional capacity through identification and meeting of skill-gaps in the context of functions assigned to different government organizations at all levels;

(d) the redesigning of rules and core business processes at all levels of government to achieve functional efficiency, client orientation, cost reduction, transparency and a shift of focus from process compliance to output and outcomes;

(e) inter-linkages between the federal, provincial and local public services with a view to strengthening the federation through increased transaction efficiency and smoother conduct of business;

(f) public service design for all tiers of government that would include:

i. the structure of the public services at all levels in view of functional reassignments;

ii. recruitment, training, placement; promotion and career planning for the public services;

iii. the development of human capital through training and higher education;

iv. indicators for qualitative and quantitative measurement of performance for diverse, professions and services;

v. compensation packages and performance-based incentives; measures to fill capacity gaps and the interim; **(Annex-I).**

DETAILS OF STAKEHOLDERS:

It is pertinent to mention here that the commission comprised representatives from the federal and provisional governments as notification No.3(1)/2006-MSW-II dated 30th August, 2006 envisages the composition of the Steering Committee of NCGR. **(Annex-II)**

In this regard, the report produced by the Commission after deliberations during these two years is comprehensive and covers the restructuring of the Government at the Federal and Provincial levels, strengthening of the district governments, reorganization of civil services, revamping of human resource management policies and practices, reengineering of business processes. These proposals summarize the findings from extensive research in the field and consultations conducted with a wide range of stakeholders spanning the public and private sectors, particularly the Federal Secretaries Committee and the provincial governments.

(c) The reason for establishing the said Commission included producing analysis and recommendations on how the government, its institutions and infrastructure can become more effective to meet the social, economic and political challenges that Pakistan faces in the 21st century.

(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)

149. ***Shahzada Muhammad Gushtasap Khan:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of official vehicles available in each Federal Government Departments; and

(b) the monthly expenditures incurred on petrol and their maintenance alongwith the complete detail thereof?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) The details of total vehicles owned by the government organizations were sought from the all Ministries /Divisions. So far, replies have been received from 25 Ministries /Divisions which are placed at **Annex-I.**

(b) As mentioned above.

(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)

150. ***Mr. Khurram Shahzad Virk:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state how would tax measures imposed through Finance Act, 2024, impact on the Information Technology Sector of the Pakistan, with regard to create job opportunities for youth, having their background of computer based education and Information Technology export?

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): 1. **preamble**

Pakistan’s IT & IT-enabled Services (ITeS) sector is making significant contribution to exports and foreign exchange earnings. During FY2023-24 (July 2023 to June 2024), IT & ITeS export remittances surged to US$ 3.223 billion, a significant increase of 24% compared to the growth rate 2022-23 when export remittances inflow growth was negative 0.8%.

Although there has not been implemented new taxes on IT sector under FY 2024-25 budget but the past tax regime has not been conducive to ensure that the ICT industry reaches its growth potential. Step like implementation of tax credits regime resulted in reduced remittances inflow by the 1CT sector thus resulting in negative 0.8% growth in FY 2022-23.

There is general consensus that Pakistan ICT sector earnings are higher than that of the actual remittances inflow with the remaining earnings retained overseas. As no regulation can be developed to force ICT companies to bring their earnings to Pakistan, it is essential that the ICI industry is given maximum long term focused fiscal packages to incentive them to bring remittances to Pakistan. It is possible that just by getting the ICT sector to bring at least 50% of their export earnings to Pakistan would significantly alleviate fiscal challenges confronting Pakistan. In order to incentivize the industry to enhance export earnings and to create an enabling environment for the purpose, a number of measures were proposed which were not included in the Finance Act 2024-25.

It is strongly recommended that the said proposals, which had been developed with consensus of all relevant stakeholders, are taken into consideration immediately to address the measures needed to accelerate the growth of IT & ITeS Industry and boost IT exports. The recommendations are enclosed along with the respective rationale at Annex-A.

2. **Primary Constraints that Hinder the growth of IT SMEs**

Major constraints and hurdles hindering the growth SMEs and Startups are:

2.1 Inconsistency of Policies erodes the confidence of business entities. Frequent changes in taxation policy on IT & ITeS export proceeds is one such example whereby a tax exemption was introduced, replaced by tax credit regime, which again was replaced by Final Tax regime. This caused unnecessary hurdles and challenges for the businesses as well as Freelancers.

2.2 Banking Hurdles and unnecessary restrictions are discouraging exporters from using formal banking channels and encouraging retention of export earnings abroad. Though we appreciate the recent revision in Equity Investment abroad policy by the State Bank, there are still other policy measures that need to be taken. Please see the budget recommendations for further details.

2.3 Ease of Travel is a necessity to ensure growth of IT & ITeS exports for both inbound travel of investors/customers/ partners/employees from offices abroad and outbound travel of IT executives and professionals.

2.4 Lack of Skilled HR is an ongoing challenge for the IT & ITeS industry. With growing international demand, finding the HR with the right skill set and expertise is difficult. The gap between demand for skilled HR in the IT' ITeS industry and supply of IT graduates has significantly increased. HEC accredited Institutes are currently producing 75,000 IT related graduates yearly and less than 10% are employable in export-oriented companies.

2.5 Lack of IT-Ready Infrastructure at affordable rates in major cities as well as secondary and tertiary cities is restricting growth of IT ITeS industry and resultantly exports.

2.6 Limited Access to Capital is a necessity for IT and ITeS businesses to expand their operations at both local and international level. Majority of the IT & ITeS businesses are SMEs and lack the capital to grow their businesses.

2.7 Limited International Marketing. Brawling, Promotion and Business Development is not enough to become a preferred outsourcing destination in the world. The program of international marketing and export enhancement need to tie expanded at least tenfold with appropriate funding. Funding from EDF can be a good contribution along with the training of the Trade and Investment Officers.

3. **Development of enabling environment for IT Startups and SMEs**

3.1 The ICT sector may be categorized as SMEs.

3.2 Effective facilitation desks geared towards ICT sector at all associated entities such as FBR, SBP and SECP.

3.3 SBP may ensure that all banks with ESFCA have trained staff well versed with ESFCA related modalities and have facilitation desks for ICT sector and ICT SMEs.

3.4 SBP may ask banks to expedite issuance of corporate ESFCA Debit cards.

3.5 SBP may be requested to allow 100% retention against ESFCA Accounts.

3.6 SBP may promote ESFCAs among IT starts up/SMEs through to enhance utilization as many are not aware of the facility.

3.7 SBP may be requested for the development of an FX portal to allow for impede-free inflow and outflow of remittances

3.8 FBR be requested to eliminate taxes on use of debit cards issued against ESFCAs currently at 5% advance tax.

3.9 FBR may work towards harmonizing IT & ITeS Definition (Federal/Provincial).

3.10 Currently, a 100% tax credit for PSEB registered startups is available for three years covering both export and domestic income. Policy may be issued to continue this policy till 2030.

3.11 Exemption of tax on dividend paid by start-ups and IT & ITeS exporters.

3.12 Exemption on capital gains on disposal of shares of start-ups and IT & ITeS exporters.

3.13 The IT services may be exempted from sales tax to ensure holistic growth. Alternately, Harmonization of sales tax on IT & IT-enabled services across capital & provinces.

3.14 Clarification of FTR regime for persons bringing remittances through alternate remittance services such as Payoneer, Wise etc.

3.15 A concessional rate of income tax of 0.25 percent is applicable to increase IT exports. This facility will continue till June 30, 2026. Extending this would result in confidence building measures for the ICT Industry.

3.16 Freelancers face difficulties in filing monthly sales tax returns. To facilitate the business environment, Freelancers help reduce unemployment and bring foreign remittances. Freelancers may be exempted from sales tax registration and filing of returns.

3.17 Process of income tax return for SMEs and freelancers may be simplified as they are not well versed with the associated intricacies of related laws. Develop user-friendly online platforms for business registration, tax filing, and compliance reporting with focus on SMEs and freelancers.

3.18 Freelancers benefit from a significantly lower tax rate. They are subject to a 1% final tax on their income, which can be reduced to 0.25% if they are registered with the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB). The tax exemption for freelancers has led to remote workers, who can significantly higher salaries, benefiting from the same tax rate as traditional freelancers. This situation has resulted in a talent drain from IT companies, as skilled professionals leave for better-paying remote positions. In addition, IT companies face standard corporate tax rates, which are generally higher than those applied to freelancers A balanced approach towards freelancers and IT companies is recommended to ensure holistic industry growth.

3.19 IT and IT enabled Service providers may be allowed to import software and hardware without taxes as these are used for exports.

3.20 Expedited development of Made in Pakistan policy pertaining to ICT sector and associated amendment of PPRA rules for Make Pakistan preference.

3.21 MoFA MoI to facilitate inbound/outbound Visas.

3.22 Work with the IT Industry representatives and insurance industry to facilitate IT & ITeS exporters by offering Business & Employee related insurances such as performance guarantees, professional indemnity, employee liability insurance, equipment insurance etc.

3.23 Venture capital is very important for the growth of SMEs, startups and freelancers. To jump-start venture capital in Pakistan, a fund to provide business capital may be established in the public sector.

3.24 In order to encourage lending in the IT sector, the venture capital firms and banks may be given an incentive in the form of tax breaks or reductions on earnings that banks or venture capital firms make from lending to freelancer SMEs, startups and IT companies.

3.25 Collaborate with banks and other funding institutions in Pakistan to find a way for seamless funding for SMEs and startups as well as facilitate development of subsidized Financial Products for IT Industry in collaboration with financial institutes, especially for freelancers and IT Professionals.

(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)

151. ***Mr. Muhammad Moin Aamer Pirzada:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) *that under Article No.11.1 of K Electricity Limited (KEL) Distribution License, the KE submitted its five years Investment Programme or Distribution Investment Plan to the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA);*

(b) *if so, details of this plan; if not, the detail of actions taken against KEL?*

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) K-Electric in compliance with Section 32 of the NEPRA Act 1997 submitted seven years investment plan and losses assessment for MYT Tariff control period from FY 2023-24 to FY 2029-30. The submitted investment plan was processed by the Authority by taking on board all the stakeholders through public hearing, written comments and intervention requests. The Authority vide its decision dated April 24, 2024 approved an investment of Rs. 392 Billion for, seven years tariff control period against the claimed amount of Rs. 484 billion.

(b) The detailed decision regarding approval of K-Electric's above-mentioned investment plan is available on NEPRA website however for the ease, order part containing the details of approved amounts is attached as **(Annex-I).**

It is also pertinent to mention here that Mr. Muhammad Arif Bilwani (the intervener) and K-Electric has filed review motion against the Authority's decision dated April 24, 2024 in the matter of K-Electric's investment plan and the same are under process for approval/consideration of Authority.

(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)

217. ***Rai Hassan Nawaz Khan:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety be pleased to state:

(a) *total number of persons who have been found below the poverty line, since 2022 to till date; and*

(b) *whether any sustainable measures have been taken by the Government to increase the income level of lower middle classes during the last two years; if so, the details thereof?*

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety: (a) It pertains to Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives (MoPDSI).

(b) Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) provides cash assistance to the beneficiaries identified through National Socio-Economic Registry (LASER) survey based on Proxy Means Test (PMT) score that determines the welfare status of the household on a scale between 0-100. The PMT cut-off score for eligibility is decided on the basis of available fiscal space. At present, PMT cut-off score of 32 is being used as eligibility cut-off which covers bottom three quintiles of population. BISP has a policy to annually increase the number of beneficiary families as well as quarterly stipend, to mitigate the effects of inflation and economic hardships. Details of such increases made during last two financial years is given as under;

Year	Increase in No. of Beneficiaries (in million)	Increase in Quarterly Stipend (Rs)
2022-23	7.6 to 9	7,000/- to 8,750/-
2023-24	9 to 9.35	8,750/- to 10,500/-

INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

One of the notable initiatives of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is the Individual Financial Assistance (IFA) Program, which is designed to guard the susceptible poor and marginalized segments of the society from livelihood problems, help the extreme poor through cash & kind. This carefully targeted and effectively managed social protection Initiative is playing a vital role in decreasing loss of human capital, enhance employment and protect people from falling into vicious circle of poverty in case of facing economic risks and prop up social solidarity.

Detail of Individual Financial Assistance support to increase the income level of lower middle class during the last two years from Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is as under:

Project		F.Y	No. of Families	Amount Disbursed (Rs.)
Individual Financial Assistance (IFA)	Education	2021-22	5,770	161,513,604
		2022-23	4,391	145,213,563
		2023-24	4,502	146,925,563
		Total	**14,663**	**453,652,730**
	General	2021-22	6,020	119,792,000
		2022-23	5,411	114,450,000
		2023-24	2,638	62,250,000
		Total	**14,069**	**296,492,000**
	Special Friend Project	2021-22	5,069	76,772,500
		2022-23	2,444	64,515,000
		2023-24	3,245	18,382,500
		Total	**10,758**	**159,670,000**
	Wheel Chairs	2021-22	877	-
		2022-23	1,098	-
		2023-24	512	-
		Total	**2,487**	-
	Sewing Machine	2021-22	656	-
		2022-23	1,827	-
		2023-24	890	-
		Total	**3,373**	-
	Grand Total		**45,350**	**909,814,730**

ORPHAN WIDOW SUPPORT PROGRAM (OWSP)

This is another social safety net of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal where 1,050 families are being granted financial assistance in the shape of education stipend to the widow's families (who's child/children specially female are going to school for education). In this project, Rs.78 million has been provided to these families from Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal during last two years.

In this way, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is taking sustainable measures by running the above mentioned projects to increase the income level of lower middle class of country.

@219. ***Rai Hassan Nawaz Khan:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Prime Minister's Office be pleased to state:

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* Transferred From planning Development and special initiative Division.

(a) *the details of Chinese and local companies/ businesses operational in the Industrial Cooperation/Special Economic Zones under China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Punjab;*

(b) *the details of fields in which Chinese and Local enterprises, in these zones have been offering employment to locals of Punjab, indicating also the number of job opportunities advertised/announced so far under the each zone; and*

(c) *the detail of procedure of seeking employment for the youth of Punjab in the aforesaid zones?*

Minister In-charge of the Prime Minister's Office: (a) There is only one Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Punjab, that is being established under the framework of CPEC that is **Allama Iqbal Industrial City-SEZ (AIIC)** located in Faisalabad, wherein **48 companies** are currently operational, which include **08 Chinese companies.** Detail is attached at **Annex-A.**

(b) AIIC is a multi-industry SEZ where all sectors are open for investment for both local and foreign investors. Enterprise wise details of businesses operating in the zone are provided in **Annex-A.** In terms of employment generation, so far, a total of **5,036 direct local jobs** have been created, with manifold indirect jobs opportunities. The individuals have already been hired and actively contributing to the industrial operations within the zone.

(c) All **48 enterprises** currently operating in **Allama lqbal Industrial City (AIIC)** are private companies that follow industry practices for recruitment from open market on need basis, by using all means of communication, to hunt the best talent as per requirements, including through open advertisements, social media platforms, walk-in interviews etc.

(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)

@220. ***Dr. Nafisa Shah:**
(Deferred during 9th Session)

Will the Minister In-charge of the Prime Minister's Office be pleased to state the status of Special Economic Zones and their progress alongwith the Khairpur Special Economic Zone and its performance?

Minister In-charge of the Prime Minister's Office: In Pakistan, there are 35 Special Economic Zones (SEZs). Four of these are being developed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Out of the 35 SEZs, 17 are public, 16 are private, and 2 operate under public-private partnership mode. Nine of the private SEZs are sole enterprise SEZ (SESEZ), while the other 26 are multi-industry SEZs. The 35 SEZs span across 18,591 acres.

Currently 18 multi-industry SEZs are operational with active investment interest, while 8 are under development and will soon become operational. There are 587 zone enterprises housed in the said 18 SEZs of which 193 units are in operation, while rest are under construction, most of which have been admitted in less than 24 months.

With reference to Khairpur SEZ, it covers an area of 140 acres, with 81.2 acres of industrial land. There are 13 zone enterprises housed in Khairpur SEZ on 37 acres of industrial land. List of zone enterprises in Khairpur SEZ is attached at **Annex-B.**

Annex-B

Sr#	Company Name	Country
1.	M/S Eximpo Cool Chains (Pvt) Ltd	Pakistan
2.	M/S Al Razak Agri Industries (Pvt) Ltd	Pakistan
3.	M/S SunTang Technology Pvt Ltd.	China
4.	M/S SAY Foods International (Pvt) Ltd	Pakistan
5.	M/S Juksan Lace & Emdroidery (Pvt) Ltd.	South Korea
6.	M/S Khairpur Foods Pvt. Ltd (Jumani Group)	Pakistan
7.	M/s Owais Shamim Enterprises	Pakistan
8.	M/S Khairpur Food International	Pakistan
9.	M/S Bio Masdar	Pakistan
10.	M/S Bio Masdar (Pakistan) Ltd	Pakistan
11.	M/S Hab Foods (SMC) Pvt. Ltd	Pakistan
12.	M/S Sachal Food Processing Pvt. Ltd.	Pakistan
13.	M/S Al-Rahim Agri Processing Pvt Ltd	Pakistan

*Transferred from Planning Development and special initiative Division.

83. ***Ms. Sharmila Sahiba Faruqui Hashaam:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state what steps have been taken by the Cabinet Division to improve Inter-Divisional Coordination and collaboration, particularly in the light of the recent changes made in the allocation of business between divisions?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: As the custodian of the Rules of Business, 1973, the Cabinet Division reiterates the directions as provided under rule (8) and rule 10 (1)(b) to ensure inter Divisional coordination and collaboration, from time to time. The rule 10(1)(b) states, "No Division shall, without previous consultation with the Cabinet Division, issue or authorise the issue of any orders which involve a change in the allocation of business between the various Divisions of a Ministry." Moreover, in terms of rule 3 of the rules ibid, modification in the allocation of business among different Ministries/Divisions is the authority of the Prime Minister. Before placement of any matter before the Prime Minister, Federal Cabinet, Cabinet Committees, NEC, and the like, the Cabinet Division scrutinizes the cases to ensure that the required consultation with concerned stakeholders under rule (8) is observed. In case of non-compliance, such cases are returned to ensure the required consultation.

84. ***Syed Amin Ul Haque:**

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state:

(a) the current status of the agreement between Telenor and Ufone (PTCL);

(b) the detail of benefit occurred to the economy and National Exchequer in case the said agreement is finalized;

(c) if the answers to part (a) and (b) above are in affirmative, how the adverse impacts on investment will be addressed in case the international company pulls its investment from Pakistan; and

(d) the action plan being devised to save the employees from unemployment?

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): (a) Pakistan telecommunication Authority (PTA) has received the application for the grant of approval of a proposed transaction of Telenor Pakistan (Private) Limited and Orion Towers (Private) Limited which involves transfer of 100% shareholding / equity interest from Telenor Pakistan B.V to Pakistan Telecommunication (Private) Limited. Currently the matter is being considered for grant of NOC by Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP). CCP has competed its Phase-I of the proceedings, and Phase II is in progress at CCP, where all stakeholders are being called in for hearing. PTA will proceed for grant of approval or otherwise, and the issuance of NOC by CCP.

(b) Currently the matter is under review from regulatory perspective at PTA and conclusive comments can be offered after the requisite review and Approval.

(c) Same response as at (b) above.

(d) Same response as at (b) above.

85. ***Ms. Sabheen Ghoury:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Federal Government Employees Benevolent Fund, re-imburse the fees for the professional degrees of children's of the Federal employees, who are studying in Universities;

(b) why does the newly introduced degrees such as Business Data Analysis are not considered as professional degrees; if so, the reasons thereof; and

(c) the time by which Government will take steps to re-imburse the fees of such degrees; if not, the reasons thereof?

Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema): (a) Yes. FEB&GIF in terms of Rule 25-A of FEB&GIF Rule, 1972 makes disbursal of semester/annual fee up to maximum of Rs. 100,000/- to every employee for professional education degree programs of his /her two children in a calendar year to Medical MBBS & BDS, Engineering, all engineering programs accredited by Pakistan Engineering Council, Architecture, IT, D-Pharmacy, Computer Sciences, Software Engineering, Information Technology, Bio-Informatics, Information System and Business Studies, Business Administration, Accounting & Finance except Ph.D in the public sector universities, colleges and institutes duly recognized by Higher Education Commission for those children who get admission on merit. **(Annex-A).** Under Rule 25 of ibid Rule, for professional studies in private sector Universities/institutions stipends are being paid @ Rs.40,000/= per annum.

(b) A case for rationalization of welfare schemes, with the approval of Board of Trustees (BOT), was sent for approval of the Federal Government, which has been referred back by the Prime Minister Office with the direction to "suggest financially viable welfare schemes for all employees in consultation with stakeholders". For any new proposal, Actuarial study Valuation of the funds is a pre-requisite. FEB &GIF is therefore, in process of Actuarial Valuation of funds. The inclusion of new subjects in reimbursement category will base on the recommendations of the Consultant Actuary, approval of BOT and Federal Government.

(c) Since any addition /deletion of new disciplines would require a detailed analysis and the Actuarial study/valuation to be subsequently approved by BOT and Federal Government, hence no particular time line can be offered at this stage.

(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)

86. ***Rai Hassan Nawaz Khan:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government has decided to abolish Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination;

(b) if so, the name of authority that would oversee the affairs of Drug Regulatory Authority (DRAP) as well as its management affairs including selection/appointment of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and other members of the DRAP, after the said abolition?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) The Committee for the Rightsizing of the Federal Government, in consultation with Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination has decided to retain the said Ministry.

(b) The Committee for the Rightsizing of the Federal Government, in consultation with Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination has decided to retain DRAP.

87. ***Mr. Hameed Hussain:**

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state:

(a) the quality of mobile coverage in Kurrum and Hangu Districts; and

(b) the measures taken by the Government for improvements during the last one year?

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): (a)

i. **<u>District Hangu:</u>**

An independent cellular quality of service (QoS) survey in Hangu city was conducted from **15th to 18th May, 2023** and a re-survey of the city was conducted from **6th to 8th August 2024.** Comparison of previous and current results are appended below;

Ser.	Parameter	Operator	May'23	Aug'24
1.	Data	Ufone	Non-Compliant	Compliant
2.	Voice	Telenor	Non-Compliant	All complaint except 1x Non-Compliant
3.	Voice	Jazz		Compliant
4	Voice	Ufone		All complaint except 1x Non-Compliant

Summary of resurvey results is as under:

- lx non-service affecting parameter (KPI) was affected for which licensees have been directed to take remedial measures.
- Overall improvement has been observed in voice and data service.
- System parameters (OSS KPI) of mobile operators in the district also show satisfactory performance.

Summary of new site installation in District Hangu is appended below;

District Hangu				
Year/CMO	**Jazz**	**Ufone**	**Telenor**	**Zong**
2023	32	64	11	22
2024	35	83	11	30
Increase in Sites	**3**	**19**	**0**	**8**

Total: 30 (28 Sites upgraded to 4G by Ufone)

ii. **District Kurram:**

Due to prevailing law & order situation in district Kurram, on-ground surveys have not been conducted in the recent past, however, network performance through system parameters (OSS KPIs) are regularly analyzed.

System parameters (OSS KPIs) analysis of the mobile operators has revealed that overall service availability in the area is affected by;

a. Prolong and unannounced power outages, and;

b. Frequent network closures on the directions of GoP due to law & order situation (more than 15 days, part or complete area mobile data service closure in 2024).

Summary of new site installation is appended below

District Kurram				
Year/CMO	**Jazz**	**Ufone**	**Telenor**	**Zong**
2023	36	9	3	16
2024	39	18	3	17
Increase in Sites	**3**	**9**	**0**	**1**

Total: 13 (4 Sites upgraded by Jazz and Ufone)

(b) PTA has pushed mobile operators to make following improvements in last one year: -

i. **30x** new sites were installed in Hangu and 13x in Kurram.

ii. **28x** sites were upgraded from **2G to 4G** in Hangu and **4x** in Kurram respectively.

iii. <u>**Advanced technical measures**</u> are used by operators for coverage improvement.

iv. Jazz, Zong and Telenor have upgraded voice to VoLTE, consequently improving voice service quality.

v. Jazz has adopted Voice over Wifi (VoWifi) feature.

vi. Reduction in load shedding has improved service availability.

vii. Moreover, PTA has a sophisticated, customer-focused Complaint Management System (CMS) in place, accessible via a toll-free number and online form for filing complaints related to specific areas.

The USF is mandated to provide services in underserved and unserved areas through subsidized projects. Any area verified as underserved or unserved is referred to the USF for service provision according to the established procedures.

88. ***Ms. Sabheen Ghoury:**

Will the Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken by the Ministry for alleviation of poverty in Karachi City, as thousands of people from Interior Sindh and across the country are migrating to Karachi on a daily basis for employment and a better future; and

(b) what role has the Ministry played in curbing the increasing rate of poverty?

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety: (a) **BENAZIR INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMME**

It is apprised that BISP is providing cash assistance to poor segment of the society under Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT) also known as Kafaalat Programme on quarterly/periodic basis since 2008. Currently, BISP is providing Rs.10, 500/- per quarter to each eligible beneficiary household to beneficiary under UCT to around 9.5 million beneficiary households through Biometric 'Verification System (BVS) across Pakistan including Karachi. District wise detail of beneficiaries from Karachi is given as under;

Name of District	Number of Beneficiaries
Karachi Central	25,589
Karachi East	25,215
Karachi South	18,472
Karachi West	60,715
Malir	54,902
Korangi	20,262
Keamari	8,420
Total	**213,575**

PAKISTAN BAIT-UL-MAL

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, under the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, plays a significant role in addressing poverty and providing social safety nets throughout the country, especially in Karachi. While specific steps taken by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal for Karachi in response to the city's growing influx of migrants, several general initiatives have been launched to tackle the challenges of poverty, in Karachi. Below are some measures that Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal has implemented:

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, Provincial Office Sindh located at Karachi and having network at Karachi division of 9 x District Offices, 12 x School for Rehabilitation of Child Labor (SRCL), 9 x Women Empowerment Centers (WEC), 5 x Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Homes and 5 x Khana Sab Key Liye-KSKL (Food Vehicles).

A brief sketch of the initiatives taken by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal to address Poverty in Karachi city, is presented below:

1. **SHELTER HOME**

Shelter Home is the place where deserving/needy people are being provided free meals and temporary housing to homeless individual and daily wage workers, including those migrating to Karachi from different areas of Pakistan.

In each Shelter Home, free of cost dinner is provided to up to (400) people and night stay plus breakfast to up to (100) people on daily basis.

So far, (5) Shelter Homes are operational all over the Karachi, as under:

i. **Korangi**
(Plot No. 110, 31-E Lucknow Cooperative Housing Society, Near VIP Marriage Hall, Korangi No.1, Karachi (021-99333545).

ii. **Lyari**
(Plot No.205, Mirza Adam Khan Road, Bakra Peeri, Main Bakra Mandi Chowk Lyari, Karachi (021-32713333).

iii. **Orangi Town**
(House No.128, Street No.1 Sector 4/F, Khyber Colony, Karachi (021-99330287).

iv. **Suriani Town**
(House No.156 Sector 11-A Baradari New Karachi (021-99334045.

v. **Sohrab Goth**
(House No. B-5, & B-6 Scheme - 33, Abdullah Shah Ghazi Goth Karachi (021-99333680).

Number of beneficiaries served (since December, 2020 till 24th September, 2024) from the Shelter Homes is as under: -

Free night stay plus breakfast provided	=	**260,424/-**
Free dinner served	=	**1,757,579/-**
Total	=	**2,018,003/-**

2. **KHANA SAB KEY LIYE:**

Those beneficiaries who could not approach Shelter Homes due to certain reasons, e.g. engagements in work/labour, mobile food unit, (Khana Sab Key Liye) program has been initiated where food is provided to the deserving people near to their workplaces.

Principle of first come first serve is being observed.

From each Khana Sab Key Liye food vehicle, upto (1000) beneficiaries are provided meal, (500) lunch and (500) dinner on the designated routes.

The vehicle is fully equipped with food, portable kiosk/food hatch with all necessary items required for transporting, catering and serving the pre-packed meal.

Vehicle / Route-I	Vehicle / Route-II	Vehicle / Route-III	Vehicle / Route-IV	Vehicle / Route-V
Quaidabad Bus Stop to Hospital Chowrangi	Car Parking Plaza Saddar, Regal Chowk, Tibat Centre	Walika Hospital to Binoria Chowrangi	Civil Hospital	Cantt. Station

So far, **575,348** meals have been served through the Khana Sab Key Liye foodvehicles (since March, 2021 till 24th Sept, 2024).

3. ORPHAN AND WIDOWS SUPPORT PROGRAM (OWSP)

The "Orphans & Widows Support Program" (OWSP) is a Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) intervention focused on orphan's education with emphasis on girls' education.

The objective of the OWSP is provision of home and family based protection and educational services to the orphan girls and matriculated children of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Sweet Homes.

Orphan and Widows Support Program is functional in Karachi Division as a pilot-project.

Under OWSP category **100 widow families** having at-least one orphan school going girls in Karachi are enrolled in the program for education support to their children education are entitled to **Rs.8,000/-** month and **Rs.12,000/-** month uponmeeting compliance of 75% attendance condition.

Enrollment:

At present, **100** families having **171** children are enrolled in OWSP and getting benefits from this scheme.

4. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT CENTRES (WECs):

These centers are providing free vocational training to widows, orphan & poor girls in modern professional skills like, dress designing, embroidery, Basic & Advance Computer Courses, beautician course, Tie & Dye and fabric painting.

Skill development helps reduce unemployment and provides migrants with opportunities for stable income.

9 x Women Empowerment Centres (WECs) have been established so far throughout Karachi located at following places:

Sr. No.	PBM District	Address
1.	Karachi – I	R9 Sector L-1, Surjani, Taisar Town, Karachi.
2.	Karachi - II	Plot No. A/94, Gulistan Society, Quaidabad, District Malir, Karachi.
3.	Karachi – III	S-26, F.F, Near Total Petrol Pump, Korangi No. 1, Karachi.
4.	Karachi - IV	Peela School, Near Jama Masjid, Furqaniya Liaquatabad No. 4, Karachi.
5.	Karachi - V	H. No. 87, Sector H, Hira Public School Wali Gali near Gujar Chowk, Manzoor Colony, Karachi.
6.	Karachi - VI	Behind Shamim Garden, Azizabad No. 8, FB Area Karachi.
7.	Karachi - VII	Layari Express Way, Musharaf Colony, Hawks Bay, Karachi.
8.	Karachi - VIII	H No.7, (1st Floor), Street No. 3, Sector 4, Haroon Bharia Cooperative Housing Society, Karachi.
9.	Karachi - IX	Plot No. 601-A, Sector 111/2 Orangi Town, Karachi.

Passed out trainees during the last three years w.e.f July, 2021 to September, 2024 are as under:

S.No.	Initiative Name	Financial Year	Targeted Beneficiaries
1	Women	2021-22	1760
2	Empowerment	2022-23	1760
3	Center	2023-24	1880

5. SCHOOLS FOR REHABILITATION OF CHILD LABOR:

In line with the United Nations & other International Labor Organizations conventions it is another initiative of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal to pull out the children fmlabor and to impart them education.

So far, 12 Schools for Rehabilitation of Child Labors are functional all over Karachi at following areas:

Sr. No.	PBM District	Address
1.	Karachi - I SRCL-I (TaiserTown)	Sector-35-B Lyari Express Way, Near Khuda Ki Basti, Near Surjani Town,Taiser Town, Karachi.
2.	Karachi - I SRCL-II (SurjaniTown)	L-21, Sector L-1 Gulshan-e-Muhammadi, Surjani Town Karachi.
3.	Karachi – II SRCL - I	Plot N o.39 Near Football Ground Quaidabad Malir Karachi.
4.	Karachi – II SRCL - II	R/23 Maham Society, Quaidabad Karachi.
5.	Karachi - III	House # J-91 St# 3, Sector 36/A Korangi 5, Karachi.
6.	Karachi - IV	A-242/A Architect Society Block-8, Gulistan-e-Johar Karachi near Furqan Masjid.
7.	Karachi - V	House No.1144, Street No.04 Mehmoodabad No. 04, Liaquat Ashraf Colony No.02 Near Askari Bank, Karachi.
8.	Karachi - VI	R-30, Sector-5-A/2, 1st and 2nd Floor, North Karachi Township.
9.	Karachi - VII	500 Quarter, Musharaf Colony, Hawks Bay, Karachi.
10.	Karachi - VIII	House #10, Street #01, Sector 01, HBCHS Hub River Road Karachi.
11.	Karachi - IX (Orangi Town)	KESC-S-122, Plot No.65, Sec-5/E Orangi Town Karachi.
12.	Karachi - IX (North Nazimabad)	R13 Piyala Hotel Buffer Zone Karachi.

About **1470 children** (Karachi Division) are enrolled in these schools in One Academic Year.

6. CIVIL SOCIETY / NGOs:

The main objective of the Civil Society/NGOs is to provide rehabilitativeservices to the poor segments of the society through its grant-in-aid to the NGOs.

Detail of Karachi Based NGOs Funded by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal

S. No.	Name of NGO	Field / Treatment
1.	LRBT	Cataract Surgery
2.	MALC	Cataract Surgery
3.	Al-Mustafa	Cataract Surgery
4.	Al-Haq	Cataract Surgery
5.	Omair Sana Foundation	Thalassemia
6.	Fatmid Foundation	Thalassemia
7.	Welfare Society for Patient Care	Kidney Dialysis

7. SPECIAL FRIENDS PROJECT:

A. Wheel Chairs (Standard):

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal has distributed 152 wheel chairs to poor persons with disabilities at Karachi Division in last three years as per following:

Years	No. of Beneficiaries
2021-22	78
2022-23	62
2023-24	12
Total	**152**

Financial Assistance To Differently Abled Persons / Families:

Disbursement of financial assistance through cross cheques for persons with disabilities for last four years of Karachi Division is as under:

Years	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs.)
2020-21	445	6,270,000
2021-22	593	8,557,500
2022-23	54	1,480,000
2023-24	229	1,317,500
Total	**1,321**	**17,625,000**

8. PAKISTAN BAIT-UL-MAL PROJECT FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

A. COCHLEAR IMPLANT:

A cochlear implant is a small electronic device that stimulated the cochlear nerve which costs about Rs.21,50,000 (more than two million). Initially the contribution by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal was Rs one million which has been enhanced to Rs 2.15 million in the present year.

Progress

The progress of the programme on Karachi based is as under:

Treated Children	**8**
Amount (Rs.)	**9,570,000**

Individual Financial Assistance (Medical) For Deserving Patients:

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal provides financial assistance upto Rs.1.0 (million) to the public sector hospitals based in Karachi Division for treatment of poor patients suffering from Cancer, Heart, Hepatitis, vital organ surgeries, kidney dialysis and any other general treatments. Concerned hospitals supported by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal of Karachi Division are as under:

S. No.	Hospital Name (Karachi Division)
1.	JPMC Karachi
2.	KIRAN Hospital Karachi
3.	Civil Hospital Karachi
4.	NICH Karachi
5.	NIBD Karachi
6.	NCCI Karachi
7.	All DHQ Hospital (where consultants are available)

Financial Assistance-Medical disbursement (last four years) detail of only Karachi Division is as under:

Years	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs.)
2020-21	1270	231,421,673/-
2021-22	865	125,343,063/-
2022-23	146	30,247,428/-
2023-24	298	55,234,498/-
Total	**2,281**	**442,246,662/-**

9. **INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (EDUCATION):**

Education stipend can be provided to deserving and brilliant students up to Rs.100,000/- per annum per person, in Government funded institutions. Detail of institutions is given below:

Sr. No.	Name of Institution (Karachi Division)
1.	University of Karachi
2.	NED University Karachi
3.	DOW University Karachi
4.	SIPM&R Karachi (MoU)
5.	Karachi Medical & Dental College
6.	Jinnah Sindh Medical University Karachi
7.	IBA Karachi (MoU)
8.	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Lyari Karachi
9.	All Government Degree Colleges
10.	All Polytechnic/ Mono-technic Institutes

Disbursement of amount for students of Karachi Division is as under:

Years	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs.)
2020-21	242	8,737,287/-
2021-22	227	8,257,683/-
2022-23	132	5,403,760/-
2023-24	120	5,598,079/-
Total	**721**	**27,996,809/-**

10. **INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (GENERAL):**

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal addresses poor persons (two times in his / her life) with emergency financial assistance, while widows and infirm can avail Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal assistance throughout their lives.

Disbursement detail of this project for last four years of Karachi Division is as under:

Years	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount (Rs.)
2020-21	491	13,455,000/-
2021-22	372	10,010,000/-
2022-23	267	6,670,000/-
2023-24	164	4,315,000/-
Total	**1,294**	**34,450,000/-**

11. **INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (SEWING MACHINE):**

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal provides Sewing machine to orphan girls, widows, poor destitute women, disabled and infirm for their economic empowerment.

Distribution detail of Sewing Machine for Karachi Division is as under:

Years	No. of Beneficiaries
2021-22	85
2022-23	229
2023-24	12
Total	**326**

TRUST FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

TVO, in partnership with the National Poverty Graduation Programme (NPGP) and IFAD, is implementing the pilot project **"Effective Implementation of Village Social Enterprises (VSEs)"** in two rural districts of Shikarpur and Badin in Sindh. The project is a critical poverty graduation initiative aimed specifically at some of the most underdeveloped and economically marginalized regions of interior rural Sindh.

This initiative is designed to establish two Village Social Enterprises (VSEs), each operating as a small business to provide direct economic opportunities to rural communities. These enterprises will support between 150 and 200 of the poorest families in each district, identified using the BISP poverty scorecard. The VSEs will focus on utilizing local resources, empowering rural individuals to create sustainable livelihoods, and fostering a cooperative structure to ensure equitable distribution of income and resources.

The project's goal is to tackle the persistent poverty in interior rural Sindh by building sustainable economic models that uplift entire communities. With two Business Cooperative Models (BCOs) already registered with local authorities, the project has laid the groundwork for a broader impact. Following the pilot phase, TVO intends to replicate and expand this poverty alleviation model to additional rural districts in Sindh and othe parts of the country, contingent upon available funding and lesson learned."

PAKISTAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION FUND

PPAF's Efforts for Poverty Alleviation in Karachi:

PPAF has made significant achievements in Karachi by implementin community-driven development approach, directly benefiting some of th city's most vulnerable populations. Key interventions include:

- Forming 439 Community Institutions (399 Communit Organizations, 35 Village Organizations, and 5 Local Suppor Organizations), empowering communities to take charge of thei development and improve their livelihoods.
- Completing 318 Water and Community Physical Infrastructur Projects, providing essential services such as clean water an sanitation to 228,123 individuals, with 53% of beneficiaries bein women.
- Enhancing access to education by supporting 110 educationa facilities, with 21,163 students enrolled, of which 52% are girls.
- Supporting 21 health facilities, providing 765,996 consultations t individuals, 51% of whom were women and girls, thereb improving healthcare services in vulnerable communities.
- Providing 1,025 productive assets to ultra-poor and vulnerabl households, enabling 24% women beneficiaries to establish smal businesses and increase household income.
- Offering skills and enterprise trainings to 5,315 individuals, wit 38% participants being women, to enhance their employmen prospects and entrepreneurship capabilities.
- Issuing 15,438 interest-free loans under the Prime Minister' Interest-Free Loan Programme, with 80% of the loans awarded t women, helping women-led households rise above poverty throug productive investments.

(b)

PAKISTAN BAIT-UL-MAL

While Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal and related government programs offe support to Karachi's growing population of migrants, the city's challenge require comprehensive long-term strategies that include not just socia safety nets but also employment generation, housing projects, and urbai infrastructure development to accommodate the influx of people migratin; in search of better opportunities.

To address the specific needs of migrants from other districts of Sindl Province and other regions, there is a need for further expansion of thes services, more job creation initiatives, and targeted support ii collaboration with local governments and NGOs.

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal's efforts aim to address immediate poverty througl shelter, food, and financial aid, while long-term poverty alleviation i tackled by providing skills and education to help migrants secur

employment.
However, challenges like overcrowding, unemployment, and informal settlements persist, and Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal's role is primarily focused on providing safety nets rather than structural economic solutions. Broader interventions in urban planning, infrastructure, and job creation are needed to curb rising poverty rates comprehensively.

PAKISTAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION FUND

PPAF's Role in Curbing Poverty Rates in the Country:

PPAF has implemented a multidimensional approach to poverty alleviation, focusing on long-term poverty graduation. PPAF's Poverty Graduation model is designed to address various facets of poverty by offering consumption support, transferring productive assets, enhancing skills, providing access to finance, and offering business support. This model has been recognized globally for its effectiveness and is considered a strategic exit for recipients of the government's social safety net programs. A recent analysis of beneficiaries from both the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and PPAF revealed that 108,043 out of 334,596 (32%) unconditional cash recipients from BISP are now eligible to graduate from the programme. Central to PPAF's theory of change is its non-prescriptive approach, which focuses empowering communities to articulate their needs and drive their own development. PPAF has formed and capacitated 150,900 Community Organizations (with 2.65 million members, of which 63% are women), of which 68% of the institutions likely to be sustainable. Its initiatives have led to the distribution of over 203,400 productive economic assets and vocational skills training for 496,800 individuals, resulting in a 32% income increase for 42% of beneficiaries. PPAF has provided 3.2 million interest-free loans, with 56% disbursed to women, enabling 74.6% of beneficiaries to improve poverty bands on the Poverty Score Card. Additionally, PPAF's support for 956 health centers has facilitated 15.35 million medical consultations, while its educational initiatives have enrolled 413,000 students (49% girls) across 2,852 educational facilities. PPAF has completed 35,895 infrastructure sub-projects, benefiting 17.32 million individuals. Key impacts include improved access to water for 61% of individuals. Key impacts include improved access to water for 61% of communities and a 35% increase in agricultural productivity. In response to climate challenges, PPAF has conserved 2.23 million cubic meters of water and supported 1,446 renewable energy projects that have benefited 583,000 individuals by generating 14 MW of renewable energy. Through these diverse initiatives, PPAF continues to play a critical role in addressing poverty. Its focus on empowering communities, fostering economic resilience, and integrating climate adaptation ensures that poverty alleviation efforts are sustainable and scalable across the country

89. ***Ms. Sehar Kamran:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state the details of actions taken or being taken by the Government to address the deteriorating internet service quality in the country?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: Cellular Mobile:

Quality of Service Surveys: PTA conducts Quarterly Quality of Service (QoS) Surveys across various cities to assess the performance of mobile (voice and data) services, focusing on key performance indicators (KPIs) as defined in the QoS regulations and license obligations.

These KPIs include parameters such as call setup success rate, call drop rate, voice quality, data throughput, latency, and network availability, ensuring compliance with the standards set for mobile network operators.

During **FY2023-24, a total of 84x Cities** were surveyed. In addition, 72 complaint-based surveys were carried out. More than 20,000 voice and data tests were performed in each campaign and over 220,000 KPIs were measured. Overall results revealed that **less than 4% of the KPIs were found below thresholds.**

It is pertinent to mention that power outages, theft and frequent network closures on the directions of the Government pose some challenges that need to be considered in terms of QoS and availability of service.

Details of Last 5-year surveys are as under:

SUMMARY OF QOS SURVEY, SCNS AND FINE IMPOSED (JAN' 21 TO JUL' 24)

SUMMARY OF QOS SURVEY, SCNS AND FINE IMPOSED (JAN'21 TO JUL'24

Year	Surveys			SCNs	Fine Imposed (PKR)
	Planned	Complaint Based	Total		
2021	119	67	186	37	68.9 Million
2022	102	90	192		
2023	81	80	161		
Jan-Jul 24	39	65	104		
Total	341	302	643		

On the basis of survey results, issues are notified to mobile operators and the same are remedied using multiple techniques, such as addition of new sites, technology upgrades of existing sites and infrastructural improvement of sites.

Independent Surveys and Monitoring of System Parameters:

Before 2018, PTA was barred from conducting independent QoS surveys and had to do them jointly with mobile operators. After favorable verdict of Supreme Court, PTA started to conduct surveys independently through 7 x state of the art tools placed nationwide. In addition, mobile network performance is analysed through System parameters (OSS KPIs) of the mobile operators, and complaints received on PTA's modern Complaint Management System.

Network Rollout and Infrastructure:

Year-on-Year (YoY) analysis has revealed that approx. 12,000 standalone new sites were added during the last 6 years. Additionally, various network rollouts and upgrades are currently, in progress.

Radio Spectrum:

Pakistan has low spectrum availability as compared to other countries, consequently, spectrum auction (including 5G) is being planned. Currently, consultant hiring is almost final. **Spectrum auction is likely to commence in April 2025.**

Global Recognition:

A reliable free third-party website Ookla provides details regarding average download speed around 20 Mbps in Pakistan **showing increase of 21% in**

last one year, reflecting substantial investments and upgrades by telecom operators.

Capacity Enhancement:

PTA survey capacity has enhanced from average survey of 20 in 2018 to over 150 in 2023. This significant increase highlights the PTA's commitment to improving service quality through comprehensive surveys.

Summary of Actions

a. Installation of 12,000 new sites in last six years and upgrading existing 2G sites to 4G.

b. Aggressive roll-out obligation in new and renewed licenses being issued by the PTA for yearly increase of 3% population coverage per province.

c. Targeted increase in survey campaigns with focus on rectification of observations.

d. Introduction of Voice over Wifi by Jazz (others to follow).

e. Telecom Infrastructure Sharing Framework, duly approved by MoIT&T in Nov23, provides a regulatory mechanism for active and passive sharing of telecom infrastructure. The framework would reduce Capex (Capital Expenditure) and Opex (Operational Expenditure) costs.

f National Roaming Facility testing along Coastal Highway, is another step towards increasing telecom penetration across country. It is aimed at provision of coverage to consumers irrespective of their subscription to any CMO.

g. 5G licensing with subsequent network rollout is being aggressively pursued by PTA (likely to commence in 2025).

90. ***Ms. Shagufta Jumani:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government is planning to restructure its Ministries, Divisions and other entities; if so, what are the the details of the proposed restructuring;

(b) what background studies, assessments, or benchmarks are guiding this restructuring process;

(c) *whether it is also a fact that the draft restructuring includes the abolition of thousands of lower grade posts; if so, what are the details thereof; and*

(d) *is the Government to protect the rights and interests of employees affected by aforesaid changes?*

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) The Government of Pakistan is firmly committed to achieving fiscal stabilization through a comprehensive strategy that encompasses reducing expenditures, right-sizing its establishments like Ministries / Divisions and other Organization Entities (OEs). This approach is essential for addressing the country's economic challenges and ensuring that public resources are allocated efficiently.

(b) The reform process gained momentum in 2018 by the introduction of Institutional Reforms Cell (IRC) headed by Dr. Ishrat Hussain. A comprehensive report was prepared covering civil service reforms, structure of federal, provincial and district governments business process re-engineering. This wide-ranging exercise prcvides an apt academic study into the reforms. The work done by Dr. Ishrat Hussain forms the very basis of the present reform initiative.

The Committee was also convinced that in pursuance of the true spirit of constitutionalism, the 18th amendment may also be given its due importance. It may be recalled that the 18th amendment of Pakistan's Constitution 1973, passed in 2010, significantly shifted powers from the Federal Government to the provinces, reinforcing the principles of provincial autonomy and decentralization.

(c) The restructuring plan includes Rightsizing the Federal Government as per the following:

i. 60% of vacant regular posts (up to 150,000) to be abolished or declared dying posts.

ii. Outsourcing of general, non-core services (cleaning, plumbing, gardening, etc).

iii. All contingency posts to be eliminated.

(d) The matter is being considered at appropriate level to provide a forum to address the grievances of the aggrieved employees.

91. ***Syed Rafiullah:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division be pleased to state:

(a) the details of employees who have obtained NOC for obtaining foreign nationality of any country during the last five years and are still in service, alongwith complete details of the department and the name of the country of which such national has been attained;

(b) the current posting of each of the above employees;

(c) the operating instructions that have been implemented by the Government, formulated in light of its own policies and decisions of the superior courts; and

(d) what corrective actions are being taken by the Government to ensure compliance with these policies, audit and review of such employees, to address and also rectify any identified irregularities, including the monitoring systems in place to prevent future issues?

Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema): (a) The Citizenship Act, 1951 is administered by the Interior Division, which deals with the matters connected therewith. At present, in terms of Civil Servants Act, 1973 and rules made thereunder, there is no requirement to obtain NOC for acquiring citizenship of any other country. However, the rule 13 of Civil Servants (Appointment, Promotion and Transfer) Rules, 1973, framed under the Act ibid, inter alia, provides that a candidate for appointment shall be a citizen of Pakistan". Further, a Government Servant who marries or promises to marry a foreign national without prior permission of the Government is a misconduct under the Government Servants (Marriage with Foreign Nationals) Rules, 1962.

(b) As above.

(c) The Supreme Court, vide judgment dated 24.09.2018 in SMC No. 03/2018, directed the Federal Government to frame policy relating to Government Servants or their spouses having dual or foreign nationality. The then Prime Minister, in exercise of powers under rule 9 of Rules of

Business, 1973 referred the matter to the Secretaries' Committee for their policy recommendations, which, in turn, constituted a three-member sub-committee consisting Cabinet Secretary, Secretary (IT & Telecom) and Secretary Law & Justice Division. The report of the said sub-committee will be placed before the Secretaries' Committee in its next meeting.

(d) Separately two privae member bills on the issue moved by Senator Afnan Ullah Khan; and moved by Mr, Noor Alam Khan, MNA presently stand referred to Senate Standing Committee of Cabinet Secretarial and National Assembly Standing Committee on cabinet respectively.

92. ***Syed Waseem Hussain:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the subjects devolved to the provinces under 18th Constitutional Amendment; and

(b) the details of Ministries and Departments and the number of posts abolished?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) Under 18th constitutional amendment, the Concurrent Legislative List of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan was deleted. All the subjects of the Concurrent Legislative List were devolved to the Provinces, which were 47 in number.

(b) After the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the Cabinet Division issued notifications to abolish 17 Federal Ministries/Divisions and devolved 22 Departments to the Provinces, the details of which have been placed at Annex-I. However, Cabinet Division has never been privy to the number of posts abolished consequent to the Amendment. The reply to this part of the Question may be taken from the Establishment Division.

(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)

93. ***Ms. Aliya Kamran:**

Will the Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety be pleased to state:

(a) *the departments under the administrative control of the Ministry, including their specific mandates related to poverty alleviation in the country;*

(b) *the recent initiatives undertaken by each department to alleviate poverty and what is the assessment of how these initiatives have been beneficial in reducing poverty, including approximate percentages of people lifted out of poverty;*

(c) *whether these initiatives are primarily supportive in nature and there is a perceived lack of systematic programmes that directly address and alleviate poverty in the country;*

(d) *if so, what measures are being taken by the Government to develop and implement progressive programmes that align with the Ministry's name, aiming to empower the poorest and create sustainable poverty reduction?*

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety: (a) As per Rules of Business, 1973 Schedule-II, para-31AA, the administration of the following departments has been entrusted to Ministry of Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety.

i. Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP)
ii. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM)
iii. Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF)
iv. Trust for Voluntary Organization (TVO)

The following initiatives have been undertaken by each department under the umbrella of Ministry of Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety to alleviate poverty.

BENAZIR INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) was established through an Act of Parliament No. XVIII 2010 with an immediate objective of consumption smoothening and cushioning the negative effects of slow economic growth. The long term objectives include meeting of the targets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to eradicate extreme and chronic poverty and empowerment of women.

BISP is providing cash assistance to poor segment of the society under Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT) also known as Kafaalat Programme on quarterly/periodic basis since 2008. Currently, BISP is providing Rs.10,500/- per quarter to beneficiary under UCT to around 9.5 million beneficiaries through Biometric Verification System (BVS) across Pakistan

PAKISTAN BAIT-UL-MAL

Initiatives undertaken by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal:

As per PBM Act 1992, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal has not directly mandated for poverty reduction, therefore any assessment and percentages of people lifted out of poverty is not available. However, a brief sketch of social uplifting initiatives undertaken by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is as under:

1. SWEET HOMES

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is running **(46)** orphanages in the name of "PBM Sweet Homes", throughout the country. Each

Centre is accommodating 100 orphan children. The age limit for enrolment of orphan children is 4-6 years. Children are kept in home like environment with the provision of boarding facility, food, medical care and clothing. They are provided with quality education from the best educational institutes of the city. Current Enrolment of the total orphans is **4,408** (Nationwide).

2. **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT CENTRE (WEC)**

Women Empowerment Centres (WECs) have been established throughout the country. These centers are providing free vocational training to widows, orphan & poor girls in modern professional skills like, dress designing, embroidery, Basic & Advance Computer Courses, Beautician Course, and fabric painting. So far, **(165)** WECs are functional across Pakistan. Total number of passed out are **298,898** and trainees enrolled in this year (session 2024-2025) are **14,490.**

3. **SHELTER HOMES**

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Homes are the place of providence where free dinner is provided to up to **400** beneficiaries and overnight stay plus breakfast is provided to up to **100** persons on daily basis. The target group is the temporarily away from homes, unemployed, students, laborers, daily wagers, poor and transit passengers, attendants of the patients etc. At present, **(17)** Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Homes are operational in the country.

4. KHANA SAB KEY LIYE (KSKL) / FOOD FOR ALL

"Khana Sab Key Liye / Food for all" is the mobile food vehicle program. From each food vehicle, upto **500** beneficiaries are provided free lunch and upto **500** beneficiaries are provided dinner at the designated routes. The target group is the any needy persons / laborers at their workplaces who could not approach the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Homes for free meal. At present, **(17)** KSKL vehicles are operational in the country.

5. **ORPHAN WIDOW SUPPORT PROGRAMME (OWSP)**

Keeping in view evidences and various financial, operational and social constraints of institutional care, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal launched family cum community based conditional cash transfer program namely, "Orphans and Widows Support Program (OWSP)". The family of a school going children, preferably girl is provided financial support @ Rs. 8000/- and Rs. 12000/- subject to their school attendance. At present, **1,074** families are enrolled in this project.

6. **SPECIAL FRIENDS PROJECT**

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal has been providing standardized assistive devices i.e. customized wheel chairs, standard wheel chairs, white canes, artificial limbs, hearing aids to PWD's since 2009. Financial Assistance is also provided to the families having at least one of their family members as special person. The family with one special family member is provided Rs.30,000/- annually as financial assistance while the family with two or more special family members are provided Rs.60,000/- annually.

7. **SCHOOLS FOR REHABILITATION OF CHILD LABOUR (SRCL)**

It is Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal initiative to pull out the children from bonded labor and imparting them education, in line with the UN & other international organizations conventions. Starting from 1995, **(160)** centers are running all over the country. 120 children involved in child labor are enrolled in each school are imparted education upto primary level. They are provided free books, stationery, uniform / shoes and daily stipend. Current enrolment of children are **18,787**, and total graduated from these schools are **47,441**.

8. **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE**

Medical Assistance is provided to deserving patients up to Rs. 1(M) per family for the medical treatment of various fatal diseases like cardiac problems, liver diseases, hepatitis-C, kidney diseases etc. The deserving patients are provided free of cost medical treatment from public sector hospitals throughout the country.

9. **EDUCATION ASSISTANCE**

Education stipend is provided to deserving and brilliant students up to Rs.100, 000/ per annum per family studying, in Government funded institutions nationwide.

10. **CIVIL SOCIETY / NGOS WING (CS/NGOS)**

To provide grand-in-aid to registered NGOs in order to strengthen such institutions aimed at rehabilitation of needy persons. With the public - private partnership the immediate community-based projects are executed. The registered NGOs operating in the field of Cataract Surgery and Kidney Dialysis & Kidney Transplantation are also provided financial assistance.

11. **COCHLEAR IMPLANT:**

A Cochlear implant is a small electronic device that stimulated the cochlear nerve. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is maintaining national registry for the patients of hearing loss and is serving such deserving persons with provision of cochlear implant in a public-private partnership mode. The children below the age of 05 years, requiring cochlear implant surgeries are registered online through Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal website www.pbm.gov.pk on first come first serve basis. So far **1,103** cochlear implant surgeries have been sponsored by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal.

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) is an autonomous body of Federal Government, established in 1992 under the act of Parliament to work for marginalized, orphans, destitute, needy & widows etc. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is endeavoring to keep pace with the growing needs of social sector and cater this through effective programs. The mandate of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal as envisaged by PBM Act 1992 extends to provide basic necessities of life such as food, Shelter, skill developments, education and medical relief for all citizens of Pakistan, irrespective of their sex caste, creed or race.

TRUST FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

TVO is a private entity, established under the Special Development Fund (SDF) agreement between the Government of Pakistan and the Government of the United States. The Trust does not receive any budgetary support from the Federal Government or provincial governments.

The Trust as per its mandate, provides technical and financial assistance for the participatory development projects from CBOs/NGOs using its own resources, which include income from investments and donor contributions. Since its inception, TVO has significantly contributed to various poverty alleviation efforts, such as skill development training, microcredit programs, and the promotion of cottage industries, with a particular emphasis on women in rural communities.

2. Conscious of its social obligations, the Trust in partnership with the National Poverty Graduation Programme (NPGP) and IFAD, is currently implementing the pilot project titled "Effective Implementation of Village Social Enterprises (VSEs)" in the rural districts of Shikarpur and Badin in Sindh, as well as in Zhob, Balochistan. This critical initiative aims to address poverty in some of the most economically marginalized and underdeveloped areas of these regions.

The project is focused on establishing three Village Social Enterprises (VSEs), each functioning as a small business to provide direct economic opportunities to rural communities. These VSEs will benefit between 150 and 200 of the poorest families in each district, identified through the BISP poverty scorecard. The VSEs will leverage local resources and empower individuals to create sustainable livelihoods, operating under a cooperative model to ensure fair distribution of income and resources.

The overarching goal of the initiative is to combat persistent poverty in rural Sindh and Balochistan by developing sustainable economic models that uplift entire communities. With three Business Cooperative Models (BCOs) already registered with local authorities, the project has laid a strong foundation for future expansion. Upon the successful completion of the pilot phase, TVO aims to replicate and scale this model in additional rural districts across Pakistan, contingent upon funding availability and insights gained from the pilot.

PAKISTAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION FUND

PPAF is the lead apex institution for community-driven local development with a mission to transform the lives of the poor to create a more equitable and prosperous Pakistan and foster sustainable economic growth. PPAF's geographic outreach is in 150 districts across all four provinces and regions of Pakistan, focusing on empowering marginalized rural communities to access improved infrastructure, green energy, health, education, livelihoods, access to finance, and fosters resilience to disasters through a holistic Poverty Graduation approach. This creates opportunities for the poor, preparing and empowering them to be able to participate in the socio-economic development and economic growth process, providing them the access to essential social services such as education, health, clean drinking water and proper sanitation, while enhancing resilience to climate change-induced shocks.

PPAF's Poverty Graduation Approach:

Poverty, defined as the inability to attain bare minimal living standards, is perceived by PPAF as a multidimensional phenomenon manifesting through low income, lack of access to resources, fewer opportunities for participation in economic activities and political processes, and high vulnerability to risks and shocks. In Pakistan, poverty remains a significant challenge. As per the World Bank, within one year poverty increased from 34.2% to 39.4%, with 12.5 million more people falling below the poverty line of $3.65 per day income level. The country grapples with issues such as high unemployment rates, limited access to quality education and healthcare, and stark regional disparities. Rural areas, in particular, suffer from inadequate infrastructure and limited access to markets, exacerbating the cycle of poverty. Additionally, political instability, natural disasters, and economic volatility further compound the vulnerability of impoverished.

communities. Addressing these multifaceted challenges is crucial for sustainable development and economic growth in Pakistan.

PPAF's interventions aim to assist households graduate out of poverty, reducing reliance on Government's social protection programmes. Our Graduation approach is guided by evidence, with outcomes validated by a global research study published in the May 2015 issue of Science. This study utilized evidence from randomized control trials conducted in six graduation programmes (in Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Pakistan [IFAD-PPAF pilot], and Peru) between 2006 and 2014. The CGAP study marked a breakthrough moment, providing the insights we needed to refine and advance our Graduation Approach.

The following Poverty Graduation Arc illustrates our Graduation model, progressing through consumption support, skills enhancement, asset transfer, saving, access to finance, and business support, ultimately leading to sustainable livelihoods. Distinct and well-thought-through interventions are tailored to each poverty band to ensure that appropriate combination of tools is used to effectively graduate people to a higher score on the Poverty Scorecard (PSC). PPAF serves as the exit strategy of GoP's social protection initiative.

A recent preliminary analysis based on triangulation of BISP and PPAF common beneficiaries' data reveals that out of 334,596 BISP unconditional cash recipients 108,043 (32%) are eligible to graduate from BISP.

Strategic Focus Areas of PPAF and Impact of Interventions:

Below are the key areas of focus for our organisation, showcasing our contributions towards poverty alleviation in the country through various multi-sectoral interventions:

Community Empowerment through Social Mobilisation and Improving Local Governance:

Central to PPAF's theory of change is its non-prescriptive approach, which focuses empowering communities to articulate their needs and drive their own development. This is achieved through organising communities into functional value laden, inclusive, democratic institutions of the people, enabling them to take charge of their destinies with voice and agency. PPAF partners with civil society organisations to build their capacity for social mobilization and community empowerment, emphasizing inclusion, participation, accountability, transparency, and stewardship.

Since its inception, PPAF has formed 150,900 Community Organizations (COs) with 2.65 million members, 63% of whom are women. Moreover, PPAF has conducted around 20,000 capacity-building events for members of the community institutions (28% women), enhancing their managerial skills and civic awareness. A third-party assessment[1] shows an 86% satisfaction rate among beneficiaries (half of whom are women), with 68% of community institutions likely to be sustainable. Local Support Organizations (LSOs) are even more confident with 92% to them likely to be sustainable. Notably, 19% of LSO office bearers are women, and all LSOs sampled engage in conflict resolution, with 76% of issues resolved amicably.

Climate Changes and Disaster Response:

Despite contributing less than 1% to global carbon emissions, Pakistan ranks among the ten most vulnerable countries to climate change. Addressing this requires integrated approaches to strengthen resilience, promote sustainable development, and prioritize the needs of vulnerable communities. Investments in climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, sustainable agriculture, green energy, water management, and social protection are essential for building resilience and promoting inclusive development. Aligned with the Paris Agreement, PPAF supports the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) through interventions in the National Adaptation Plan 2023, focusing on green jobs, livelihoods, inclusive growth, green energy, and social equity. These efforts have conserved 2.23 million cubic meters of water, built 72 km of protection walls benefiting 156,000 households, generated over 14 MW of renewable energy, planted 129,706 trees, and raised environmental awareness among 7,000 youth across 64 schools.

PPAF has made significant achievements in disaster relief and mitigation, benefiting 260,000 households through its Drought Mitigation and Preparedness Programme (DMPP) and constructing 120,000 seismically safe houses post-2005 earthquake. Flood relief efforts have supported 859,000 households, and emergency responses like the COVID-19 Fund aided 66,000 households in 20 districts in 2020. Responding to recent disasters in 2022 and 2023, PPAF reached over 87,600 households and provided emergency relief, achieving high satisfaction rates and significant improvements in access to essential resources, as reported by independent assessments. As reported by an independent assessment[2], 90% of beneficiary households reported improved access to shelter, food and non-food items, while 89% of assisted households expressed satisfaction with the project support, they received.

Looking forward, PPAF continues its focus on rehabilitation, reconstruction, and resilience-building across 61 Union Councils, aiming to restore social services and critical infrastructure with a budget of approximately PKR 3.4 billion.

Assets Creation, and Vocational Skills and Value Chains Development:

Within PPAF's poverty graduation framework, productive economic asset creation serves as a vital mechanism for enhancing the economic and social welfare of ultra-poor and

vulnerable households, enabling them to generate sustainable income and employment streams. Additionally, augmenting the skillsets of these households enhances their employability and entrepreneurial talent.
Through this initiative, a more than 203,400 productive assets have been allocated, with 63% benefiting women, aiming to boost sustainable income and employment. Additionally, 496,800 individuals, including 45% women, received skills and entrepreneurship training, resulting in 42% of beneficiaries earning 32% more income[3]. Moreover, another assessment[4] reported that an impressive 54% of the households successfully graduated out of poverty. Furthermore, under Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) project, 22% of supported SMEs embraced environmentally sustainable cultivation practices, leading to a 72% increase in sales turnover. This growth fostered full-time-employment in 36% of target SMEs and saw a 68% SMEs reporting an increase in investment within targeted value chains[5].

Financial Inclusion:
Financial inclusion is a cornerstone of poverty alleviation, empowering individuals, and households to access essential financial services for investment, asset-building, and managing financial challenges. This access promotes economic empowerment, resilience to shocks, and inclusive growth. PPAF plays a crucial role in advancing financial inclusion as the sector developer of Pakistan's microfinance sector. Through its majority shareholding in the Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company (PMIC), PPAF facilitates sustainable growth in microfinance by providing wholesale funding and financial advisory services to Microfinance Banks and Institutions. This support enables these institutions to offer affordable financial services to marginalised rural and low-income households, contributing significantly to financial inclusion and poverty alleviation. As sector developer of Pakistan's microfinance sector, PPAF provides wholesale funding and advisory services to 26 microfinance providers through PMIC, facilitating PKR 87.02 billion in microfinance loans, with 79% benefiting women. Moreover, PPAF spearheads Prime minister's Interest-Free Loan (PMIFL) Programme in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan, disbursing over PKR 115

billion[11] in interest-free loans to support microenterprises, with 56% going to women. An independent assessment[7] shows significant impacts, including 74.6% of beneficiaries moving to higher Poverty Scorecard bands and 77.8% increasing monthly incomes by 25% or more and 97.4% successfully completed loan repayments. In SME development initiatives, PPAF facilitates access to financial services, mobilizing PKR 382 million and providing PKR 706 million in matching grants to SMEs.

Community Physical Infrastructure:

Within PPAF's holistic development framework, the provision of vital community infrastructure stands as a pivotal measure for enhancing access to social services, fostering economic growth, driving local development, and consequently, reducing poverty, directly enhancing community well-being, and strengthening resilience to combat disasters. Investment in critical community infrastructure at the local level serves as a potent economic catalyst for the most underserved communities, creating avenues for income generation and bolstering market access to uplift livelihoods. These locally constructed and managed infrastructure projects empower communities by showcasing their organisational and managerial skills, while also contributing to social cohesion.

PPAF has significantly strengthened local economies and improved living conditions through the completion of 35,895 infrastructure sub projects benefiting 17.32 million individuals, including 51% women, marking significant progress towards community empowerment and prosperity by enhancing access to water, sanitation, and agricultural facilities. Key impacts as reported by an independent assessment[8], include improved access to drinking water for 61% of communities, sanitation service enhancements for 28%, direct benefits to the poor from 76% of infrastructure schemes, and a notable 35% increase in agricultural production due to improved irrigation access.

Renewable Energy:

The necessity of a green, reliable, affordable, and inclusive energy transition is paramount in enhancing the quality of life for off-grid and underdeveloped areas across Pakistan. PPAF's strategic response is its impactful Renewable Energy initiatives, which invest in hydropower, mini-grids, and energy efficiency, facilitating a sustainable and cost-effective energy transition. Local communities actively participate in the planning and execution processes, fostering a sense of ownership.

PPAF's Renewable Energy initiatives promote sustainable solutions such as hydropower and mini grids, with a cumulative capacity of over 14 MW across 1,446 projects benefiting more than 583,000 individuals. These initiatives reduce reliance on fossil fuels, improve livelihoods through better lighting and income generation, and contribute to environmental sustainability. An independent assessment[9] confirms 100%.

utilisation and maintenance of renewable projects, complete elimination of fossil fuel consumption for lighting, and a 30% reduction in 46% households' expenditures.

Health and Nutrition:

Health is a critical ingredient for achieving economic, social, and environmental goals, including alleviating poverty and sustainable economy. Recognising the correlation between health, malnutrition, and poverty, PPAF's health and nutrition component interventions aims at improving indiscriminate access of marginalised communities to comprehensive primary health care and nutrition services, especially emphasising maternal, neonatal and child health. By supporting and enhancing 956 community health centres and government facilities, PPAF has facilitated 15.35 million health consultation visits, with 56% being women and girls addressing gender disparities and promoting well-being across all community members. Special initiatives include a blood transfusion project for Thalassemia patients and the establishment of a Deaf Reach Centre in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ensuring inclusive care and education. A third-party assessment[10] reports 212% increase in women's utilisation of Antenatal Care/Postnatal Care (ANC/PNC) services, 56% increase in Outpatient Department (OPD) attendance at Basic Health Units (BHUs) and 24% at Community Health Centres (CHCs). Moreover, a remarkable 94% satisfaction rate among women visiting supported health centres.

Education:

The nexus between education and poverty is profound and multifaceted, with education laying a pivotal role in poverty alleviation and socio-economic development. PPAF has been investing in inclusive and equitable education, among impoverished communities addressing the root causes of poverty and creating pathways to inclusive and sustainable socioeconomic development.

So far, a total of 2,852 educational facilities including more than 1,500 public schools and 5 tele-education facilities received support, facilitating the enrolment of over 413,000 students (include 10,000 blind and deaf children), of which 45% were girls, in primary and secondary schools and also trained more than 4,000 teachers and 6,000 community resource persons and school management committees. The key impacts as reported by a third-party assessment[11], there is an enrolment of 25% of out-of-school children in target areas, alongside a noticeable 30% increase in overall enrolment, with 49% being girls. Moreover, 78% of parents reported satisfaction with the improved quality of schools.

PPAF integrates principles of peace, pluralism, and harmony into its poverty graduation model, fostering social cohesion and inclusivity. PPAF supports projects like 'Bridging Educational Polarisation for Social Harmony' provides formal education and economic opportunities to youth population through religious educational facilities in Balochistan. It establishes mechanisms for inter-sect and inter-faith dialogue, advocacy, and public information to promote religious moderation, tolerance, mutual respect, religious freedom, fundamental rights, and social harmony.

PPAF is also supporting Pakistan Armed Forces in implementation of the Chamalang Balochistan Education Programme focusing youth for studying outside the province and as day scholars in Quetta, Loralai, and Kohlu.

Inclusion and Gender

PPAF views social exclusion as a multidimensional issue beyond financial deprivation, emphasizing the need for equal access to resources and opportunities for disadvantaged groups. This approach focuses on inclusivity, ensuring access to essential services, education, healthcare, clean water, and employment. By embedding social inclusion, participation, and accountability into all programmes, PPAF helps marginalized groups, especially women and girls, combat poverty and gender inequality through education, skills training, and economic empowerment.

PPAF also tailor programmes for people with special needs, providing assistive devices and enterprise training to foster integration and community contribution. The organisations, distributed assistive devices to over 39,000 persons with disabilities and provided enterprise training to more than 3,000, helping them integrate into the society and lead more fulfilling lives while contributing to their communities. Moreover, PPAF implemented initiatives like economic empowerment, cultural exchange programmes, and community-based conflict resolution strengthen social fabric and contribute to sustainable development through involvement of youth population.

All the programs related to Social Safety under the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety are primarily supportive in nature and are directly related to alleviate poverty in the country.

(c)

PAKISTAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION FUND

PPAF's interventions aim to assist households graduate out of poverty, reducing reliance on Government's social protection programmes. The Graduation approach is guided by evidence, with outcomes validated by a global research study. The poverty challenges, high unemployment rates, and stark regional disparities indicate that while supportive initiatives exist, a comprehensive and systematic program addressing poverty directly is essential.

In addition to positive impacts and outcomes reported on the targeted communities, a recent preliminary analysis based on triangulation of BISP and PPAF common beneficiaries' data reveals that out of 334,596 BISP unconditional cash recipients, 108,043 (32%) are eligible to graduate from BISP. This finding is a testament to the effectiveness of the programmes in alleviating poverty and transitioning individuals from dependency to self-sufficiency.

(d) As Above.

94. ***Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb:**

Will the Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety be pleased to state what procedure is being adopted alongwith its schemes by the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal at present for providing relief to the poor and needy people in the country?

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety: Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is a body corporate established in 1992 through an Act of Parliament. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is premier public sector social safety net of the Federal Government, working under Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety.

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is operating number of programs/schemes for providing relief to the poor and needy people in the field of medical, education, women empowerment, child education and protection, food and shelter etc.

BRIEF ON MAJOR PROGRAMMES / INITIATIVES / PROJECTS COVERED UNDER PAKISTAN BAIT-UL-MAL ARE AS UNDER:

I. **PAKISTAN BAIT-UL-MAL SHELTER HOMES**

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Home program is started in July, 2020 from Islamabad. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Home is the place where deserving / needy people are provided free meal and shelter. The target groups are people faraway from homes, unemployed, laborers, daily wagers, poor and transit passengers, attendants of the patients, students or any other deserving individuals. In each Shelter Home, free of cost dinner is provided to upto (400) people and night stay plus breakfast to upto (100) people on daily basis. Currently, (17) Shelter Homes are functional in the country, as under:

Province/Region	Numbers
Islamabad & Capital Territory	05
Azad Jammu & Kashmir	01
Punjab	01
South Punjab	02
Sindh	07
Gilgit Baltistan	01

So far, number of beneficiaries served from Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Homes since its inception is as under:

Free night stay plus breakfast provided	=	1,295,899
Free dinner served	=	7,742,071
Total	**=**	**9,037,970**

Procedure:

i. Citizens of Pakistan including AJ&K and Gilgit Baltistan urban/ rural homeless, faraway from homes, unemployed, laborers, daily wagers, poor and transit passengers, attendents of the patients, students etc. can avail the facility of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Homes.

ii. Free meal (dinner) is served to all the above inside the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Home in a respectable manner.

iii. Those who are provided free night stay in the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Home are required to have valid CNIC or any other identification document.

iv. Biometric check-in registration.

v. Preference to such persons who have no/less history of stay.

vi. Dependents of the applicants will also be allowed to stay in Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Home on case to case basis.

Sustainability:

Regular allocation of funds by the Federal Government is mandatory to ensure sustainability of the program.

2. **KHANA SAB KEY LIYE**

Khana Sab Key Liye program is started in March, 2021 to provide free food to those beneficiaries who could not approach Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Shelter Homes due to certain reasons, e.g. engagements in work / labour, mobile food unit, Khana Sab Key Liye (KSKL) have been initiated where food is provided to the deserving people near to their workplaces. Principle of first come first serve is being observed. From each KSKL food vehicle upto (1000) beneficiaries are provided free meal, (500 lunch and 500 dinner) on the designated routes. Currently, (17) KSKL food vehicles are functional in the country as under:

Province/Region	Numbers
Islamabad & Capital Territory	03
AJK	01
South Punjab	03
Sindh	07
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	03

So far, 7,190,615 meals have been served through the KSKL food vehicles since its inception.

Procedure:

i. Residents/ Citizen of Pakistan including urban/ rural, faraway from homes, unemployed, laborers, daily wagers, poor and transit passengers, attendants of the patients, students or any other deserving individual can avail the facility of free food.

ii. Principle of first come first serve basis is observed.

Sustainability:

Regular allocation of funds by the Federal Government is mandatory to ensure sustainability of the program.

3. **PAKISTAN BAIT-UL-MAL SWEET HOMES**

The "PBM Sweet Homes" a premier project of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is a significant initiative aimed at providing protection, care and rehabilitation of underprivileged orphaned children. The Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Sweet Homes project in Pakistan is a remarkable initiative that has made significant contribution in providing orphaned children with a secure, nurturing, and education-focused environment. With widespread coverage, dedicated staff, using a holistic approach, the program has positively impacted the lives of thousands of under-privileged children.

Objective: The primary objective of the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Sweet Homes project is to offer a nurturing and home-like environment to orphaned children. This is achieved through the provision of free boarding, food, clothing, and education up to intermediate level.

Scope: Presently, the project comprises of 46 Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Sweet Homes across the country, collectively accommodation approximately 4,235 orphan children. Each of these homes is dedicated to provide individual attention to the physical, mental, and psychological well-being of every child. Province/Region wise detail of PSHs is as under:

Province/Region wise details of Pakistan Sweet Homes (PSHs)		
Sr. No.	**Province/Regions**	**No. of PSHs**
1.	Punjab-I	08
2.	South Punjab	05
3.	Sindh	07
4.	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	08
5.	Balochistan	04
6.	ICT/AJK	11
7.	Gilgit Baltistan	03
Total		**46**

4. ORPHAN AND WIDOWS SUPPORT PROGRAM

The “Orphans & Widows Support Program” (OWSP) is a Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) intervention focused on orphan’s education with emphasis on girls’ education. The objective of the OWSP is provision of home and family based protection and educational services to the orphan girls and matriculated children of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Sweet Homes. The program was launched in July, 2020.

Program Components / Features:

a. Children of closed Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Sweet Homes are enrolled in OWSP program;

b. The Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Sweet Homes children who have completed matric are enrolled in the program for further support to get higher education;

c. 100 widow families having at-least one orphan school going girls in 7 Regional Head Quarters are enrolled in the program for education support to their children education.

Benefits:

- Families of children enrolled under OWSP category "a & b" are entitled to **Rs.8,000/-** month and **Rs.16,000/-** month having one child and more than one child respectively, upon meeting compliance of 75 % school attendance.;

- While, Families of children enrolled under OWSP category "c" are entitled to **Rs. 8,000/-** month and **Rs. 12,000/-** month having one school going orphan girl and more than one child including a girl respectively, upon meeting compliance of aforesaid attendance condition;

- Matriculated children can avail benefit through Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal-IFA-Education for their education on scholarship upto Ph.D level. This Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal intervention provides facility of transfer educational fee and hostel fee to the public sector college/university where matriculated child is studying;

- Matriculated children and their family members can avail facility of medical treatment upto **10 lacs** through Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal-IFA-Medical in case of any fatal disease. This Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal intervention provides facility of transfer medical grant to concern hospital where matriculated child or his/her family member is admitted for treatment;

5. PAKISTAN BAIT UL MAL, SCHOOL FOR REHABILITATION OF CHILD LABOUR (SRCL)

Child labour is the work by children that harms them or exploits them physically, mentally, morally or by blocking access to education, which certainly needs to be abolished. Child labour is not an isolated phenomenon. It is outcome of multitude of Socio-economic factors and has roots in poverty, lack of opportunities, and explosive rate of population growth, out-dated social customs and norms and plethora of other factors. The Government of Pakistan has signed MoU with the ILO in 1994 committing full backup and support for International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) programs in Pakistan. Pakistan ratified the convention 182 on "Worst form of child labour" in 2001, which aims to eliminate child labour in hazardous Sector. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, School for Rehabilitation of Child Labour (SRCL) is working for eradication of child labour by imparting primary education to the children working in hazardous workplace i.e. Brick kiln, Carpet, Mining, Tannery, Construction, Glass Bangle, Domestic work, Begging, Agriculture and Street Children etc. across the country. 160X SRCLs (Lahore Region-46, Multan Region-20, Sindh-38, KP-24, Balochistan-14, ICT-13 & GB-5) are imparting quality education to almost 19,269 students. These students are being paid daily stipend along-with parents' subsistence allowance and also provided free Textbook, uniform, stationery, etc.

6. **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT CENTERS**

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal has established Women Empowerment Centres throughout the country at district level including Azad Kashmir & Northern Areas since 1995. These centers are providing free vocational training to widows, orphan & poor girls in modern professional skills like, dress designing, embroidery, Basic & Advance Computer Courses, beautician course, Tie & Dye and fabric painting. 165 number of Women Empowerment Centre have been established so far throughout Pakistan in phased manners.

Currently, 129 Women Empowerment Centre have been modernized with IT Labs (having 20 Computer in each), throughout the country. Capacity building workshop pertaining to latest programming skills, networking, office automation etc. has also been carried out in collaboration with Microsoft Office Pakistan.

The successful trainees are awarded "Certificates of Proficiency" after completion of each full course or a part, accredited by National Vocational & Technical Training Center (NAVTTC).

Trainees of Women Empowerment Centre are being paid stipend of Rs.50/day on attendance basis thorough Biometric Verification System (BVS) / Electronic Payment System (EPS).

Establishment of Central Point / display centre at F-9 Park, Islamabad on pilot basis. It is under consideration that 75% of the sale proceeds would be given as incentive to respective teachers and trainees and 25% of the sale proceeds would be balanced in respective Women Empowerment Centre accounts for purchase of gadgets and to meet other day to day expenses.

The outcome of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal struggle for Women Empowerment is very positive as the Passed-out trainees have become able to earn their livelihood with a better and respectable way.

Furthermore, the effective, efficient, and transparent electronic money transfer mode for payment of stiped to trainees is under practice. The 328,064 trainees have been passed out since inception.

7. INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal since 1992, has been serving the poor of Pakistan in the field of Social Protection and Development. Being Public Welfare Organization mission of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is targeting poorest and vulnerable segments of the society and bring the sustainable development by addressing root cause of poverty. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is executing various antipoverty schemes to achieve its goal of ending poverty and bringing social justice in terms of provision of livelihood, Healthcare, Education and shelter for the destitute, orphans, widows and needy people lives. Programmes/schemes of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal along-with procedure which is being adopted is as under:

i. IFA- Education
ii. IFA-General
iii. IFA- Sewing Machine
iv. Financial Support to Special Friends of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (SFP)

i. INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE-EDUCATION

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal provides education assistance to the deserving students of Government Schools/Colleges/Institutes.

Nature of Assistance:

- Education stipend to purchase uniform, books & stationery (up to matric level students).

- Payment of post matric students (maximum to Rs. 100,000/- per year) including boarding fee.

Procedure:

The students are required to submit application for education stipend along-with academic testimonials and *bonafide* certificate. Subsequently, the cases are got duly investigated to assess their genuineness. The deserving students are paid education stipend once a year on inception of new academic session in case of annual and semester system as well. However, the amount in both cases should not exceed Rs.100,000/- in a year (in case of post matric students).

ii. **INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE-GENERAL**

The eligible applicants are provided financial assistance on first come first serve basis.

Nature of Assistance:

Financial assistance up to Rs. 60,000/- (per family) is provided to all poor, suffering from misery and unable to overcome circumstances within available resources.

Procedure:

Applications for financial assistance are received alongwith a copy of CNIC of the applicant through any source. These are duly investigated by the survey/Investigation. Officer in the Provincial/Regional office or by the concerned District Incharge Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal. On completion of verification, the application is processed at Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Head Office or concerned Provincial/Regional Office. The amount of financial assistance is then finally assessed and recommended for approval by the sanctioning authority.

iii. INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE- SEWING MACHINE.

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is working for the benefit of the poor masses, through its Programme i.e. IFA-Sewing Machine. The aim of this programme is to provide social protection to the poor marginalized segment of the society and to sponsor and promote self-employment for orphan girls and widows etc.

Nature of Assistance:

The sewing Machine is major component of assistance of the project.

Procedure:

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal provides sewing machines to an individual after receiving application on plain paper along-with copy of valid CNIC (application can be received by any source). After receiving an application, following procedure is being adopted for the delivery of Sewing Machine.

a. Investigation of the applicant is carried out for determining his/ her deserving status through its field staff. On completion of verification, the application is processed and finally approved at Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Head Office or concerned Provincial/ Regional Office. The sewing machine is delivered to applicant after the approval of the Competent Authority.

b. CNIC of the guardian of orphan girl less than 18 years of age can also be entertained on provision of Form- B for the convenience of minor applicants as well.

iv. FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO SPECIAL FRIENDS OF PAKISTAN BAIT-UL-MAL (SFP).

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal also provides social protection to the marginalized segment of the society specially focusing on disabled persons under this programme. Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal provides Standard Wheel Chairs & Customized Wheel Chairs and Financial Assistance to these special persons.

Nature of Assistance:

a. Provision of Standard Wheel Chair & Customized Wheel Chair, for poor disabled persons (mobility that leads special persons towards independence).

b. Financial Assistance is provided to them financial to live honorably.

Procedure:

- **Financial Assistance**

  - Application at Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal prescribed proforma along-with copy of valid CNIC.
  - B-Form (in case of minor)
  - Disability Certificate or NADRA CNIC having disability monogram.

- **Standard Wheel Chairs**

  - Application at Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal prescribed proforma along-with copy of valid CNIC.
  - B-Form (in case of minor)
  - Disability Certificate or Photograph showing disability or Recommendation from a medical practitioner of Government Hospital or recommendation of Director (Medical).
  - Senior Citizens (having age 60 or above).

- **Customized Wheel Chairs**

Submission of online application by persons with disabilities (PWDs) at Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal website.

v. **INDIVIDUAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE - MEDICAL**

Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal provides financial assistance upto Rs. 1.0 (million) to the public sector hospitals for treatment of poor patients suffering from cancer, heart diseases, hepatitis, tuberculosis, vital organ surgeries, kidney dialysis another general treatments. Similarly, a financial assistance of Rs. 1.5 (million) is provided to public as well as private sector hospitals for cochlear implant surgeries of by birth deaf and mute children on first come and first serve basis. A family having monthly income equal to or less than Rs. 30,000/- is eligible for financial assistance from Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal.

95. ***Dr. Mahreen Razzaq Bhutto:**

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan's Information Technology Sector, is facing issues related to infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, skill development, cyber security, investment and the digital divide;

(b) if so, what specific steps are being taken by the Government to address these challenges and how can the Government and private sector collaborate to enhance IT infrastructure, improve regulatory policies, invest in skill development, strengthen cyber security, increase investment opportunities and bridge the digital divide to foster growth and innovation in the industry?

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): (a) Pakistan's IT sector is facing some key issues related lack of skilled resources in tech sector, regulatory burden and uncertainties, vulnerabilities in cyber-security, insufficient investment and widening the digital divide. These issues are stopping the IT sector from growing and being competitive. The key challenges in this regard are hereby explained at **Annex-A, B, C, D, E**.

(b) Multipronged approach is being employed to address the issues related to digital landscape for promotion of ICT sector in line with the imperetives of contemproary digital trends. The same are placed at **Annex-F, G, H, I, J.**

(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)

96. ***Syed Waseem Hussain:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that psychological test of the Candidates of Central Super Services (CSS) and Members and Chairman of Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) are conducted before their appointments;

(b) if so, the details of numbers of candidates, retired officers who could not qualify the tests during the last year?

Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema): (a) The Competitive Examination (CSS) is conducted every year in order to recommend suitable candidates for induction into BS-17 posts of Civil Service in the twelve Occupational Groups/ Services under the Federal Government. The examination has four stages *i.e.* (i) Screening Test, (ii) Written Examination, (iii) Psychological Assessment, (iv) *Viva Voce* (Interview). The Psychological Assessment of only those candidates is carried out who qualify the Written Examination. No separate marks are awarded for Psychological Assessment. However, 300 marks of *viva voce* also reflect performance on the Psychological Assessment of the candidates.

Chairman/ Members of the Commission are retired officers of BS-21 or above/ equivalent, appointed by the President of Pakistan in terms of Section 3(3) of FPSC Ordinance, 1977 who conducts interviews of the CSS written qualified candidates and award marks also taking into account Psychological Assessment report of the candidates conducted by Psychologists.

The Members and Chairman of FPSC are appointed by the President of Pakistan & no psychological test is conducted in this regard.

(b) For CSS Competitive Examination 2023, a total of 401 candidates qualified written examination. However, 10 candidates could not qualify the interview and 4 candidates remained absent in the interview. Detail of the candidates is at **Annex-I.**

Further, there is no category of Fail/ Pass in psychological assessment report. The psychological assessment only contains a pen picture and assessment of the candidate's personality. Hence, no candidate is declared failed in psychological Assessment.

Annex-I

LIST OF THE CANDIDATES WHO COULD NOT QUALIFY THE VIVA VOCE OF CE-2023

Sr.	Roll No.	Name of Candidate	Domicile
1	012666	Aimen Asad	AJK
2	019531	Shiza Bashir	Punjab
3	026345	Abdul Wahab	Sindh (R)
4	031279	Huma Riaz	Punjab
5	033164	Maryam Javed	Punjab
6	034819	Muhammad Hadayat Ullah	Punjab
7	034998	Muhammad Hassan Zaib Khan Lodhi	Punjab
8	035163	Muhammad Israr Ul Haq	Punjab
9	039344	Sarmad Noor	Punjab
10	042107	Zaiin Ul Abdeen	Punjab

LIST OF CANDIDATES REMAINED ABSENT IN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT/ VIVA VOCE OF CE-2023

Sr.	Roll No.	Name of Candidate	Domicile
1	004000	Arifa Batool	Punjab
2	037756	Rabeea Ikram	Punjab
3	037850	Rafaqat Ali (Deceased)	Punjab
4	040097	Shukaiba Ghafoor	Punjab

97. ***Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb:**

Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) cannot become a profitable department; if so, the reasons thereof; and

(b) why have excess staff have been appointed in PIA beyond its need?

Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif): (a) The accumulated losses/liabilities of PIACL are PKR 830.79 billion liabilities by 30 September, 2023. Sustenance of PIACL was not possible with negative equity of such magnitude. Federal Government could either take all the liabilities or go for its restructuring/privatization. The former option was not considered feasible so the later option was opted which is presently underway.

PIACL has been making losses for years. The loss for first 9 months of 2023 (till 30 September, 2023) stood at PKR 75.75 billion. In order to bridge the gap PIACL could either take assistance from the Government or take loans from commercial banks. During recent Stand-by Arrangement with IMF, Government was unable to support PIACL and the company resorted to take loans from commercial banks at high interest rates to pay off current and legacy liabilities. Although PIACL has seen operational profit of PKR 5.6 Billion during year 2023 but the amount of profit is meager when compared to net losses of 75.75 billion. Total loans of PIACL (commercial banks, government loans and sukuk) amounts to PKR 389.7 Billion. Owing to these reasons, PIACL cannot be turned into a profitable organization. Hence, government planned to privatize it after restructuring.

(b) Currently, there is no excess manpower in PIA. The existing regular employees of the airline are right sized to meet current operating network specific requirements and stands at 7,577 as of 18th April 2024. The existing aircraft to HR ratio is 222 per aircraft at the moment.

98. ***Ms. Shaista Pervaiz:**

Will the Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination be pleased to state what specific steps are being *taken by the Government to integrate climate action in the country's constitutional framework to ensure long term commitment?*

Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination: Under Serial No. 32 of Federal Legislative List of the Constitution of Pakistan, Federal Government is mandated to work on implementation of international treaties, conventions, and agreements.

Effective coordination between federal and provincial governments is crucial for advancing climate and environmental sustainability in Pakistan as well as effective implementation of these treaties/ Conventions as mentioned in the Constitution of Pakistan.

Following initiatives/ steps are being taken and implementation mechanism are in place to implement climate action in line with our long term commitment as provided in the constitutional framework:

1. **Pakistan Climate Change Council (PCCC):** Established under the Pakistan Climate Change Act of 2017, the PCCC includes representatives from federal and provincial governments, civil society, and experts. High-level provincial representation ensures local priorities and challenges are integrated into national climate strategies, fostering a comprehensive approach to climate action.

2. **National Climate Change Policy Implementation Committee (NCCPIC):** The NCCPIC oversees the implementation of the National Climate Change Policy 2021, bridging federal and provincial governments. High-level provincial officials participate, allowing regional concerns to be articulated within national policies, enhancing accountability and coherence in climate action.

3. **Project Steering Committees:** For both foreign-funded and public-funded climate projects, Project Steering Committees are established with mandatory provincial representation. High-level provincial officials oversee project implementation, advocating for resource allocation that aligns with local climate challenges, thus enhancing project efficacy.

4. **Federal Forestry Board:** The Federal Forestry Board coordinates policies across federal and provincial governments,

incorporating high-level provincial representatives. This ensures that sustainable forest management practices reflect both national goals and provincial needs, allowing for tailored strategies that combat climate change effectively.

5. **CITES Management Authority:** The CITES Management Authority, established under the Fauna and Flora Act of 2012, includes high-level provincial representation to address local wildlife conservation issues. This integration ensures that national policies along-with international commitments while considering provincial eco-systems.

6. **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):** The TAC established under the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA) of 1997, comprises experts and high-level representatives from federal and provincial levels. It plays a crucial role in providing technical guidance on bio-safety matters, particularly concerning Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and their products. The TAC supports the National Bio-safety Centre (NBC) in processing applications and ensuring compliance with Pakistan Bio-safety Rules, 2005 (updated in 2024). By facilitating dialogue between stakeholders and aligning technical advice with regional conditions, the TAC helps develop evidence-based policies that can be effectively implemented at the provincial level, enhancing the country's regulatory framework for GMOs in line with its commitments under the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety.

99. ***Ms. Asiya Naz Tanoli:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division be pleased to state:

(a) *the number of Federal Girls Hostels in Islamabad and the location of such hostels;*

(b) *the procedure to get accommodation thereof;*

(c) *what are the details of check-inn and check-out time of the girls who are working at various places in the evening at aforesaid hostels; and*

(d) *whether there is any procedure to adjust their timings; if not, the reasons thereof?*

Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema): (a) A hostel for female Federal Government employees operates under the administrative control of the Staff Welfare Organization, an attached department of the Establishment Division. This hostel is located at Street 35, Sector G-7/l, Islamabad.

(b) According to the Staff Welfare Organization (Hostel Accommodation) Rules, 2012, female Federal Government employees posted in Islamabad or Rawalpindi, who neither have government house nor own a home in these cities, are eligible for hostel accommodation for a period of up to one year extendable further for a period of six months only, subject to room availability and payment of rent and charges as outlined in the rules. To apply for accommodation, the female Federal Government employee (Civil Servant) must submit an application, duly recommended by the Head of Department, using the prescribed form and accompanied by necessary documents to the Chief Welfare Officer, Aabpara, Islamabad. The application is reviewed by the Hostel Allotment Committee and eligible applicants are granted accommodation subsequent to approval by the Director General, Staff Welfare Organization.

(c) Check-in timings for the hostel are as follows:

- **Summer Season:** 10:00 PM
- **Winter Season:** 9:00 PM

Allottees working in evening shifts must provide their office timings and submit a written request for relaxation of the above-mentioned check-in and check-out timings.

(d) Allottees working in evening shifts must provide their office timings and submit a written request for relaxation of the above-mentioned check-in and check-out timings. Upon receiving a written request, the check-in and check-out timings for allottees working in evening shifts are adjusted to accommodate them.

100. ***Disallowed on Re-considerations.**

101. *Syed Rafiullah:

Will the Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Establishment Division has implemented the Supreme Court Judgment in Criminal Original Petition No.89 of 2011 and the subsequent judgments of both the Supreme Court and the Islamabad High Court on the matter in its letter and spirit among all departments of the Federal Government; if so, the details thereof;

(b) has the said Division issued any instructions to the department of Federal Government to ensure compliance with the above judgments; if so, details thereof;

(c) has the Division taken notice of the fact that various departments of the Federal Government are constantly absorbing employees in their departments in violation of the above judgments; if so, details thereof; and

(d) what corrective measures are being taken by the Government to address ongoing violations of court judgments and to ensure that the spirit of such judgments is implemented in true spirit?

Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema): The Induction Policy in Secretariat Group (SG/BS-20) was issued in 2012 and at that time, was a part of All Pakistan Unified Group (APUG). It is pertinent to mention that pursuant to issuance of SRO 89(1)/2014 dated 10-02-2014 (Annex-I). Whereby Nomenclature Rules, 1973 were repealed, the APUG ceased to exist. No induction has been carried out in Secretariat Group in compliance of Supreme Court’s order in Crl Org. 89/2011 and subsequent judgments of courts.

(b) Supreme Court of Pakistan vide judgment dated 13-06-2013 passed in Crl. Org. Petition No. 89/2011 issued directions to the Secretary Establishment Division to Streamlined service structure of Civil Servants in line with principles laid down in the said judgment. The Establishment Division vide Office Memorandums dated 31-01-2014 (Annex-II) and 25-02-2014 (Annex-III) issued directions to all Ministries/Divisions with regard to implementation of the judgment of the Apex Court. In the said O.Ms selected parts of the judgment were reproduced verbatim. However the said two O.Ms were withdrawn with the Approval of the Prime Minister and all Ministries and Divisions vide O.M. No. 1/59/2013-Lit-iii dated 18-09-2015 **(Annex-IV)** were directed that under Article 189 and 190 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, every, judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan is binding upon the executives and to be implemented in letter and spirit.

(c) In terms of Rule-6 of Civil Servants (Appointment, Promotion & Transfer) Rules, 1973, all Ministries/ Divisions are independent for appointment upto BPS-19. Whenever, any Ministry / Division refers its case to Establishment Division, advice is given in the light of subject judgment in following Manner: -

- The posts reserved under the said Recruitment Rules for promotion and initial appointment cannot be filled through appointment by transfer except as provided in a general proviso in the Recruitment- Rules that failing promotion, the post shall be filled by initial appointment and failing that by transfer.

- Moreover, in the light of direction of Supreme Court of Pakistan issued vide Crl. Org. Petition 89/2011, it is also emphasized that for appointment by transfer for which incumbent concerned, who is to be considered for appointment by transfer, should also possess the matching qualification. designation, job description, pay scale and experience as laid down for the purpose of initial appointment.

- Finally, a non-civil servant e.g employee of autonomous / semi-autonomous body / corporation, etc. is not eligible for appointment through method of appointment by transfer/ induction against a civil post.

(d) As mentioned above, all Ministries/Divisions/Departments were directed vide O.M. No. 1/59/2013-Lit-IV dated 18-09-2015 **(Annex-IV)** to implement the judgment of the Hon’ble Supreme Court of Pakistan in letter and spirit.

(Annexures have been Placed in the National Assembly Library)

102. *Ms. Zahra Wadood Fatemi:

Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state:

(a) what is the status of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight permissions for Europe;

(b) whether ban on PIA flights has been lifted; if not, when the same will be tentatively lifted?

Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif): (a) PIACL's flight operation to Europe is yet to be resumed. PIACL was never banned from operating to Europe, rather European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) had imposed a suspension on all airlines holding Air Operator Certificates (AOCs), issued by Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) in 2020, barring them from operating to Europe till further decision.

Since the suspension, PIACL in coordination with PCAA has worked closely with. EASA and the European Commission for addressing their concerns. As a result of relentless efforts, both from the regulatory and industry, we have not only been able to settle their concerns but also ensured successful closure of all of the EASA findings related to Safety Management, Flight Operations and Airworthiness Control.

European Union, in their official journal, circulated through Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024 / 1601, dated: 30th May 2024, has not included any Pakistani airline in their Air Safety List and appreciated the efforts of PCAA, PIACL and other Pakistani airlines towards improving the flight safety.

(b) Suspension on flights to EU/UK has not been lifted so for, however recently, PIACL has received a letter from EASA whereby EASA has requested for a virtual half day meeting with PIACL Executive Management from Flight operations, Engineering, Corporate Safety and Quality Assurance departments, for finalizing the modalities required for uplifting of imposed suspension. Exact date of PIACL flight restoration to Europe shall be intimated by EASA after this meeting.

103. *Ms. Nikhat Shakeel Khan:

Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several airports in Sindh, including Hyderabad, are currently non-functional or under utilized and that the Government has not sufficiently encouraged private airlines to operate their flights from these airports; if so, the reasons thereof; and

(b) what steps are being taken by the Government to encourage private airlines to operate their flights from non-functional airports, particularly for Hyderabad?

Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif): (a) The Airports beside Jinnah Lnternational Airport Karachi in Sindh are Hyderabad, Moen jo Daro, Sukkur, Nawabshah and Sehwan Sharif. Among the Said Airports, the only currently closed Airport is Sehwan Sharif. Remaining Airports are operational and available for flight operations. However, the decision to operate to / from any Airport is complete discretion of Airline based on commercial feasibility,

(b) Hyderabad Airport was built in 1965 compatible for aircraft ATR or below, PIA started regular scheduled flight operation in 1970. PIA suspended operations in year 2000 and Airport was closed for operations in year 2001. Airport was again reactivated on 28th June 2007 and PIA operated scheduled flights from August 2008 till May 2013. Present status of Hyderabad airport is operational and nonscheduled flights are operating. Manpower of PAA and all allied facilities required for flight operation are available. PIAC operation is suspended since 2nd May, 2013 due to their own constraints.

104. *Mr. Jamshaid Ahmad:

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cellular phone companies allow third party service providers to offer subscriptions through mobile billing, potentially leading to consumers being subscribed to services inadvertently or without full awareness;

(b) if so, what are the mechanisms through which these subscriptions are processed and how are consumers typically notified or given the option to opt-in;

(c) *what measures are in place to prevent such practices and how effective are they in protecting consumers from unintended charges;*

(d) *how can these practices be improved to better protect low income individuals who are disproportionately affected; and*

(e) *what best practices from other regions could be adopted to address these issues?*

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) Cellular mobile operators do collaborate with other parties to offer value added services to consumer, and this subscription is charged in billing to customer. Subscription to these services is optional. PTA had been issuing instructions to operators to provide full details of these subscriptions through various means and alternative means so that customer should have complete knowledge of these subscriptions as and when required. Inadvertent subscription is avoided and no subscription can be done by any type of single click and tapping on icon of such service.

(b) It is to be considered that unless intentionally subscribed nothing can be proceeded, except by mistake. Hence, every person desirous of subscription has to intentionally do such actions which take him to configure and opt-in by taking actions and not automatically.

(c) All service providers, have kept different manners, including explicit consent and password insertions, so that no charges could be billed to customer for a service he has not subscribed, and accordingly no intended charges will be billed.

(d) Practices of Pakistan are comparative, and among good practices, every individual weather low income or otherwise subscribes to service intentionally. In case if there is a mistake, he can send a complaint to either service provider or PTA for redressal. Such complaints do arrive to PTA, and being investigated at appropriate level and if found correct. refund is given to complaining customer, without delay and evidence is placed in record.

(e) Other regions also practice similar activities to protect consumers from such activities which are not intentional.

105. *Mr. Zubair Khan Wazir:

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state the details of the funds utilized for the developments of sports by Pakistan Cricket Board and other sports federations in District South Waziristan (Upper and Lower) during the last three years?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: South and North Waziristan are part of the FATA Region under the PCB's structure, which includes 16 Regional Cricket Association (RCA) and 101 District Cricket Association (DCA). They have their own district teams supported by PCB that participate in district tournaments organized by the FATA Regional Cricket Association under the auspices of the PCB. There are 10 registered clubs in South Waziristan and 24 registered clubs in North Waziristan that participate in club championships organized by the District Cricket Association under the auspices of the RCA and PCB (details is attached as **Annex-I).**

The PCB does not receive any grants from the government and focuses more on skill & pathway development and organization of tournaments.

(Annexure has been Placed in the National Assembly Library)

106. *Syeda Shehla Raza:

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) the names and place of domiciles of the Members of Board of Governors of Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA);

(b) the powers and functions of the said Board;

(c) the procedure being adopted by OGRA for making changes in the price of gas; and

(d) whether the said board is independent in making decisions/changes in the prices of gas or it seeks approval of any other authority for the same?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) does not have a Board of Governors, however, the Authority consists of a Chairman and three Members under sub section 3 of section 3 of the OGRA Ordinance out of whom one is designated as Member (Gas), one Member (Oil) and one Member (Finance). At present, the post of Member (Gas) is lying vacant since completion of tenure of Ex-Member (Gas) on November 20, 2022.

The Names and place of domicile of the existing incumbents i.e. Chairman and Members of the Authority are as under:

Sr.#	Name	Designation	Place of Domicile
1.	Mr. Masroor Khan	Chairman	Sindh
2.	Mr. Zainulabideen Qureshi	Member (Oil)	Punjab
3.	Mr. Mohammad Naeem Ghouri	Member (Finance)	Punjab

(b) Powers and functions of the Authority are placed at **Annex-I**.

c. <u>Step-wise Process for Determination of Revenue Requirement</u>

1. OGRA determines the revenue requirement (prescribed prices) of the gas utilities viz; SNGPL & SSGC under Section 8 of the OGRA Ordinance, 2002. SNGPL & SSGCL file their petitions before OGRA for determination of revenue requirement under the relevant provisions of the OGRA Ordinance, 2002 read with Natural Gas Tariff Rules, 2002. For each financial year, three main petitions are submitted for determination i.e.;

   i. Petition for determination of estimated revenue requirement (DERR), the process of which starts before the commencement of financial year and normally takes effect from 1st July.

   ii. Petition for the determination of Review of Estimated Revenue Requirement (RERR), normally takes effect from 1st Jan.

iii. Petition for Total/Final. Revenue Requirement (FRR) based on initialed/actual accounts submitted after the close of financial year.

2. After receipt of petitions from sui companies, OGRA follows a procedure as provided in its law which inter-alia includes issuance of public notices in leading national newspapers, inviting comments/interventions from all stakeholders i.e. general consumers, industry, commercial etc. and conduct of public hearings in all four provincial capitals. OGRA also carries out an in depth and thorough cost & revenue analysis of the said petitions and allows only prudent and well justified costs as part of price.

3. OGRA, after following due diligence and process, issues the determinations of revenue requirements of Sui companies. These determinations are then sent to Federal Government for receipt of category-wise gas sale price within forty days from the date of issuance of decisions.

<u>Detailed Bteak-up of Revenue Requirement</u>

Revenue Requirement (RR) is sum of money retained by company to meet its operating expenditure, comprises of the following major components:

iv. Cost of gas paid to the gas producers (approx. over 80-90% of prescribed price).

v. Transmission and distribution cost (T&D cost) including depreciation.

vi. Return on assets of the value of their average net operating fixed assets.

(d) OGRA's role, under Section 8(1) (2) of the OGRA Ordinance, 2002, is restricted to the extent of determinations of revenue requirement (prescribed price) of SNGPL & SSGCL only. These determinations of gas utilities are then sent to Federal Government for receipt of category-wise gas sale price including minimum charges.

2. Section 8(3) of the Ordinance mandates Federal Government to advise category-wise gas sale price, keeping in view its socio-economic agenda and sectorial policies as well as priorities. OGRA, upon receipt of advice from Federal Government, notifies the same in the official gazette.

(Annexure has been Placed in the National Assembly Library)

107. *Syed Amin Ul Haque:

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Information Technology Industry is facing great difficulties due to low speed of internet, dollar retention and investment policies;

(b) the steps being taken by the Government to resolve the issues of IT industry;

(c) whether proposal had been sought from the representatives of the industry while preparing Federal Budget; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of unofficial data of dollar sent through other sources by IT experts other than the official data of IT export?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) Recently, on 17th June 2024, one of our major submarine cable SMW4 developed a fault which reduced its available inland capacity by 1.5 terabit per second (tbps). Afterwards another cable AAE-1 also faced outage which impacted the internet bandwidth by further 0.25 tbps.

As a matter of fact, around 98% of global internet is mainly provided through submarine cables. These cables' are normally managed by a Consortium of Operators who are responsible for its maintenance and repair. In Pakistan, the bulk of internet is also served through seven such cables from which our Operators have leased bandwidth for internet access.

Faults in submarine cables are a known occurrence. According to the United Nations, 150 to 200 subsea cable faults occur annually. Fishing and shipping activities account for nearly two-thirds of the total of these faults. Specialized repair crew and ship are arranged by the consortium for rectification of such faults and the process normally takes many weeks.

Accordingly, PTA issued press releases to inform the general public that as a result of these faults they may face internet slowdown and degradation during internet usage in peak hours. To minimize impact on users, the Operators also adopted rerouting of traffic on other paths.

In the month of August, PTA received complaints for the slowdown of internet and in particular for services of META specifically WhatsApp.

It may not be out of context to mention here that in Pakistan, among all social media platforms, META's Facebook has a significant large user base of users around 50 million. Furthermore, META's WhatsApp is among the most popular real time application under use. Hence, any slowdown or degradation on META and WhatsApp is most likely to be noticed as compared to other platforms.

The matter was taken up by PTA with the Telecom Operators for troubleshooting and resolution. The public was also kept informed through a press release issued on 22nd August 2024.

As per the information received from the Operators, the situation began improving from mid of August 2024 and by first week of September, META services and WhatsApp performance was reported acceptable across their networks.

The SMW4 cable is expected to be repaired in October 2024, after which the situation should further improve and become normal. PTA is continuously monitoring the situation for any further developments.

(b) Not related to PTA

(c) Not related to PTA

(d) Not related to PTA

108. *Mr. Muhammad Arshad Sahi:

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) whether Federal Government under Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Programme (SAP-SDG) or any other arrangement issued the funds for Sangla Hill during the last five years; and

(b) the names of the projects started from said funds alongwith its latest status?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) SDGs Achievement Programme (SAP) funds are grant-specific and not person or constituency-specific in terms of the judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan dated 05-12-2013. Lump-sum funds are released to the concerned Federal Ministries, i.e. M/o Housing & Works (PWD), Petroleum Division (Gas Companies), Power Division (Electric Companies) and Provincial Governments for execution of their SAP Schemes under SAP "Guidelines" approved by the Federal Cabinet, after fulfilling all codal formalities. Cabinet Division provides only the "Secretarial Support" to the Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Programme (SAP).

The following funds under Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Programme (SAP) were allocated/released by Government of the Punjab to Sangla Hill:-

S.No.	Financial Year	Funds Provided
1.	2019-2020	Nil
2.	2020-2021	Nil
3.	2021-2022	Nil
4.	2022-2023	86.429 Million
5.	2023-2024	18.004 Million
Total:		**104.433 Million**

(b) As per information received from Government of the Punjab, list of schemes started with SDGs funds is attached at **Annex-I.**

(Annexure has been Placed in the National Assembly Library)

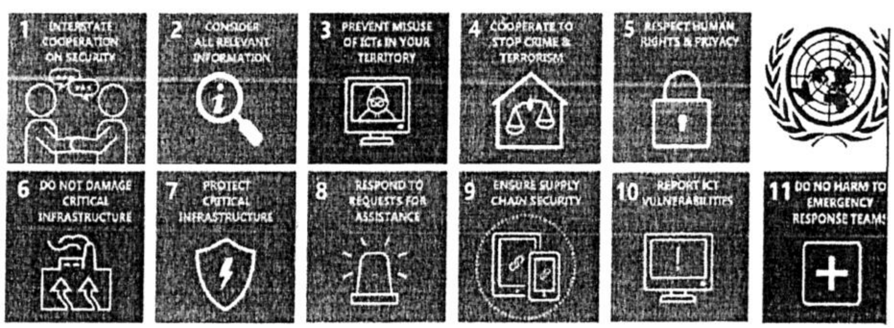
109. *Mr. Muhammad Jawed Hanif Khan:

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state:

(a) what is the philosophy and strategy behind the national cybersecurity framework of the country; and

(b) how is the national cyber security framework being strengthened to counter rising cyber threats and hacking incidents?

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): (a) The 'UN Norms of Responsible State Behavior in Cyber Space' provide the philosophy & strategy of the National Cyber Security Framework i.e. besides securing our citizens and businesses we also have to make sure that other nations are also secure from actors in our cyberspace.



In light of the 'Digital Pakistan Policy 2018' the 'Vision' of the 'National Cyber Security Policy -2021' was envisioned as under:

'Pakistan to have a secure, robust, and continually improving nationwide digital ecosystem ensuring confidentiality, integrity, and availability of digital assets leading to socio-economic development and national security'

For the implementation of Cyber security, NCSP - 2021 envisioned an ecosystem based on Three Tier Approach i.e. National Level; Sectoral; Organizational / Enterprise.

Under section 51, read with section 49 of the Prevention of Electronic Crime Act (PECA), 2016, and in compliance with the National Cyber Security Policy (NCSP), 2021, the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication (MoITT) as a designated organization of the Federal Government to deal with Cyber Security has formulated the CERT Rules in consultation with the concerned stakeholders. In light of the recommendation received, incorporating the “views and Comments” of the stakeholders and vetting by the Cabinet Committee for Legislative Cases (CCLC), the Federal Cabinet, Government of Pakistan, approved the CERT Rules-2023, Gazette notified on 26th September 2023.

CERT Rules 2023

1. Provides legislative umbrella to handle ever-emerging cyber-security risks and vulnerabilities at the National, Sectoral, and Organizational levels by laying out a working mechanism in the form of technical support, operational facilities, and capacity-building services. These Rules further provide a state-of-the-art proactive and integrated risk management process for identifying and prioritizing protective measures regarding cybersecurity.

2. Given provision under Rules 3 & 5, ‘Cyber Security for Digital Pakistan’, a PSDP project, sponsored by the MoITT and executed by the National Telecommunication & Information Security Board (Cabinet Division), has been designated/Gazette Notified as National Computer Emergency Response Team (NCERT). Soft functioning of the NCERT has been started (July 2023) however, the acquisition of Technical HR and capabilities/solutions is in progress, likely to be completed by June 2025.

3. A ‘CERT Council’ has been established as a forum for consultative and coordinating processes to advise CERTs for the effective implementation of its functions and services.

4. The definitions and constituencies of National CERT, Government CERT, Critical Information Infrastructure CERT, Sectoral CERT, Federal CERT, and Provincial CERT are discussed separately.

5. The specific responsibilities, functions, and services of the National CERTs and Sectoral CERTs are also outlined in the rules.

(b) Cyber security measures given in cyber security frameworks focus on dealing with the cyber threats in the cyber landscapes. These measures are already explained in part (a) of the Question and it includes but not limited to investment in technology sectors, cyber intelligence information sharing, capacity building and education, international cooperation and compliance cyber codes and standards.

110. *Ms. Rana Ansar:

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state

(a) what is the future of digital media in our country;

(b) what steps are being taken by the Government for digital media?

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): (a) Digital media refers to any form of media that is created distributed and consumed electronically. It includes websites, social media, online videos, audios pod casts, games and mobile applications. Pakistan has witnessed a tremendous growth in the digital media landscape in the recent years and the future of digital media in Pakistan will continue to be on the same trajectory. Following reasons are responsible for these rising trends of digital media in our country:

1. **Growing Internet Penetration**:

The number of internet users in Pakistan is rapidly increasing, providing a larger audience for digital content. This growth is fueled by the expansion of mobile broadband services and affordable smartphones.

2. Young Population:

Pakistan has a large and predominantly young population, which is highly engaged with digital media. This demographic is more likely to consume and create content online, driving demand for digital platforms.

3. **E-commerce Boom:**

The e-commerce industry in Pakistan is experiencing rapid growth, fueled by increased internet penetration and rising disposable incomes. Digital media plays a crucial role in marketing and promoting e-commerce businesses.

4. **Social Media Adoption**:

Social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok have a massive following in Pakistan. These platforms offer opportunities for businesses and individuals to reach a wide audience and engage with their target market.

5. **Content Citation and Innovation**:

Pakistani content creators are producing high-quality content across various genres, including entertainment, news, and education. This creativity and innovation are attracting a growing audience and driving the growth of digital media platforms.

6. **Government Support**:

The Pakistani government is taking steps to promote the growth of the digital media industry, including improving internet infrastructure and providing incentives for digital startups.

Overall, the future of digital media in Pakistan is characterized by immense potential and significant opportunities. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the strengths, Pakistan can position itself as a leader in the digital media landscape.

(b) To benefit from the digital media landscape Government has subscribed to multi-pronged approach. Following measures are noteworthy in this regard.

Telecom expansion:

Telecommunication expansion and broad band penetration has been a core priority under the digital Pakistan policy to ensure that internet availability and connectivity is maintained in the neck and corners of the country to promote digital inclusion and wellbeing.

Digital Literacy:

To promote responsible use of digital media Government has special emphasized on the promotion of digital literacy in the country. In this connection national freelance training programmes and digiskills training programmes are imparted to the citizens of Pakistan to enable them to take maximum benefit from digital medial in this digital age.

Institutional framework:

Pakistan Telecom Authority and Cybercrimes Cell FIA are mandated organizations to implement the digital laws and regulations of Pakistan to ensure that misinformation are essential affixed for credibility and sustainability of digital medial industry.

Legal framework:

Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act(PECA) 2016 is a legislative instrument to ensure that the digital landscape in Pakistan is hazard free, credible, sustainable and responsive to digital wellbeing. It has elaborate a mechanism to deal with digital offenses. To translate the objectives of PECA Law on the ground Social Medial Rules 2021 have also been promulgated which is called as “the Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Online Content (Procedure, Oversight and Safeguards) Rules, 2021”

It is pertinent to mention that PECA 2016 Law and the rules made thereunder are under review to improve its efficacy for promotion of digital wellbeing in this digital etra.

ISLAMABAD:	TAHIR HUSSAIN,
The19th October, 2024.	*Secretary General.*

PCPPI—1461(2024) NA—19-10-2024—400.

(4th Group, 10th Session)

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT

"UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND THEIR REPLIES"

For Sunday, the 20th October, 2024

26. **Ms. Aasia Ishaque Siddiqui:**

Will the Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that BISP Regional Offices are conducting surveys for the payment of monthly amount to the poor segment of society but the process of payment is too slow especially in case of CNIC No.37401-5233051-0, 37401-1442629-7 and 37401-6158989-6 the first survey was conducted in the month of June, 2023 but the payment is still awaited; and

(b) time by which payment will be released?

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety: (a) Yes, it is fact that BISP Regional offices are Conducting surveys for the payment of monthly amount to the poor segment of society.

As per record, the survey against:

CNIC Number	PMT Score	Date of Survey
37401-5233051-0	46.78	07th June, 2023
37401-1442629-7	46.78	07th June, 2023
37401-6158989-6	45.35	10th June, 2023

(b) The aforesaid CNICs holders are ineligible to receive payment; as per BISP Policy.

27. **Syeda Shehla Raza:**

Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state:

(a) the number of helicopters and aeroplanes available in the fleet of Cabinet Divison as on 1st March 2018 and 1st March 2024;

(b) When were these helicopters and aeroplanes purchased; and the present utilization of these helicopters and aeroplanes?

Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: (a) **Number of Helicopters as on 01-03-2018**

3x Serviceable &
3x un-serviceable (due to mandatory maintenance)

Number of Helicopters as on 01-03- 2024
3x Serviceable &
3x un-serviceable (due to mandatory maintenance)

Cabinet Division does not maintain any fixed wing aircraft (aeroplane).

(b) 6-Aviation Squadron, Cabinet Division has total of 6 x Helicopters out of these 5 x Helicopters were purchased during the year 2009 and 1 x Helicopter was purchased during the year 2017.

Utilization of Helicopters

i. Flying duties with the President and the Prime Minister;
ii. Inland transportation of VVIPs including foreign dignitaries;
iii. Relief, Rescue and firefighting operations; and
iv. Casualty evacuation.

28. **Sahibzada Sibghatullah:**

Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state:

(a) *whether it is a fact that mobile phone service is not available in some areas of District Tank, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP);*

(b) *if so, what steps are being taken by the Government in this regard?*

Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja): (a) • District Tank has an approximate population of 470,000, primarily low literacy and population density impacts telecom adoption.

- The district is divided into Tehsil Tank and Jandola, bordering Dera Ismail Khan and South Waziristan, with a mix of urban and rural areas.

- Telecom voice and data services are being provided by all **4 operators,** however, rural coverage gaps may exist. Detail of sites are as follows: -

District Tank				
CMO	Technology			Total
	2G+3G	2G+3G+4G	2G+4G	
Jazz	3	16	9	28
Telenor	3	25	-	28
Ufone	1	19	1	21
ZonG	1	17	-	18
Grand Total	8	77	10	95

- New telecom infrastructure and upgrades in district Tank during last 2 years are summarized below;

CMO	District Tank (2022-2024)	
	New Sites	Upgrade Sites
Jazz	3	16
Telenor	-	2
Ufone	11	10
ZonG	1	1
Grand Total	15	29

- **Average of population per site, for District Tank, comes to 4947** (470000 / 95) compared to country average of 4537, which is not a major difference.

- Due to prevailing law & order situation in the district, on-ground surveys have not been conducted in the recent past, however, network performance through system parameters (OSS KPIs) of the mobile operators are regularly analyzed. Details are:-

  a. Network downtime was found slightly above the thresholds due to the reasons of prolonged and unannounced power outages; Frequent network closures on the directions of GoP due to law & order situation (123 closures in 2023/24), and, threats from terrorists to destroy telecom infrastructure (09 sites destroyed by terrorist in 2024 in Tank)

  b. Whereas voice and data services, including call completion and throughput, were found to be within the acceptable thresholds.

- The USF is mandated to provide services in underserved and unserved areas through subsidized projects. Any area verified as underserved or unserved is referred to the USF for service provision according to the established procedures.

(b) Over Over the last few years, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has taken significant measures for improvement of nationwide cellular coverage and QoS. Key initiatives include;

a. Installation of 11915 new sites in last six years and upgrading existing 2G sites to 4G.

b. Aggressive roll-out obligation in new and renewed licenses being issued by the PTA wherein, an YoY increase of 3% population per annum per province to be covered in terms of voice and Mobile Broadband (MBB) is mandatory obligation

c. Advanced technologies deployment such as sector splitting and Massive MIMO to enhance coverage and capacity.

d. CMOs upgraded voice to VoLTE and Wi-Fi-Off loading, consequently improving voice service quality.

e. 15x new sites have been installed, and 29xsites have been upgraded in Tank.

f. Reduction in load shedding can improve service availability.

g. Targeted increase in survey campaigns with focus on rectification of observations.

h. Nationwide System Parameters (OSS KPIs) analysis.

i. Spectrum auctions for new spectrum and 3G phase¬out for better utilization of spectrum.

J. Recommendations on the underserved and unserved areas to Universal Service Fund (USF).

k. Telecom Infrastructure Sharing Framework, duly approved by MoIT&T, provides a regulatory mechanism for fair and competitive active and passive sharing of telecom infrastructure. The framework would also encourage CMOs to improve network penetration across by reducing Capex (Capital Expenditure) and Opex (Operational Expenditure) costs.

l. National Roaming Facility testing along Coastal Highway, is another step towards increasing telecom penetration across country. It is aimed at provision of coverage to consumers irrespective of their subscription to any CMO.

m. 5G rollout is being aggressively pursued by PTA (likely in April 2025).

n. Moreover, PTA has a sophisticated, customer-focused Complaint Management System (CMS) in place, accessible via a toll-free number and online form for filing complaints related to specific areas.

ISLAMABAD:
The 19th October, 2024.

TAHIR HUSSAIN,
Secretary General.

PCPPI—1461(2024) NA—19-10-2024—400