



# THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN

Friday, the 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2025

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## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN ASSEMBLY DEBATES

Friday, the 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2025

The National Assembly of Pakistan met in the National Assembly Hall (Parliament House) Islamabad, at 11:10 a.m. with the honourable Speaker (Sardar Ayaz Sadiq) in the Chair.

### RECITATION FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ - بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ -

إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾ قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمٌ  
يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ  
عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾

(سورة المائدہ، آیات: 118 تا 119)

[ترجمہ: پناہ مانگتا ہوں میں اللہ کی شیطان مردود سے۔ اللہ کے نام سے شروع جو بڑا مہربان نہایت رحم فرمانے

والا ہے۔

اگر توں انہیں عذاب کرے تو وہ تیرے بندے ہیں اور اگر توں انہیں بخش دے تو بیشک توں ہی ہے غالب

حکمت والا۔ اللہ تعالیٰ نے فرمایا یہ ہے، وہ دن جس میں سچوں ان کا سچ کام آئے گا۔ ان کے لیے باغ ہیں، جن کے نیچے

نہریں رواں ہمیشہ ہمیشہ ان میں رہیں گے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ ان سے راضی اور وہ اللہ تعالیٰ سے راضی۔ یہ ہے بڑی کامیابی۔]

### RECITATION OF HADITH

۶۸۷- وَعَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ  
اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ  
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ : « مَنْ حَمَلَ عَلَيْنَا  
السَّلَاحَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا ، وَمَنْ غَشَّنَا  
فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا »

[ترجمہ: حضرت ابو ہریرہ رضی اللہ عنہ سے روایت ہے کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے ارشاد فرمایا جو

شخص ہمارے اوپر ہتھیار اٹھاتا ہے وہ ہم میں سے نہیں ہے۔ اور جو ہمیں دھوکہ دیتا ہے وہ بھی ہم سے نہیں ہے۔]

### RECITATION OF NAAT

وہ سوئے لالہ زار پھرتے ہیں

تیرے دن اے بہار پھرتے ہیں

جو ترے در سے یار پھرتے ہیں

در بدریو نہی خوار پھرتے ہیں

اس گلی کا گدا ہوں میں جس میں

مانگتے تاجدار پھرتے ہیں

### NATIONAL ANTHEM

### STARRED QUESTION AND ANSWERS

جناب سپیکر: اَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ - بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ - Question Hour - طاہرہ

اور نگزیب صاحبہ، موجود نہیں ہیں۔ جمشید احمد صاحب، موجود نہیں ہیں۔ ملک عامر ڈوگر صاحب، موجود نہیں ہیں۔

طاہرہ اور نگزیب صاحبہ، موجود نہیں ہیں۔ شرمیلا صاحبہ۔

محترمہ شرمیلا صاحبہ فاروقی ہشام: سوال نمبر 88۔

## Step are taken to improve air and water quality

88. \*Ms. Sharmila Sahiba Faruqui Hashaam:

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

- (a) *what steps are being taken by the Government to address the reported increase in deforestation and environmental degradation, particularly in key Ecological Zones;*
- (b) *how is the Ministry tackling the recent rise in urban pollution levels; and*
- (c) *what measures are being adopted and implemented by the Government to improve air and water quality?*

**Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination:** (a) Following steps are being taken by the Government for/ addressing deforestation and environmental degradation, particularly in Key Ecological Zones:

- i. The Forest Departments of provinces, AJK and GB are mandated to control cutting of trees within their respective jurisdictions and take cognizance of such issues as per their forestry laws and rules. The ministry established an

Interprovincial Coordination Committee on illicit wood cutting and interprovincial Timber movement in June 2024 on directions of Coordinator to PM on Climate Change and EC and held meetings to highlight the issues for taking effective measures by the respective provinces.

- ii. The ministry has revived the Federal Forestry Board to discuss the forestry related issues including deforestation and enhance forest and tree cover in line with National Forest Policy 2017.
- iii. A 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-I). Under the programme, nationwide plantations campaigns are organised every year during Spring and Monsoon. During Spring 2024 season, 85.58 million plants were planted / distributed across the country (details in Annex-II), whereas a target of 40.33 million plants has been set for Monsoon 2024 season.
- iv. 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 for custodian communities to protect forests. and prevent deforestation.

(b) Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) and Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) have undertaken several measures to address the rising urban pollution levels within its jurisdiction in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). These efforts build upon initiatives launched in the last decade to tackle smog and urban pollution.

#### 1. Policy and Legislative Measures

- The Federal Government has formulated and implemented key policies, including the **National Environmental Policy (2005)**, **National Climate Change Policy (2012)**, and **National Clean Air Policy (2023)**, to combat air pollution.

The **National Clean Air Policy (NCAP)**, developed in collaboration - with international advisors, provides a framework for reducing air pollutant emissions and improving air quality.

- Amendments to the **Pakistan Environmental Protection Act, 1997**, are underway in order to strengthen enforcement mechanisms, enabling stricter action against violators contributing to air pollution.

## 2. **Air Quality Monitoring**

- Pak-EPA operates **Continuous Air Quality Monitoring Systems (CAMS)** in ICT to monitor pollutants like PM2.5, PM10, NOx, SO2, and VOCs. Real-time Air Quality Index (AQI) data is shared with the public to enhance awareness.

## 3. **Vehicular Emission Controls**

- **Introduction of Euro-II and Euro-IV Fuel Standards:** These standards have significantly reduced vehicular emissions in ICT.
- **Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy (2020):** Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) promotes EV adoption, aiming for 30% penetration by 2030, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and urban transportation emissions.
- Collaboration with Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) ensures regular vehicular emission testing at the entry points of Islamabad, and bans have been imposed on smoke-emitting vehicles entering Islamabad.

## 4. **Industrial Emission Control**

- **Steel Industries:** Islamabad's six operational steel furnaces now use **bag-house filters**, recovering approximately 150+ tons of carbon black monthly, ensuring compliance with NEQS.

- **Brick Kilns:** Of the 63 brick kilns in ICT, 49 have transitioned to **zigzag technology**, 10 Brick Kilns have been removed from ICT jurisdiction and 03 are in the process of conversion to zigzag technology. This reduces particulate emissions and aligns with federal smog reduction initiatives.
- Industries are regularly inspected, with non-compliant units fined or sealed.

#### 5. **Construction Activity and Dust Control**

- Construction sites are required to implement dust suppression measures, such as water sprinkling and covering loose soil. These measures are being ensured by Pak-EPA in coordination with the project proponents, i.e., Capital Development Authority (CDA), and other private developers.
- Urban plantation drives are intensified to mitigate fugitive dust and absorb particulate matter.

#### 6. **Prohibition of Open Burning**

- Section 144 is regularly imposed by the ICT Administration to ban open waste burning, particularly during the smog season. Public awareness campaigns complement enforcement efforts.

#### 7. **Recent Actions by Pak-EPA (2024-25)**

- Advisory letters were issued to stakeholders, including the ITP and educational institutions, for smog prevention measures during winter-2020-25.
- Collaborative efforts with Punjab-EPA were initiated to manage transboundary air pollution.
- Brick kilns voluntarily ceased operations during peak smog months (November 15, 2024 – February 15, 2025).

## 8. Promoting Public Awareness and Green Practices

- Awareness campaigns on urban pollution and its health impacts are conducted in collaboration with schools, local communities, and media outlets.
- Tree plantation drives and urban forestation projects are being undertaken to absorb pollutants and improve air quality in urban areas.

Pak-EPA committed to improving urban air quality through policy frameworks, enforcement of environmental regulations, technological upgrades, and public engagement. The recent adoption of innovative technologies, combined with legislative reforms, ensures a multi-faceted approach to tackling urban pollution levels in ICT.

(c) Pak-EPA is actively working to improve air and water quality within its jurisdiction in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The measures include the following:

### 1. Measures to Improve Air Quality

#### *Policy and Regulatory Framework*

- **National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS):** Strict enforcement of NEQS for air emissions ensures compliance by industries and other polluting entities.
- **National Clean Air Policy (2023):** Provides a framework for reducing emissions and improving air quality through a multi-sectoral approach.

#### *Air Quality Monitoring and Reporting*

- **Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Systems (CAMS)** are operational in ICT to monitor pollutants such as PM 2.5, PM10, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, and VOCs. Real-time data is shared with the public to enhance awareness and inform policy decisions.



### ***Emission Control Measures***

- **Industrial Emissions:** All six steel furnaces in Islamabad have installed **bag-house filters**, recovering over 150 tons of carbon black monthly, and ensuring compliance with NEQS.
- **Brick Kilns:** Of the 63 brick kilns in ICT, 49 have transitioned to **zigzag technology**, 10 Brick Kilns have been removed from ICT jurisdiction and 03 are in the process of conversion to zigzag technology.

### ***Vehicular Emissions***

- Introduction of **Euro-II and Euro-IV fuel standards** has reduced vehicular emissions.
- The **Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy (2020)** aims to achieve 30% EV penetration by 2030, reducing reliance on fossil fuels.
- Collaboration with Islamabad Traffic Police ensures regular vehicular emission testing and bans on smoke-emitting vehicles.

### ***Fugitive Dust and Construction Activity Control***

- Enforcement of dust mitigation measures at construction sites, including water sprinkling and soil covering, in collaboration with the Capital Development Authority (CDA).
- Urban plantation drives and urban forestation projects to absorb particulate matter.

### ***Prohibition of Open Burning***

- Section 144 is imposed to ban open burning of municipal solid waste, particularly during the smog season. Regular inspections and public awareness campaigns complement these enforcement measures.

## 2. Measures to Improve Water Quality

### *Notification of National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS)*

- **Drinking Water NEQS:**

NEQS for Drinking Water Quality have been notified by Pak-EPA. These standards define permissible limits for contaminants in drinking water, such as heavy metals, pesticides, and microbial agents. Pak-EPA ensures that water filtration plants and supply systems in ICT meet these standards through regular monitoring and inspections.

- **Municipal and Industrial Effluent NEQS:**

Standards for wastewater discharge from municipal and industrial sources are notified by Pak-EPA which ensures that untreated or harmful effluents are not released into water bodies. Pak-EPA monitors compliance and takes action against violators.

### *Regulation and Monitoring*

- **Industrial and Municipal Wastewater Management:**

Industries in ICT are required to install and maintain Effluent/Wastewater Treatment Plants. These systems treat industrial wastewater to remove harmful pollutants before discharge. Municipal authorities like MCI and CDA are similarly required to ensure proper treatment of domestic wastewater.

- Regular inspections are conducted, and non-compliant entities face fines, penalties, or operational shutdowns.

### *Improving Drinking Water Quality*

- Pak-EPA works with local authorities to ensure water filtration plants in ICT to deliver clean and safe drinking water. Regular testing is conducted for microbial and chemical contaminants, ensuring compliance with NEQS.

- Pak-EPA also advocates for the maintenance and upgrading of water supply systems to prevent contamination from outdated infrastructure.

#### *Awareness and Capacity Building*

- Industries and MCI/CDA are advised by Pak-EPA during the several in-house and external meetings on best practices for wastewater treatment, use of advanced technologies, and adherence to NEQS.

#### *Policy and Collaborative Efforts*

- Pak-EPA works closely with the Capital Development Authority (CDA), ICT Administration, and other stakeholders to:
  - o Implement pollution control measures.
  - o Develop policies that protect water resources.
  - o Prevent industrial effluents from contaminating rivers and underground water reservoirs.

Pak-EPA is adopting a multi-pronged strategy to improve air and water quality in ICT. By enforcing NEQS, upgrading monitoring systems, promoting cleaner technologies, and engaging stakeholders, these efforts aim to create a healthier and more sustainable urban environment.

*(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)*

**Mr. Speaker:** Answer be taken as read, supplementary please.

محترمہ شرمیلا صاحبہ فاروقی ہشام: سر! سپلیمنٹری کون لے رہا ہے؟

جناب سپیکر: عتیق صاحب پارلیمانی سیکرٹری۔

So, I am محترمہ شرمیلا صاحبہ فاروقی ہشام: سر! اس سوال کا جواب آٹھ صفحات پر مشتمل ہے۔

Green Pakistan going to ask small two questions. یہ جو

Programme ہے جس کے تحت یہ کہہ رہے ہیں کہ ہم نے 3.29 billion plants لگانے ہیں till

Unfortunately, 2028 اور 2019 تک یہ کہتے ہیں کہ 2.2 billion plants لگ چکے ہیں۔ we haven't been able to see these plants. independent ان کا کوئی audit mechanism ہے کہ اس initiative کی کیا progress ہے؟ سر! پاکستان کے کئی شہروں میں It has crossed the WHO guidelines specially in، air pollution جہاں پر Lahore schools were also shut down and the lives of at least 11 million children were on the peril; UNICEF کی رپورٹ ہے which is very, very alarming. اس میں جو toxic smog ہے that is something which is a huge cause of concern. یہاں پر یہ کہہ رہے ہیں کہ جو camps لگائے ہیں وہ صرف ICT کے لیے ہیں، اسلام آباد کے لیے ہیں۔ تو کیا ان کا کوئی ایسا پروگرام ہے کہ باقی شہروں میں بھی لگایا جائے۔ کیونکہ اسلام آباد میں بھی جو pollutants ہیں like PM2.5, that is very, very alarming۔

-PM10

جناب سیکرٹری: احمد عتیق انور صاحب۔

پارلیمانی سیکرٹری برائے موسمیاتی تبدیلی (جناب احمد عتیق انور): شکر یہ جناب۔ جہاں تک ان کی audit کی بات ہے۔ کیونکہ these projects are funded by internationally and nationally as well. So, they are audited. we can detail چاہیے کی اگر detail چاہیے۔ So, they are audited. provide them as well and as far as concerned about the air quality; اب اسلام آباد ہی منسٹری کی حدود میں آتا ہے اور باقی اٹھارہویں ترمیم کے بعد It is prerogative of provinces کہ اس کو کرے۔ We do have them and اس میں جو بھی

ہم نے قانون سازی کرنی ہوتی ہے اور اس میں ہم نے ان کو جو بھی support provide کرنی ہوتی ہے، we are there and I think provinces can better answer it as far as Lahore is concerned.

جناب سپیکر: اگلا سوال ڈاکٹر شازیہ ثوبیہ صاحبہ، موجود نہیں ہیں۔ نزہت صادق صاحبہ، موجود نہیں ہیں۔ شائستہ خان صاحبہ، موجود نہیں ہیں۔ طاہرہ اور نگزیب صاحبہ، موجود نہیں ہیں۔ مہرین رزاق بھٹو صاحبہ، موجود نہیں ہیں۔ سیدہ شہلا رضا صاحبہ۔

سیدہ شہلا رضا: شکریہ۔ سوال نمبر 95۔

### Number of commercial airports in the country

95. \*Syeda Shehla Raza:

*Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state:*

- (a) the number of commercial airports in the country at present;
- (b) the number of these airports that are operational; and
- (c) the number of airports with night-landing facilities?

**Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif):** (a) Number of commercial airports in the country = 35

(b) Number of operational airports = 26

(c) Number of airports with night landing facility = 16

**Mr. Speaker:** Answer be taken as read, supplementary please.

سیدہ شہلا رضا: مجھے منسٹر صاحب نے reply کیا ہے کہ commercial airports in the country are 35. Number of operational are 26 and number of

provinces- airports with night landing facilities are 16. کیا مجھے اس کا-

wise break up دے سکتے ہیں؟

جناب سپیکر: احمد عتیق صاحب۔

I can provide them with detail list میں جناب احمد عتیق انور: سر! اس because there are more than 35 airports. I can provide them provincially. Will it be -I don't have them right now with me ابھی تو۔ ok, if I can give the list of it?

جناب سپیکر: Details: بتائیے۔ Do you want to give it in writing یا ہاؤس میں۔

**Mr. Ahmad Ateeq Anwer:** No, I will give her in the writing because I don't have the list right now.

جناب سپیکر: تھوڑا سا ہاؤس کو بھی بتا دیجیے کہ کون کون سے ہیں اور کہاں ہیں؟

جناب احمد عتیق انور: سر! اس میں تھوڑے سے نام میرے پاس ہیں۔ خضدار میں ہے، مظفر آباد میں ہے،

I have small list but I can۔ سہون شریف میں ہے، سبی میں ہے۔ راولا کوٹ میں ہے، بنوں میں ہے، راولا کوٹ میں ہے، بنوں میں ہے، سہون شریف میں ہے، سبی میں ہے۔ give them exact list of all....

جناب سپیکر: جو operational ہیں، وہ کہاں ہے اور جو night landing facilities ہیں۔

آپ دیکھ لیجئے۔ We will come back to that۔ تب تک ایک اور supplementary لے لیتے ہیں۔

جناب احمد عتیق انور: بالکل ٹھیک ہے۔

جناب سپیکر: شہر یار مہر صاحب on supplementary۔

جناب محمد شہریار خان مہر: جناب! There is a strong rumour کہ Aviation Division کو ختم کر کے واپس Ministry of Defence میں merge کیا جا رہا ہے۔ اور اسی طرح ان کی جو Standing Committee ہے، جس میں ہمارے کچھ matters refer تھے اس کو بھی شاید واپس Defence Committee میں merge کیا جا رہا ہے۔ تو یہ rumour ہے یا یہ واقعی fact ہے؟  
 جناب سپیکر: احمد عتیق انور صاحب ایک تو اگر منسٹری ختم ہوگی تو پھر Standing Committee بھی dissolve ہو جائے گی۔ آپ اس کی hard copy شہلا صاحبہ کو دے دیجئے۔

جناب احمد عتیق انور: جی سر ٹھیک ہے۔

جناب سپیکر: جو operational airports ہیں، ان کا آپ کو بتانا چاہیے تھا کہ کون سے operational airports ہیں۔ آگے کر لیجئے گا۔ اگلا سوال عالیہ کامران صاحبہ۔  
 محترمہ عالیہ کامران: سر! سوال نمبر 96۔

### Funds for climate change

96. \*Ms. Aliya Kamran:

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

- (a) *what steps are being taken by the Government to overcome the challenges of accessing climate finance, ensuring that funds are effectively mobilized and allocated, for supporting vulnerable communities, particularly in sectors such as agriculture and water resources; and*
- (b) *while also advocating for a more equitable international climate finance system that recognizes Pakistan's limited contribution to global emissions and its disproportionate vulnerability to climate impacts?*

**Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination:** (a) The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) has a separate Climate Finance Wing focusing on accessing climate finance for securing funds to supporting vulnerable communities. The Government of Pakistan has implemented several measures to address challenges in accessing climate finance: Pakistan has developed strategic plans and adaptation measures to meet current and future climate-related needs. This includes projects like the Global

Environment Facility (GEF)-funded initiative aimed at reversing deforestation and degradation in high conservation value Chilghoza Pine Forests, launched in 2021 in Chitral and South Waziristan Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Finance Ministry of Pakistan actively collaborates with international climate funds, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to leverage climate finance. Important projects include:

- Recharge Pakistan: Aiming to build resilience through ecosystem-based
- adaptation and green infrastructure for integrated flood risk management.
- Climate Smart Agriculture.
- Transforming the Indus Basin: Focusing on climate-resilient agriculture and water management.
- Resilient water infrastructure.

To enhance oversight and coordination, the government is considering establishing a new climate finance governance framework. This framework aims to streamline processes and improve access to climate finance.

In January 2023, Pakistan co-hosted the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan in Geneva, securing over \$9 billion in pledges from international financial institutions, donor agencies, and development partners for flood recovery and climate resilience efforts.

These steps reflect Pakistan's commitment to overcoming challenges in accessing climate finance and building resilience against climate change impacts.

(b) MoCC&EC is finalizing the National Climate Finance Strategy (NCFS). NCFS objectives are to identify the key market and policy barriers to scale up finance for priority climate and development objectives, and to develop potential financing and other interventions to leverage climate finance, both domestic and international, including private finance. NCFS also emphasizes Pakistan's vulnerabilities towards climate impacts.



**Mr. Speaker:** Answer be taken as read, supplementary please.

محترمہ عالیہ کامران: میرا سوال یہ ہے کہ 2 جنوری کو Climate Change پر ایک کانفرنس ہوئی ہے۔ اس میں وعدہ کیا گیا تھا کہ پاکستان کو 9 ارب ڈالر دیے جائیں گے۔ مجھے یہ معلوم کرنا ہے کہ کیا وہ رقم پاکستان کو پوری مل گئی ہے اور اگر نہیں ملی تو اس کی وجہ کیا ہے؟

جناب سپیکر: احمد عتیق انور صاحب۔

جناب احمد عتیق انور: سر! 2 جنوری کی کانفرنس کا بتادیں specific، کہ کونسی کانفرنس کی چیز refe کر رہی ہیں کہ 2 جنوری، یہ تو Its a vague second January کہ کونسی کانفرنس؟

جناب سپیکر: پھر سے repeat کیجئے۔

جناب احمد عتیق انور: سر! جس 2 جنوری کی کانفرنس کا reference دے رہی ہیں۔ ہمیں specific

name بتادیں because اس طرح vaguely تو.... I would not be able to

جناب سپیکر: عالیہ صاحبہ کون سی کانفرنس تھی؟

محترمہ عالیہ کامران: Climate Change کے اوپر، اور یہ جواب دینے کے لیے بیٹھے ہیں۔ ہم سے زیادہ ان کو معلومات ہونی چاہئیں کہ کانفرنس ہوئی ہے۔ سر! یہ بہت اہم سوال ہے۔ 9 ارب ڈالر کی خطیر رقم کا، ہم سے وعدہ کیا گیا تھا، وہ ابھی تک ہمیں کیوں نہیں ملی؟

جناب سپیکر: احمد عتیق صاحب۔

the last conference we have of the جناب احمد عتیق انور: سر! میرے علم میں تو  
 that was in COP conference, COP-20 اور اس کے بعد ریاض میں ہوئی ہے  
 December but I am not sure کہ کس کانفرنس کی بات کر رہی ہیں because اس طرح۔  
 جناب سلیکر: جی رانا تنویر صاحب۔

وزیر برائے صنعت و پیداوار و قومی غذائی تحفظ و تحقیق (رانا تنویر حسین): یہ جو جنوری کا حوالہ دے رہی ہیں۔  
 یہ پرانی کانفرنس شاید پیرس میں ہوئی تھی۔ وہاں پرائمری انٹرنیشنل کمیونٹی نے 9 billion کی commitment کی  
 تھی۔ لیکن ابھی تک ہمیں کوئی substantial amount نہیں ملی۔ کیونکہ جو COP کی بات کر رہے  
 ہیں Baku کی، اس میں بھی یہ repeatedly کہا گیا ہے ساری انٹرنیشنل کمیونٹی کو کہ پاکستان climate  
 change کی وجہ سے سب سے زیادہ affected ہے۔ لہذا آپ کی جو commitment ہے اس کو پورا  
 کریں۔ دوبارہ انہوں نے وعدہ کیا ہے کہ ہم کریں گے۔ لیکن up to today, there is no  
 substantial amount come to Pakistan for climate change as support.

جناب سلیکر: جی ٹھیک ہے۔ اگر page 26 پر دیکھیں۔ In January 2023, Pakistan  
 co-hosted as international conference on climate resilient Pakistan in Geneva, securing over 9 billion in pledges from  
 international financial institutions and donors. یہ عالیہ صاحبہ، میں بھی اس میں  
 گیا تھا۔ اس میں انہوں نے pledge کیا تھا، مگر وہ commitment نہیں تھی۔ It was a sort of  
 firm commitment نہیں تھی۔ اس میں جو ہمارے World Bank،  
 Asian Development Bank وغیرہ ہیں، ادھر سے ہمیں ملے تھے لیکن دوسری جگہوں سے نہیں۔

In supplementary. اور Point of Order ہوتا ہی نہیں ہیں۔  
Question Hour, there is no such thing as Point of Order in  
Question Hour.

جناب سپیکر: غفور حیدری صاحب supplementary-

(اس موقع پر سنی اتحاد کو نسل کے معزز اراکین نے احتجاجی نعرے بلند کیے، پلے کارڈ آویزاں کیے اور ایوان سے واک  
آؤٹ کر گئے)

جناب سپیکر: Points of Order تو ہوتا ہی نہیں۔ There is no such thing as

Points of Order in Question Hour. جی غفور حیدری صاحب۔

مولانا عبدالغفور حیدری: جناب سپیکر! Climate change کے حوالے سے ایک بہت بڑے عرصے

سے کام ہو رہا ہے۔ وزیر صاحب بتائیں گے کہ اس پر کتنے اخراجات آئے ہیں اور کتنا ہم اس میں پیشرفت کر چکے۔

جناب سپیکر: احمد عتیق انور صاحب۔

جناب احمد عتیق انور: Can you repeat the question? کیونکہ وہ شور میں first

part نہیں سن سکا۔

جناب سپیکر: مولانا صاحب ذرا پھر سے repeat کیجئے۔

مولانا عبدالغفور حیدری: میں یہ کہنا چاہ رہا تھا کہ climate change کے حوالے سے ایک عرصے سے

خطیر تم خرچ ہو رہی ہے۔ اب یہ بتایا جائے کہ پاکستان میں کس حد تک اس پر پیشرفت ہوئی ہے اس حوالے سے ذرا بتایا

جائے۔

جناب سپیکر: جی احمد عتیق صاحب۔

because this is the major گے جناب احمد عتیق انور: سر! اس میں خطیر رقم تو ہم نہیں کہیں گے  
 issue اور اس میں تھوڑا سا donors کا آتا ہے اس میں ہم نے climate change کے اوپر  
 vulnerable twenty countries awareness conferences کی ہیں، raise کی  
 ہیں اپنے پاکستان کے اندر۔ ہم نے گرین پاکستان کا پروجیکٹ شروع کیا ہے۔ اور اس کے علاوہ ہم ابھی new  
 energy vehicle policy لے کے آرہے ہیں۔ National Disaster Management  
 Authority (NDMA) کے اندر ہم نے awareness campaigns کی ہیں۔ آپ کے جو  
 drought اور floods ہیں۔ اس میں NDMA کے ساتھ support دی ہے so, this is a  
 huge list of projects اور جو ابھی چل رہے ہیں اور ہم نے complete بھی کیے ہیں  
 اور forthcoming بھی ہیں۔

جناب سپیکر: جی. next question Anjum Aqeel Sahib, not present.  
 Syed Waseem Hussain Sahib, not present. Naveed Aamir Sahib,  
 شازیہ مری صاحبہ۔ Page 37۔

شازیہ مری: Sir, I want to appreciate you کہ پارلیمنٹ کو undermined  
 کرنے والوں کے اس ہجوم میں آپ parliamentary proceeding کو چلا رہے ہیں۔ so,  
 thanks to you for that, Sir! my Question Number is 102.

## **Block of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) in the country**

### **102. \*Shazia Marri:**

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Government is planning to block Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) across the country;*
- (b) if so, the details of such plans, including the timeline and reasons for this decision;*
- (c) the details of measures being taken by the Government to ensure that legitimate users of VPNs, such as Information Technology (IT) companies, freelancers and other stakeholders, can continue to access VPNs without interruption for their professional needs; and*
- (d) whether a mechanism for registration or approval of legitimate VPN users has been implemented or is under consideration by the Government; if so, the details thereof?*

**Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja):** (a) Ministry of Interior (MoI) directed Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to close all illegal VPNs to counter the widespread watch of pornographic content using VPNs. Hence, PTA sought legal opinion on the issue from

the Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom (MoIT&T) which is still awaited. Further, MoIT&T is the relevant forum for any such policy on closures of VPNs in Pakistan. PTA will take necessary steps w.r.t. blocking of illegal VPNs in light of legal opinion and subsequent directions from the federal government.

(b) For policy direction on VPNs closures in Pakistan federal government i.e. MoIT&T is the right forum to answer the question.

(c) Since, 2010 PTA has been registering legitimate VPN users for facilitation of the Industry. Companies such as software houses, banks, BPOs etc., embassies, Govt organizations or individual freelancers requiring the use of VPN can get it registered from PTA website through a convenient online process: <https://ipregistration.pta.gov.pk/>

The IP addresses to be used for VPN are required for registration. The applicant can provide Static IP addresses of any one side i.e. foreign static IP(s) or local static IP(s) which are being used for VPN connectivity.

In cases where no static IP address is available, PTA has revamped their system and from 3rd December 2024 the user can register VPN on the basis of mobile number for using VPN on the mobile data of registered number.

Over 31000 VPNs of companies and freelancers have so far been registered.

(d) PTA has also introduced Data-CVAS license for VPN providers to provide licensed VPN service within the country.

The step will allow users to simply use VPNs through the licensed VPN providers for legitimate purposes without the need to approach PTA for VPN registration of their IP addresses or mobile number.

**Mr. Speaker:** Answer be taken as read, supplementary please.

جناب سپیکر: محترمہ شازیہ مری صاحبہ۔

شازیہ مری: سر! میرا supplementary جو ہے کیونکہ یہ Information Techno-

logy (IT) سے related ہے اور IT اس وقت جو ہمارا انٹرنیٹ ہے وہ بہت بڑا مسئلہ بنا ہوا ہے۔ آپ سن رہے

ہیں کہ ایک شکایت بڑی common ہو گئی ہے کہ جو انٹرنیٹ سروس ہے وہ slow ہے، لوگ اپنے WhatsApp کو نہیں استعمال کر سکتے، attachments کو نہیں کھول سکتے۔ اگر VPN ہے تو VPN بھی نہیں چل رہا، کبھی VPN کو register کرنے کی بات ہوتی ہے، تو کبھی یہ کہہ دیا جاتا ہے کہ جو ہماری internet service providers ہیں ان میں کوئی مسئلہ ہے۔

تو سر! IT کے حساب سے یہ سوال کیا گیا ہے، اگر honourable Minister صاحبہ ہمیں clarity سے یہ بتادیں کہ پاکستان کے اندر internet کے کیا مسائل ہیں اور یہ admit بھی کریں کہ مسائل ہیں، کیونکہ لوگوں کو تشویش ہوتی ہے کہ جب آپ کہتے ہیں کہ کوئی مسئلہ نہیں ہے۔

تو میں آپ کے توسط سے گزارش کروں گی کہ یہاں عمران خان کارونارویا جا رہا ہے اور یہ ہم رونا سن رہے ہیں۔ لیکن جو پاکستان کے مسائل ہیں اس پر بات کرنے کی ضرورت ہے اور IT کو لے کر انٹرنیٹ اس وقت پاکستان کا بہت بڑا مسئلہ بن چکا ہے۔ Businesses متاثر ہو رہے ہیں، students متاثر ہو رہے ہیں، لوگ یہاں سے wrap up کر کے ہمارے جو قریبی ممالک ہیں اس میں جا کر کام کرنے کو ترجیح دے رہے ہیں۔

تو اس مسئلے پر ہمیں حکومت کی توجہ چاہیے اور honourable Minister صاحبہ کا ایک جو positive اور comprehensive اور solution oriented answer ہے وہ چاہیے۔ شکریہ

سر۔

جناب سپیکر: شازہ فاطمہ صاحبہ۔

وزیر مملکت برائے انفارمیشن ٹیکنالوجی و ٹیلی مواصلات (محترمہ شازہ فاطمہ خواجہ): شکریہ جناب سپیکر! Thank you honourable Member کے سوال کا۔ سر! سوال VPNs پہ تھا، مگر ایک بار پھر اگر general internet کی بات کرنی ہے۔ سر! میں نے last time بھی اس disclaimer کے ساتھ

بڑی clarity سے بتایا تھا کہ user experience میں definitely جو ہے وہ challenge آ رہا ہے۔ اور سر! ابھی as of now Sir, there is Member سے آپ کے through پوچھنا چاہوں گی اور آپ سے بھی سر کہ اس وقت WhatsApp وہ fully functional ہے کوئی VPN block نہیں there is any specific VPN جو یہ use کرتی ہیں اور ان کو لگتا ہے blocked ہے یا ان کے جاننے والے یا کوئی انڈسٹری میں مسئلہ آ رہا ہے تو وہ highlight کریں کہ یہ والا VPN نہیں چل رہا۔ سر! اس وقت VPNs % 100 کھلے ہوئے ہیں WhatsApp fully functional ہے internet بھی fully functional ہے۔

میں ایک بار پھر یہ بات دہراؤں گی کہ پچھلے سال mostly August میں جو challenges آئے اس کا denial نہیں ہے۔ مگر سر ابھی ابھی right now numbers are coming Sir and it says کہ ICT exports کی جو remittance ہے پاکستان میں وہ 28 فیصد increase کی ہے، چھ مہینے پہلے دو quarters میں year on year اور 1.86 billion dollars کی export جو ہے وہ پہلے چھ مہینے میں پاکستان سے ہوئی ہے۔

سر! یہ جو increase an export ہے it is directly proportional to the increase in internet usage in Pakistan and is directly proportional to the average speed increase in Pakistan, Sir numbers don't lie. User experience میں جہاں problem آ رہا ہے، جہاں چیلنج آ رہا ہے 24/7 Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) نے اپنی Service Center کھولا ہوا ہے۔ Complaints register کریں، ہمارے بندے جا کے دیکھیں گے کس انڈسٹری کو، کس کمپنی



improving Sir, الحمد لله Sir, numbers are consistently مگر issue آرہا ہے؟  
 and it has been a consistent effort by PTA, ourselves, Special  
 Pakistan Software Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), مسلسل ہم  
 Houses Association کے ساتھ Pakistan Freelancing Association کے ساتھ  
 protect Sir, all else said Sir, industry۔ تمام انڈسٹری کے ساتھ مسلسل رابطے میں ہیں۔  
 challenges mobile Fixed line۔ پہ ویسے بھی primary agenda ہے۔  
 broadband والے نہیں آتے اور industry fix time پہ operate کرتی ہے۔  
 Sir, comprehensive جو problems ہیں جو request کی گئی کہ کیا ہے؟ سر! سب سے  
 پہلی problem یہ ہے کہ Pakistan is spectrum storm، پاکستان میں اس وقت total  
 2.74 megahertz کا spectrum ہے، 562 megahertz کو litigations سے پچھلے 8  
 مہینے میں نکلوا یا گیا ہے Sir, grateful once again to the Law Ministry and to  
 by the mid of this year when ان شاء اللہ SIFC, for their efforts  
 spectrum auction has been conducted. We will make 562 twice  
 the spectrum that is being used right now will going to auction  
 by mid-year.

Secondly Sir جو یہاں پہ infrastructure facility کے challenges رہے ہیں،  
 unfortunately ہمارے دوست آج یہاں احتجاج کر رہے ہیں، 2022ء میں جب یہ ملک کو default  
 کے دہانے پہ چھوڑ کے گئے تھے۔ تو اس ملک میں کوئی Letter of Credit نہیں کھلتی تھی، کچھ import نہیں  
 ہوتا تھا۔ Telecom industry کا تمام infrastructure import based ہے، پچھلے تین چار

سالوں میں اس default کے ڈر کی وجہ سے، خوف کی وجہ سے آئی ایم ایف کے پاس واپس ہمیں جانا پڑا اس کی وجہ سے، ہم پچھلے تین سالوں میں Telecom کے infrastructure میں کوئی investment نہیں کر سکے، کوئی Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) نہیں آسکی۔

آج جب ہماری macro economy بہتر ہو رہی ہے، ہمارا interest rate جو ہے وہ نیچے آچکا ہے، inflation تین فیصد کے اوپر آچکی ہے۔ ہم نے کرنسی میں پچھلے دو سال سے ایک consistency دیکھی ہے۔ اب FDI جو آئے گا ان شاء اللہ interest rate کی کمی کی وجہ سے، جو investment آئے گی اس سے telecom infrastructure بہتر ہوگا۔ Telecom infrastructure بہتر ہونے سے جو انٹرنیٹ ہے اس کی availability بہتر ہوگی۔

تیسرا سر! جو submarine cable پاکستان میں land کرتی ہیں وہ اس وقت صرف 7 ہیں۔ ان میں سے بھی ایک جو ہے وہ end of life پہ ہے۔ Meta کی جو سب سے بڑی Africa cable 2 ہے وہ پاکستان میں land کر گئی ہے۔ اس کو چند مہینے لگیں گے light up ہوتے ہوئے، once the submarine cable lights up three more are coming in آپ دیکھیں گے کہ ہمارا جو live internet کا دنیا کے ساتھ چینل ہے وہ بہتر ہوگا۔

سر Pakistan China optic fiber cable جو ہے وہ operationalize ہو گئی ہے ان شاء اللہ چائنہ کا data پاکستان سے جانا شروع ہوگا we are connecting over submarine cables all the way to Central Asia through Wakhan boarder Sir, that's operationalize so, overall internet جو ہے اس میں But generally that considerable improvement کے لیے کام کیا جا رہا ہے۔

definitely internet conjunction, which is because of lack of investment it is because of lack of spectrum and it is because of slightly less capability in terms of submarine cables جو پاکستان کی ہونی چاہیے۔

Sir, this is comprehensive effort that's going towards تو improving how the internet looks like in user experience اس کے حوالے سے Thank you Sir۔

جناب سپیکر: شمیمہ خالد گھر کی صاحبہ۔

محترمہ شمیمہ خالد گھر کی: شکریہ سپیکر صاحب۔ سپیکر صاحب! میرا question تھا 101۔ لیکن اس میں answer میں لکھا ہوا ہے کہ پرائم منسٹر کے آفس سے یہ آئے گا، اس کو دیا ہے، refer ادھر، ابھی جواب نہیں آیا۔ میں پوچھنا چاہ رہی ہوں کہ اس میں نام نہیں دیا گیا question کا 101 نمبر ہے۔ لیکن میرا نام نہیں ہے تو یہ اس کی کیا reason ہے کہ نام کے بغیر جو دیا گیا ہے۔

جناب سپیکر: مشتاق صاحب! انہوں نے صحیح point out کیا ہے۔

جناب سپیکر: صحیح point out کیا ہے، ذرا ایک منٹ تشریف لائیے۔ سید حفیظ الدین صاحب

supplementary please.

سید حفیظ الدین: میرا سوال یہ ہے کہ VPN کے بند ہونے سے، VPN پر restriction سے جو پاکستان

کو losses ہوئے ہیں وہ کتنے تھے؟ کیا آپ یہ بات بتا سکتی ہیں؟

(مداخلت)

جناب سٹیکر: حفیظ الدین صاحب کا mike کھولیں۔

سید حفیظ الدین: میرا mike کھلا ہوا ہے۔

جناب سٹیکر: شازہ خواجہ صاحبہ۔

محترمہ شازہ فاطمہ خواجہ: سر ہوا یہ تھا کہ جو Ministry of MORA ہے اُس نے MOI کو letter لکھا اور MOI نے PTA کو لکھا تھا کہ 30 ستمبر تک VPNs بند کئے جائیں مگر اس کے بعد کیونکہ PTA نے Interior سے ایک legal opinion مانگی تھی کہ complete shutdown of VPN کی That response is still awaited Sir. So, that deadline legal حیثیت کیا ہے؟ was never implemented and as of now internet تمام اور ویسے بھی اس وقت industry کو VPNs جو ہیں they are functional جی۔ 2010 سے PTA خاص طور پر industry کو to register their IP's. Sir this is an encourage کر رہا ہے اور individuals کو important thing to note کہ ہماری جو اس وقت کچھ legitimate چیزیں جو ہم نے legally بند کی ہوئی ہیں، ان کا access generally should not be allowed in the country Sir! pornography میں جس کے اندر blasphemy content ہے اور multiple چیزیں ہیں، but Sir، اس مدعے پر واپس آؤں گی کہ VPN industry کیلئے بہت important ہے، free lancers، بہت important ہے without the use of VPN, industry اور خاص طور پر free lancing industry نہیں چل سکتی۔ اس کیلئے PTA کی اس وقت جو IP registration ہے وہ free of cost ہے۔ that is open پہلے 2010 سے آج تک ہزار سے بھی کم registrations تھیں، پچھلے 3 مہینے میں 31 ہزار سے زائد IP registrations ہو گئی

ہیں۔ Simultaneously Sir! data CVAS کی licensing regime بھی PTA نے  
 announce کر دی ہے۔ اس کے تحت VPN companies کی دو applications آگئی ہیں، 3 چار  
 اور interested ہیں، تو انشاء اللہ یہ کوئی challenge نہیں آئے گا، VPN نہ industry کیلئے، نہ

citizens کیلئے for regular usage میں کوئی impact نہیں آئے گا۔ Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Next question, Ms. Aliya Kamran Sahiba.

**Ms. Aliya Kamran:** Sir, question No. 103.

### **Inclusion of disable persons in BISP**

103. **\*Ms. Aliya Kamran:**

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

- (a) *whether the Government has any plans to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities, irrespective of gender, in the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP);*
- (b) *if so, what specific measures are being taken by the Government to provide equal access to benefits and support for both male and female persons with disabilities, under the programme and by when will such inclusion be actualized;*
- (c) *if not, such plans exist, the reasons thereof?*

**Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety:** (a) It is apprised that Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) prioritizes women empowerment by enhancing their socio-economic status, health, education, and workforce participation. To achieve this, BISP targets women, recognizing that they are often the primary caregivers in households.

(b) In addition to focus on women, WISP has also taken steps to include people with disabilities. Recently, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed with NADRA to simplify the process of obtaining ID cards for individuals with disabilities. This initiative not only supports people with disabilities but also helps their families, particularly women to become eligible for financial assistance.

(c) Beneficiaries of BISP are identified/selected through National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) survey on the basis of Proxy Means Test (PMT) score which determines the welfare status of the household/family on a scale between 0-100. The PMT cut-off score for eligibility is set on the basis of available fiscal space. The PMT cut-off score for BISP's core initiative *i.e.* Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) also termed as Benazir Kafaalat programme is currently set as 32. However, as per policy approved by the BISP Board, PMT cut-off score has enhanced from 32 to 37 for families with differently abled persons, regardless of gender, making them more likely to receive financial support. This approach demonstrates BISP's commitment to promoting inclusivity and supporting vulnerable population.

**Mr. Speaker:** Answer be taken as read, supplementary please.

محترمہ عالیہ کامران: میرا supplementary سوال یہ ہے کہ بلوچستان میں اس سے زیادہ خواتین متاثر ہیں، تو بے نظیر انکم سپورٹ پروگرام کے تحت بلوچستان کی خواتین کو اس میں شامل کرنے کیلئے کیا اقدامات کئے جا رہے ہیں۔

جناب سپیکر: ڈاکٹر درشن صاحب جواب دیجئیے۔

پارلیمانی سیکرٹری برائے بحری امور (جناب درشن): شکر یہ۔

جناب سپیکر: ایک second hold please، آپ اپنی chair پر جا کر quorum point

out کیجئے۔ فیصلہ تو یہی ہوا تھا کہ public کے issues discuss کرنے کیلئے Question Hour میں

honourable ممبران نے محنت کی ہوتی ہے تو ہم Question Hour میں اور Private

Members' Day پر نہیں کریں گے، اسی طرح حامد صاحب نے بھی مجھے یہ کہا تھا کہ میں نے گرم کے اوپر بات کرنی ہے مگر وہ quorum point out کرتے ہیں اور نکل جاتے ہیں۔ Seriousness یہ ہے کہ گرم میں جو حالات ہیں ان پر وہ بات کرنا ہی نہیں چاہتے اور مجھ سے جب مانگتے ہیں تو وہ بڑا غیر مناسب ہوتا ہے۔

جناب محمد اقبال خان: سپیکر صاحب آپ کی advisory میں یہ بھی فیصلہ ہوا تھا کہ جب بھی Opposition Leader وقت مانگے گا تو آپ دیں گے۔

### POINTING OUT THE LACK OF QUORUM

جناب سپیکر: آپ نے quorum point out کرنا ہے یا نہیں؟ آپ quorum کی بات کریں۔

جناب محمد اقبال خان: پورا نہیں ہے quorum, counting کریں۔

**Mr. Speaker:** Count be made.

(The count was made.)

**Mr. Speaker:** The House is not in order.

## STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Prohibit diesel and petrol vehicles

†152.            **\*Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb:**

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

- (a) *whether there is any proposal under consideration by the Government to prohibit diesel and petrol vehicles which are more than twenty years old in order to curb air pollution in Islamabad including whole country;*
- (b) *if so, when it will be implemented?*

**Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination:** (a) & (b) Emissions from vehicles are a major contributor to air pollution in Pakistan, with outdated diesel trucks and buses being a significant factor. These vehicles, due to overloading, faulty injection nozzles, and poor engine maintenance, emit high levels of graphite carbon (visible smoke) and other harmful pollutants, posing severe health risks. In the absence of a Vehicular Retirement Policy, obsolete, pollution-emitting petrol and diesel vehicles continue to operate in Islamabad and across the country.

To address this issue, the Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination has initiated discussions with relevant Ministries, including the Ministry of Industries and Production, to develop a national roadmap for retiring vehicles older than 15 years. This proposal aligns with regional vehicle retirement policies. Additionally, in a recent meeting, the Ministry of Industries & Production and the Engineering

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*(Question Hour being incomplete, the remaining Starred Questions were treated as Unstarred and placed on the Table of the House.)*



Development Board were urged to facilitate the transition to accessible Electric Vehicles (EVs), in line with the Electric Vehicle Policy.

The National Climate Change Policy Implementation Committee has also taken up this issue, focusing on sector-specific measures to mitigate air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, initially targeting the transport sector.

These efforts, however, must be complemented by improvements in fuel quality to meet Euro-5 standards and above, as well as upgrades to the vehicle certification system to align with environmental standards, in order to effectively reduce air pollution from the transport sector.

In line with the 18th Amendment, provincial governments are also taking action in this regard. For instance, the Government of Gilgit-Baltistan is developing a “Vehicle Emission and Certification (VEC)” pipeline project under the Excise and Taxation Department. The Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir has established a Vehicular Emissions Testing System (VETS) in collaboration with the Transport Authority and Traffic Police. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has operated a Vehicular Emissions Testing Station in Peshawar since 1997 as part of its Transport & Mass Transit Department. The Balochistan government has phased out buses from Quetta city and replaced 100,000 two-stroke rickshaws with four-stroke models.

For policy intervention, MoCC&EC has also formulated the following policies, acts, to address the problem of air pollution from transport sector at the national level, :

- I. **National Clean Air Policy, 2023:** The NCAP was developed in 2023 with the aim of mitigating air pollution from five sectors, including transport. NCAP proposes policy measures for gradual phasing out of obsolete technology in engines (and vehicles).
- II. **National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) 2021:** The NCCP serves as the foundation for various sectoral policies, and proposes policy interventions for the control of air pollution and GHG emissions from transport sector (among others).

- III. **National Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy, 2019:** The Policy aims to reduce emissions from the transport sector by incentivizing electric vehicles.
- IV. **Pakistan Environmental Protection, Act 1997:** Under provisions of the Act, National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) have been developed for Vehicular Emissions which are enforced by the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA).

### **Higher position granted to junior employees**

84. **\*Mr. Jamshaid Ahmad:**

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

- (a) *whether it is a fact that higher positions have been granted to junior employees through different arrangements at the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) Headquarters;*
- (b) *if so, the details of the employees on such positions including the justifications for their appointments and the duration for which they have held such higher positions;*
- (c) *do such arrangements contravene prescribed procedures;*
- (d) *the details of deputationists in grade-17 and above at PBM;*
- (e) *whether the deputation of each was endorsed by the Establishment Division; if so, the details thereof;*
- (f) *if any deputation was not endorsed by the Establishment Division alongwith reasons thereof; and*
- (g) *what corrective measures are being taken by the Government to fix aforesaid discrepancies and to give promotions to eligible employees to aforesaid posts and fix the matter of deputations in line with established rules and criteria of Establishment Division?*

**Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety:** (a) This is to state that the current charge of the higher posts has been entrusted to PBM officers as per prescribed procedure under Clause 3.30 of Pakistan

Bait-ul-Mal Employees Service Regulations (PBM ESR), 2021 for use of resources and shall ensure the effective, efficient, economical and transparent use of funds, budget, assets and human resources available to him in accordance with relevant policies, rules and regulations for achieving the stated objectives of department or offices. programmes, projects and services. The said rule is reproduced as under: *“Where a temporary vacancy occurs for not more than two months or when a regular vacancy occurs and no arrangement for carrying out the day-to-day routine work of the post is possible, the charge of the vacant post may, with the approval of the Appointing Authority (i.e. Managing Director), be given temporarily, in addition to the duties of his own post, to an officer in the cadre present at the place if he is otherwise fit and qualified to hold that post”* (**Annex-A**).

(b) Detail of such employees along with duration and justification is placed as (**Annex-B**).

(c) The answer is in negative as the arrangements have been made as per prescribed procedure (Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Employees Service Regulations, 2021) duly approved by Bait-ul-Mal Board.

(d) Detail of deputation is placed as (**Annex-C**).

(e) The endorsement of Establishment Division is not mandatory as per Clause 3.23 of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Employees Service Regulations, 2021 (**Annex-D**).

(f) Same as above point (e).

(g) Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal is an autonomous body, established under Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Act, 1991. According to Section 16 of the Act *ibid*, Bait-ul-Mal Board may prescribe the procedure of appointment and terms & conditions of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal employees.

Bait-ul-Mal Board has approved the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Employees Service Regulations, 2021. Further, all the promotions and appointment of deputation are made accordingly to the PBM Employees Service Regulations, 2021 (**Annex-E**).

*(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)*

## Domestic Airlines operate on secondary routes

85. \*Malik Muhammad Aamir Dogar:

*Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state:*

- (a) *whether it is a fact that according to the country's aviation policy, domestic airlines are required to operate on secondary routes, with a specific percentage of their operations allocated to these routes; if so, the details thereof;*
- (b) *whether it is also a fact that domestic airlines are failing to operate on secondary routes as per the stipulated requirements; if so, what steps are being taken by the Government to hold them accountable for this non-compliance; and*
- (c) *what corrective measures are being implemented to ensure that domestic airlines adhere to the policy and fulfill their obligations regarding secondary routes?*

**Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif):** (a) As per Para 3.2.1.1, Sub-Para 7 to 8 of National Aviation Policy-2023, following conditions are in place for Regular Public Transport Operations:

1. RPT operators shall be required to operate 5% of their total capacity in terms of ASKs floated on domestic Primary routes on at least one secondary route. This provision may be subject to review by PCAA on development of TPRI operations.
2. RPT operators may engage in commercial arrangement or joint ventures with other air service operators for operations on Secondary Routes.

Accordingly, RPT operators are required to operate 5% of their total capacity floated in terms of ASKs floated on domestic primary routes to at least one secondary route.

(b) Domestic airlines have been struggling to operate on secondary routes as per the stipulated requirements in Para 3.2.1.1 (7) of NAP-2023.

Due to commercial reasons and economic viability, the scheduled airlines are unable to operate on the secondary routes. However, presently, only PIA and Airblue are operating their flights to secondary routes.

To address the issue, following corrective measure have been taken by the Government.

1. Amendments in the conditions of Tourism Promotion and Regional Integration (TPRI), through NAP-2023, aimed at increasing services on secondary routes.
2. Investment in infrastructure development, including airport and airfield upgrades, to support domestic air travel growth and improve secondary route connectivity.

(c) As per Para 3.2.1.1, Sub-Para 7 of national Aviation Policy-2023, non-conformance to operate on secondary routes may result in penal action as determined by DG CAA.

In this regard, Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) is proposing measures to ensure compliance with the requirements stipulated in NAP-2023. In this regard:

1. Imposition of financial penalties for non-conformance by domestic airlines, as permissible under the Second Schedule of the PCA Act, 2023.
2. Curtailment of international flights for non-compliant airlines.

## **Medical staff and medicines on domestic and international flights**

86. **\*Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb:**

*Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state:*

- (a) *whether all private airlines, including Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) have doctors, medical staff and medicines on board for domestic and international flights;*
- (b) *if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons thereof?*

**Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif):** (a) & (b) As per ICAO Standards for operation of passenger Aircraft, airlines are obligated to have;

1. First Aid Kits: Required on all aircraft, with the number determined by passenger capacity
2. Emergency Medical Kits: Mandatory for aircraft carrying more than 100 passengers
3. Doctor Onboard: ICAO does not mandate a doctor onboard but encourages crew first aid training and use of telemedicine for emergencies.

Compliance is enforced by PCAA through incorporating ICAO recommendations in national regulations for our Airline operators.

87. Admissibility is being re-considered because the Prime Minister's Office has referred the question to Planning Development and Special Initiatives Division for acceptance.

## **5G internet services in the country**

89. **\*Dr. Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro:**

*Will the Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication be pleased to state when will 5G internet services be available in major cities of the country without any interruption?*

**Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja):** Ministry of IT & Telecom is on the way of strategic telecommunication transformation phase by launching 5G services to ensure seamless and better internet services across Pakistan.

Consultant for the purpose has been hired in line with recommendation of Spectrum Advisory Committee.

The detailed chart of activities alongwith responsible stakeholder and timeline is placed at **Annex-A**.

**Annex-A**

No. 1-41/2024/Council (NA)  
 Government of Pakistan  
 Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunication  
 Digital Nation Pakistan  
 \*\*\*\*\*

**STEPS INVOLVED IN 5G LAUNCHING**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Consultant recommendations to Spectrum Advisory Committee (SAC)	PTA	February, 2025
SAC to finalize policy reforms (rationalization of spectrum pricing, commercial terms, taxation)	MoiTT, PTA	March 2025
Approval of the Policy Directive by the Federal Government	MoiTT	April 2025
Spectrum Auction (700, 2300, 2600, 3500 MHz)	PTA	May 2025
Launch of 5G network by any operator	Telecom Operators	June 2025

**International Conventions for the protection of glaciers**

90. \*Ms. Nuzhat Sadiq:

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

- (a) *whether Pakistan is a signatory to various international conventions related to climate change and the protection of glaciers; if so, details of the specific conventions;*
- (b) *what are the obligations of Pakistan under these convention;*

- (c) *what actions are required to fulfill these commitments;*
- (d) *what steps does Pakistan need to take at the federal level to frame laws to ensure true implementation of the provisions of these international agreements in accordance with Entry No. 32 of the Federal Legislative List, part-I of the Constitution of Pakistan,*
- (e) *who are the other signatories to these conventions, what do they require from Pakistan in terms of cooperation or action; and*
- (f) *what is the role of the international community in the protection of glaciers and combating with the climate change?*

**Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination:** (a) Pakistan is a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, which encompasses obligations related to climate change, mitigation, adaptation, and environmental protection, including ecosystems reliant on glaciers. However, there are no specific international conventions exclusively addressing glacier protection. Instead, glacier-related obligations fall under broader climate and environmental frameworks.

(b) Under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement, Pakistan is committed to:

- Mitigating greenhouse gas emissions to address climate change impacts on glaciers
  - Adapting to climate change by improving resilience and protecting vulnerable ecosystems, including glaciers
  - Reporting requirements, such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), to detail progress on climate action.
- (c) To meet these obligations, Pakistan must:
- Implement and scale up climate-resilient development projects like glacier monitoring, afforestation, and disaster risk reduction (DRR) programs



- Develop and deploy renewable energy and low-carbon technologies to limit emissions
  - Strengthen research and data collection on glaciers to inform policy
  - Mobilize financial resources from international climate funds.
- (d) • Enact laws explicitly addressing glaciers and ecosystem protection in the context of climate change
- Establish a **national glacier protection framework**, harmonizing federal and provincial policies
  - Strengthen institutional capacity to enforce such legislation, including the MoCC&EC and provincial environmental authorities.

(e) The UNFCCC and Paris Agreement have nearly universal participation, including all major glacier-hosting countries like Nepal, Bhutan, China, and India. Pakistan is expected to:

- Cooperate in transboundary water resource management for glacier-fed rivers
- Exchange scientific data and best practices related to glacier conservation.

(f) The international community can support glacier protection by:

- Providing technical and financial assistance for glacier conservation and climate adaptation projects
- Supporting capacity-building initiatives for countries like Pakistan
- Facilitating knowledge-sharing platforms to advance glacier monitoring and DRR.

## Elimination of smog in the country

91. \*Ms. Shaista Khan:

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

- (a) the steps had taken by the previous and also by the present Government at Federal level to eliminate the smog during the last ten years;*
- (b) the solid steps being taken by the Government to overcome the said issue in near future;*
- (c) the time by which the policy would be formulated with the collaboration of provinces; and*
- (d) how can Pakistan persuade India at the International level to refrain from burning crops in order to reduce smog in Pakistan?*

**Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination:** (a) Smog, a blend of “smoke” and “fog,” is a type of air pollution that occurs when pollutants, such as nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and particulate matter, interact with sunlight. In urban areas, especially during winter, the combination of these pollutants with moisture in the air leads to the formation of a thick, hazy fog-like substance that can reduce visibility and have harmful health effects.

Smog is closely associated with air pollution, as it is caused by emissions from vehicles, industrial activities, burning of fossil fuels, and other human activities. In cities with high levels of traffic and industrial activity, smog can occur more frequently, especially during times of temperature inversions, when a layer of warmer air traps cooler air near the ground, preventing pollutants from dispersing and causing the smog to persist for extended periods.

The health risks associated with smog include respiratory problems, eye irritation, and increased cardiovascular issues, making it a serious concern for urban populations.

**The steps taken by the previous and present Government at the Federal level to eliminate smog during the last ten years (Annex-I):**

(b) Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC), has already formulated comprehensive policies aimed at eliminating smog and improving air quality. These policies include the National Action Plan for Clean Air (NAPCA), the National Clean Air Policy (NCAP) approved in March 2023, and sector-specific measures addressing vehicular emissions, industrial pollution, and agricultural residue management.

In collaboration with Provincial Governments and Environmental Protection Agencies (EPAs), these policies are now in the implementation phase. Programs initiated under these policies include **(Annex-III)**:

**(c) Measures to Persuade India at the International Level to Refrain from Crop Burning**

(d) Crop residue burning in India, particularly in Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, significantly contributes to smog in Pakistan due to cross-border transboundary air pollution. This necessitates diplomatic and multilateral efforts to address the issue effectively.

Pakistan can effectively persuade India to refrain from crop burning through a combination of diplomatic, scientific, and multilateral strategies. Collaborative regional efforts and leveraging international frameworks will be instrumental in addressing this pressing environmental challenge and reducing smog in Pakistan.

**More suggestions/ response by MoCC&EC, Pak-EPA (Annex-IV):**

*(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)*

## **People living below the poverty line**

92. \*Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb:

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

(a) *the total number of people, who are living below the poverty line in the country; and*

(b) *the steps being taken by the Government for the betterment/rehabilitation of the above mentioned people?*

**Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety:** (a) It pertains to Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives (MoPDSI). The total number of people who are living below the poverty line relate to “Poverty Estimation Committee” under MoPDSI.

(b) 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 by 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 re-certification process is not yet complete, the actual number of beneficiaries exiting/graduating, may vary.

## **Overview laws and rules made by the Ministry**

93. **\*Dr. Mahreen Razzaq Bhutto:**

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

(a) *an overview of each law including rules made thereunder currently overseen by the Ministry including the departments*

*under its jurisdiction, recent evaluations of each law and the date of the last evaluation for said laws;*

- (b) if such evaluation has been conducted, the specific findings, particularly highlighted areas within these laws and rules require improvements;*
- (c) whether the Ministry has consulted the above laws with the Ministry of Law or other legal entities to address these shortcomings, if the improvements and corrections found necessary in relevant laws; and*
- (d) what measures are being taken by the Governmental to ensure that these laws must align with international best practices to maintain their relevance in the contemporary context?*

**Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination: (a) Overview of Laws and Rules of Pak-EPA Currently Overseen by the Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination**

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) oversees critical environmental laws and corresponding rules designed to safeguard Pakistan's environment, promote sustainable development, and combat climate change. Below is a comprehensive summary (**Annex-I**):

**(b) Specific Findings from Evaluations of Environmental Act and Rules & Regulations made thereunder**

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) and Pak-EPA has conducted evaluations of key Environmental Law (PEP Act, 1997) and Rules & Regulations made thereunder. The findings highlight critical areas requiring improvements to enhance the effectiveness and implementation of these regulatory frameworks. The detailed findings and recommendations are as follows (**Annex-II**).

**(c) Consultation with Legal Entities to Address Identified Shortcomings in Environmental Laws**

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC) is committed to maintaining a robust and adaptive environmental legal framework. Recognizing the need for continuous improvement, the Ministry has undertaken consultations with the Ministry of Law and Justice, provincial Environmental Protection Agencies (EPAs), international legal experts, and relevant stakeholders to address shortcomings identified during evaluations. Below are the specific efforts made in this regard (**Annex-III**):

**(d) Measures to Align Environmental Laws with International Best Practices**

Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC&EC), is actively working to ensure that environmental laws and regulations align with international best practices. These measures aim to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of Pakistan's legal framework in addressing contemporary environmental challenges (**Annex-IV**).

**Forestry and Wildlife Related Act/ Rules**

For effective implementation of CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) in Pakistan, '**The Pakistan Trade Control of Wild Fauna and Flora Act, 2012**' and '**The Pakistan Trade Control of Wild Fauna and Flora Rules, 2018**' are in place.

CITES is an intergovernmental treaty under the United Nations, which aims to prevent the unsustainable exploitation of wild fauna and flora in international trade. CITES classifies its parties into three categories (Category I, Category II, and Category III) based on the consistency of their national legislation for implementing the Convention. Following an exhaustive review process, Pakistan's legislation was recognized as **Category I** in the 77th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee held on 8th November, 2023. It affirms that, Pakistan's legislative measures meet the highest standards for implementation of CITES.

No evaluation done at national level. However, the referred law was reviewed by CITES Secretariat and placed in **Category I** affirming that it meets the requirements for implementation of CITES.

N/A

Under the referred law, imports and exports of wild fauna and flora in Pakistan is being regulated by the Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination in collaboration with the provincial wildlife departments and Pakistan Customs. The referred law was reviewed and placed in Category I by CITES affirming that, it meets the requirements for implementation of CITES. Placement of Pakistan in CITES Category I is a significant achievement, as CITES is listed as one of the conventions which are being monitored by the European Union for GSP+ Status given to Pakistan. It is an acknowledgement of Pakistan's efforts towards conservation of wildlife.

#### **Pakistan Biosafety Rules 2005 (Amended 2024)**

#### **Pakistan Biosafety Rules 2005 (Amended 2024) Overview:**

As a party to Cartagena Protocol, Pakistan is obliged to make necessary legislation for safe handling, use control and import of GMOs for various purposes. Pakistan has been implementing the provisions of Cartagena Protocol since 2005 employing Pakistan Biosafety Rules 2005 and National Biosafety Guidelines 2005. During last few years, there was a growing concern that the Biosafety Rules (2005) need to be further clarified for import of GMO commodities for Food Feed or Processing.

#### **Recent evaluation/Amendment:**

Amendment in Biosafety Rules was conducted and during the processing comments of M/o Law and Justice were received on 23-12-2023 and subsequently incorporated for approval of the CCLA.

No evaluation was carried out, as the need of amendment did arise due to new and emerging needs import of GMO commodities for Food Feed or Processing.

As Above.

The amendments in the Rules were approved by the Federal Cabinet on 24-11-2023. SRO was issued on 18-1-2024.

Under the referred Law, import of GMO commodities for Food Feed or Processing are separated from the GMOs intended to be released into the environment.

These Rules are now aligned with international best practices to maintain their relevance in the contemporary context.

- The National Hazardous Waste Management policy 2022
- Single Use Plastics (Prohibition) Rules, 2023

National Assembly	Response by MoCC&EC
<p>*Will the Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination be please to state;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An overview of each law including rules made there under currently overseen by the Ministry, including the departments under jurisdiction, recent evaluations of each law and the date of the last evaluation for said laws;</li> <li>2. If such evaluation has been conducted, the specific findings, particularly highlighted areas within these laws and rules required for improvements;</li> <li>3. Whether the Ministry has consulted the above laws with the Ministry of Law or other legal entities to address these shortcomings, if the improvements and corrections found necessary in relevant laws; and</li> <li>4. What measures are being taken by the Government to ensure that these laws must align with international best practices to maintain their relevance in the contemporary context?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. i. The National Hazardous Waste Management policy 2022 is formulated and overseen by the MoCC&amp;EC with the help of federal/provincial EPAs and other relevant ministries. The NHWMP was launched in 2022. It envisages that it will be updated from time to time. However, no such evaluation has been conducted as of now. ii. Single Use Plastics (Prohibition) Rules, 2023 are implemented by the MoCC&amp;EC with the assistance of EPA</li> <li>2. i. Nil as no evaluation has been conducted. ii. These rules were formulated in 2019 with the name "<u>Pakistan Environment Protection Agency ban on (Manufacturing, import, sale, purchase and usage) Polyethylene Bag Regulations 2019</u>" and have been revised in 2023. Some other types of plastics have been added in the category of single use plastics.</li> <li>3. i. Ministry of Law and Justice was consulted and the recommendations of the Law division were incorporated in the NHWMP. ii Ministry of Law and Justice was consulted and recommendations were incorporated.</li> <li>4 i. The NHWMP policy envisages that training on international best practices that are practicable in Pakistan will be given to the private organizations, Industries, hospitals and service sector to ensure alignment with the international best practices. ii. The rules have been formulated keeping in view the international best practices.</li> </ol>

#### Other Acts

- Pakistan Climate Change Act 2017
- Global Change Impact Studies Centre Act 2013
- Islamabad Nature conservation and Wildlife Management Act 2024

*(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)*



## Number of persons got employment

97. \*Mr. Anjum Aqeel Khan:

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

- (a) the number of persons who got employment after introducing the 3G and 4G technologies; and*
- (b) the steps being taken by the Government in view of the revolutionary changes occurring in the field of technology therefrom, so far?*

**Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division:** (a) With the successful auction of spectrum in 2100 MHz and 1800 MHz bands in June 2014, telecom operators launched 3G /4G services in Pakistan. Over the years, operators have expanded their 3G/4G networks and towers across Pakistan, and generated a number of direct and indirect employment opportunities. Since the launch of 3G/4G in Pakistan, an estimated total employment of 210,000 (direct and indirect) has been generated by telecom sector, in which, 13,500 are direct job creation by telecom companies, whereas, rest are indirect job opportunities that includes employment generated through mobile phone shops, Franchises/retailors, Tower Manufacturers, Tower Installation Companies, Tower Security Staff, Sub Contractors, Consulting / Service Companies. In addition, PTA has also issued 37 authorizations to mobile device manufacturing companies that have also generated an estimated 60,000 employment opportunities. It may be noted that above referred employment estimates do not include induced employment generated in the economy by widespread usage of 3G/4G services in the country such as e-commerce, e-businesses, e-banking, uber /cream/bykea services, free lancing etc.

Note: Employment estimates are based on the information available with PTA. Currently approximately 42,610 employees working in all telecom companies in Pakistan and 143 million broadband subscribers are in Pakistan.

(b) The introduction of 3G and, particularly, 4G technology marked a significant milestone in the realm of mobile broadband in Pakistan. These advancements paved the way for faster and more reliable mobile internet access, fundamentally altering how individuals interact

with their mobile devices. This transformation gave rise to several notable developments, few of which are as under:

i. **Enhanced Connectivity:**

3G and 4G technology provide faster and more reliable internet connectivity, enabling better communication and access to information for individuals and businesses.

ii. **Mobile App Boom:**

We witnessed a surge in mobile application development spanning various sectors, including communication, entertainment, finance, and e-commerce. This proliferation of mobile apps revolutionized how we engage with technology on the go.

iii. **On-Demand Services:**

The advent of reliable mobile internet facilitated the explosive growth of on-demand services such as ride-sharing, food delivery, and mobile banking, reshaping consumer behaviors and preferences. Careem, Uber, Bykea, Foodpanda, etc. are examples in this regard.

iv. **Remote Work Opportunities:**

The increased reliability of mobile internet made remote work more feasible, empowering individuals to work from anywhere with a reliable internet connection, thereby revolutionizing traditional work structures. The telecom sector has proved to be the bedrock for other industries to recover and thrive during COVID-19.

v. **Social Media and Content Consumption:**

3G and 4G technology fueled a surge in social media usage and mobile content consumption, including streaming videos and music, fostering a more connected and multimedia-rich digital landscape. Example include YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook etc.

vi. **Economic Growth:**

Improved connectivity has stimulated economic growth by enabling e-commerce, digital payments, and access to online services, thus creating new opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs.

vii. **e-Health:**

3G and 4G technologies have facilitated e-health by enabling remote patient monitoring, telemedicine consultations, and health information exchange. With high-speed mobile Internet, healthcare providers can remotely monitor patients' health status, offer medical consultations, and securely exchange electronic health records. These technologies enhance healthcare accessibility, improve patient outcomes, and promote preventive care and health education initiatives.

viii. **e-Education:**

3G and 4G networks have revolutionized e-education by increasing accessibility to educational resources, regardless of geographical location. These technologies enable mobile learning, allowing students to access educational content on smartphones or tablets at their convenience. High-speed internet facilitates interactive learning experiences, such as virtual classrooms and live webinars, enhancing collaboration and participation. Additionally, 3G and 4G networks provide access to multimedia content, online libraries, and professional development opportunities for educators, fostering continuous learning and skill development in the education sector.

## **Safeguard the rights of K-Electric's consumers**

98. **\*Syed Waseem Hussain:**

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

- (a) *what regulatory oversight does National Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) provide over K-Electric's operations;*

- (b) *what consumer protection initiatives are in place to safeguard the rights of K-Electric's customers;*
- (c) *what service improvement plans has K-Electric been required for implementation;*
- (d) *how often does NEPRA review K-Electric's tariffs, and what factors influence these revisions;*
- (e) *what steps are being taken to ensure public accountability from K-Electric regarding its service and financial practices;*
- (f) *is the Government exploring any options to introduce competition in the electricity market to reduce K-Electric's monopoly; and*
- (g) *what emergency measures have been taken by the Government during severe service disruptions caused by K-Electric?*

**Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division:** (a) KE is a generation, transmission, distribution and supply licensee of NEPRA. As a licensee, the tariff for each segment is determined by the Authority. The Authority also issues performance standards and approves its investments and power acquisition programs. The Authority also has powers to initiate investigation against KE in case of any violation of law. It also has the powers to impose penalties and issue prohibitory order. In case of consistent failure to comply with the conditions of license, the Authority may suspend or revoke its license.

(b) Clause 7(6) of the NEPRA Act emphasizes that: *Powers and functions of the Authority.—"In performing its functions under this Act, the Authority shall protect interests of consumers and companies providing electric power services in accordance with the principles of transparency and impartiality"*. This principle serves as the foundation for all consumer protection initiatives.

2. NEPRA has implemented numerous consumer protection measures to safeguard K-Electric's consumers, ensuring compliance with its legal obligations under the NEPRA Act and related regulations.

Following are some of the key initiatives of NEPRA for protection of KE's consumers:

### **Consumer Complaint Redressal Mechanisms**

- The establishment of NEPRA's provincial office in Karachi ensures accessibility for K-Electric consumers, enabling prompt resolution of grievances.
- The Consumer Service Manual (CSM) outlines standardized procedures for handling consumer complaints with specified timelines, ensuring accountability and responsiveness.
- The complaints received in NEPRA are being processed in accordance with NEPRA Complaint Handling and Dispute Resolution (Procedure) Rules, 2015 which provides detailed procedure for resolution of the complaints filed against distribution companies.
- NEPRA mandates that all complaints, including those regarding billing, service interruptions, and disconnections, are resolved transparently and equitably.

### **Monitoring and Enforcement of Performance Standards**

- Regular audits and inspections of K-Electric's operations ensure compliance with performance standards related to reliability, fault rectification, and consumer satisfaction.
- Penalties and enforcement actions are imposed for non-compliance, ensuring adherence to consumer protection norms.

### **Tariff Regulation and Consumer Representation & Accessibility**

- NEPRA ensures that tariffs reflect the cost of service while protecting consumers from unjustified price hikes.

- Public hearings allow consumers to present their concerns about tariff changes and other regulatory matters, ensuring participatory decision-making.
- Documents such as the CSM and tariff determinations are made publicly available to keep consumers informed.

#### **Accountability for K-Electric**

- NEPRA reviews K-Electric's performance periodically and directs corrective actions where required.

(c) K-Electric in compliance with Section 32 of the NEPRA Act 1997 and other applicable documents submitted seven years Investment Plan and losses assessment study with regards to multi-year tariff (MYT) for control period from FY 2023-24 to FY 2029-30. The submitted investment plan which includes system expansion, rehabilitation and improvements projects for the transmission and distribution segments to ensure the effective services and quality of power to consumers of K-Electric, the said 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 with is subject to annual actualization and adjustment in tariff for particular year, based on the third party audit report to the NEPRA.

The detailed decision regarding approval of K-Electric's above mentioned Investment Plan is available on NEPRA website that includes details of specific projects, purpose, targets and benefits.

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 said Investment Plan and the same are under regulatory proceedings for consideration and approval of the Authority, once decided the decision shall be available for public and stakeholders and at NEPRA Website.

(d) The Authority determined a Multi-Year Tariff ("MYT") for K-Electric Limited for a period of seven (07) years, from July 2016 to June 2023, which expired on June 30, 2023. The MYT provided a

mechanism wherein the Authority has to review and revise the approved tariff through monthly, quarterly and annual adjustments.

- i. The fuel cost component of tariff of KE's own generation power plants shall be adjusted due to change in fuel prices, generation mix and volume. KE shall be allowed adjustment in this tariff component on monthly and quarterly basis. The change in KE own generation's fuel cost component due to variation in fuel prices, generation mix and volume shall be passed on to the consumers of KE directly in their monthly bills in the form of Fuel Charges Adjustment (FCA). The impact of monthly variations in Million Rupees in KE own generation's fuel cost component to the extent of targeted T&D losses, not taken into account in the monthly FCAs, shall be adjusted on quarterly basis. The, fuel cost component of KE's own generation power plants shall be adjusted in accordance with the mechanism.
- ii. The change in the fuel component of Power Purchase Price (PPP) due to variation in fuel prices and energy mix shall be passed on to the consumers of KE directly in their monthly bills in the form of FCA. The impact of monthly variations in Million Rupees in fuel cost component of PPP to the extent of targeted T&D losses, not taken into account in the monthly FCAs, shall be adjusted on quarterly basis. In addition, the monthly variations in Million Rupees in the variable O&M and fixed costs, as allowed by the Authority, shall be adjusted on quarterly basis using weighted average method on targeted units sold basis. The impact of these variations shall be worked out based on targeted units to be sold in the next quarter and shall be adjusted in the SoT of KE. The Power Purchase Cost component shall be adjusted in accordance with the mechanism.
- iii. The actual payments in respect of WWF and WPPF to the IPPs shall be considered as pass through and shall be adjusted on yearly basis upon production of verifiable documentary evidence.
- iv. The O&M component shall be subject to CPI (CPI-X) indexation on annual basis. The determined Return, Base Rate Adjustment, Other Income, Bad Debt and Depreciation components of the tariff shall remain fixed throughout the

control period, except for adjustment with the yearly target of T&D losses. The O&M, Depreciation, RORB, Other Income and base rate adjustment components shall be adjusted in accordance with the mechanism.

- v. All components of the tariff shall be adjusted with yearly target of T&D losses.

2. Pursuant to the expiry of its MYT, K-Electric filed petitions for determination of a new MYT for the period from July 2023 to June 2030 for its Generation, Transmission, Distribution and Supply business separately. The Authority while admitting these petitions, granted K-Electric an interim tariff. The interim tariff was determined on the basis of allowed quarterly adjustments for the quarter ending in March 2023 and the same is subject to adjustment once the final MYT of KE for the control period FY 2024-30 is determined.

3. Here it is pertinent to mention that although K-Electric's Tariff, including quarterly adjustments, is determined separately, however, since a uniform tariff regime is applicable in the country, therefore, as per relevant provisions of NEPRA Act and NE Policy, base tariff applicable to other XWDISCOs is charged from consumers of K-Electric. Similarly, in line with the Policy Guidelines, issued by the Federal Government vide letter dated 22.08.2023, the quarterly adjustments as applicable on the consumers of XWDISCOs are charged from the consumers of K-Electric.

4. Regarding Monthly FCAs, the same are determined separately for K-Electric which are passed to consumers of K-electric on monthly basis, Thus, to the extent of monthly FCAs the tariff is not uniform.

(e) NEPRA ensures public accountability from K-Electric through several key measures, including:

a. **Performance Standards and Monitoring:**

Regular audits, inspections, and performance reviews ensure compliance with reliability and service quality benchmarks.

b. **Consumer Complaint Mechanisms:**

NEPRA operates complaint centers, including a Karachi provincial office, ensuring timely grievance redressal for K-Electric consumers.



**c. Tariff Oversight:**

Tariffs are scrutinized to reflect service costs fairly, with public hearings allowing consumer input into adjustments.

**d. Transparency and Reporting:**

K-Electric is required to submit performance and financial reports for review, ensuring adherence to transparency standards under the NEPRA Act.

**e. Penalties and Enforcement:**

NEPRA imposed fines of Rs.263.5 million upon K-Electric by issuing 8 No. of Show Cause Notices for non-compliance and Mandated corrective actions to address deficiencies in service.

2 The above measures ensure that K-Electric operates transparently, prioritizing consumer interests while maintaining financial discipline.

(f) The NEPRA (Amendment) Act, 2018, ended the exclusivity of DISCOs and K-electric and established a regulatory framework for a competitive, liquid and efficient power market. Key amendments included Section 23E, empowering NEPRA to issue electric power supply licenses for supply to consumers.

To further this objective, NEPRA approved the high-level and detailed designs of the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM) model on December 5, 2019, and November 12, 2020, respectively. As per the November 2020 determination, K-electric will be integrated into CTBCM, with its integration plan under review and expected to be finalized by Q1 2025.

Once K-electric's integration plan is approved and the Competitive Market Operations Date (CMOD) is declared, CTBCM will be launched nationwide. This framework will allow generation companies and other companies to obtain supplier licenses and supply power to bulk consumers at mutually agreed rates, effectively breaking the monopoly of K-electric

and DISCOs. Bulk consumers will have the option and freedom to choose their electric power suppliers, fostering competition in the power sector.

Additionally, the Distribution and Supply Licenses granted to K-electric on January 19, 2024, are non-exclusive, effectively ending its earlier monopoly.

(g) Does not pertain to NEPRA.

## **Delays in arrival and departure of Pakistani Airlines**

99. **\*Mr. Naveed Aamir:**

*Will the Minister for Aviation be pleased to state the reasons for delays in arrival and departure of each Pakistani Airline to and from Saudi Arabia during the last three years?*

**Minister for Aviation (Khawaja Muhammad Asif):** All Pakistani airlines operate flights to/from Saudi Arabia and Major categories of reasons for delays / cancellations by Pakistani airlines are as follows:

- PIA operated 58% flights on time (within 15 minutes of Scheduled Time of Departure).
- Serene Air 88%.
- Airblue 90%.
- Air Sial 95% and
- Fly Jinnah conveyed that no major flight disruptions occurred during its flight operations' period which were being conducted for a few months as of now.

Further statistics are as follows.

1. Consequential delay (around 50% delays) due to numerous factors like weather / headwind, technical fault / procedure, maintenance delays etc.
2. 20-30% due to immigration procedures, airport congestion, passengers offloading by immigration, etc.
3. 10-20% due to passenger late boarding, crew late reporting, crew duty time limits, catering related issues, slower refueling, slot/parking unavailability / ATC hold, runway closures at destinations, etc.

**Note 1:** The above stated reasons are valid for all airlines, however, actual percentage of influence may differ for each airline.

**Note 2:** Almost 50% of the reasons may be lumped into 'controllable' category of causes i.e. they could be or might be averted by the airline.

**Note 3:** All airlines have been directed to strictly comply with air passenger rights in cases of flight delays/cancellations, regardless of cause of disruption

101. Admissibility is being re-considered because the Climate Change and Environmental Coordination has referred the question to Prime Minister's Office for acceptance.

## **Programmes Launched by Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal**

104. **\*Syeda Shehla Raza:**

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

- (a) *the details of programmes or projects launched in the country by the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, since January, 2018; and*
- (b) *the number of persons who benefited from these projects?*

**Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety:** (a) Since January 2018, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) has launched the following programs / projects:

- PBM Shelter Homes.
- Orphan & Widow Support Program.
- Khana Sab Key Liye.
- Cochlear Implant.

The detail of the aforementioned programmes is as under:

### **1. PBM SHELTER HOMES**

PBM Shelter Home program was started in July, 2020 from Islamabad. PBM Shelter Home is the place where deserving / needy people are provided with 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. Currently, (17) Shelter Homes are functional in the country as under:

<b>Province /Region</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
ICT	05
AJK	01
Punjab	01
South Punjab	02
Sindh	07
Gilgit Baltistan	01

**Benefit:**

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.

**Procedure:**

- i. Citizens of Pakistan including AJ&K and Gilgit Baltistan urban/ rural homeless, far away from homes, unemployed, laborers, daily wagers, poor and transit passengers, attendants of the patients, students etc. can avail the facility of PBM Shelter Homes.
- ii. Free meal (dinner) is being served to all the above categories, inside the PBM Shelter Home in a respectable manner.
- iii. Those who are provided with free night stay in the PBM 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 are also allowed to stay in PBM Shelter Home on case to case basis.

2. **ORPHANS & WIDOWS SUPPORT PROGRAM (OWSP)**

The “Orphans & Widows Support Program” (OWSP) is a Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) intervention started in 2020. The program is providing institutional family support to widow for orphan’s education particularly, girls education. The program aims to revolutionize the care paradigm by transitioning from institutionalized care to family-based customized support.

**Program Components:**

- PBM Sweet Homes lagging behind in their performance, their children are shifted on OWSP model.

- Children of PBM Sweet Homes who have passed their matriculation/ intermediate are enrolled in OWSP after admission in public sector educational institutions, colleges. universities.
- Children of 6th /7th /8th class in public sector cadet colleges.
- 100 BISP beneficiary families with orphan girls are enrolled in each Provincial/Regional Headquarters, initially to be assisted through OWSP.

**Benefit:**

- Families of PSH children enrolled under OWSP are entitled to Rs. 8,000/- and Rs. 16,000/- per month having one child and two & more children respectively.
- BISP Families enrolled under OWSP are entitled upto Rs. 12,000/- per month having at least one school going orphan girl.
- Payment is made on quarterly basis through Bio-metric verification, at present through UBL Omni.
- First payment is made on the basis of school admission and subsequent payments are made on the basis of academic attendance compliance.

**3. KHANA SAB KEY LIYE (KSKL)**

Khana Sab Key Liye program is started in March, 2021 to provide free food to those beneficiaries who could not approach PBM 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. Currently, (16) KSKL, food vehicles are functional in the country as under:

<b>Province/Region</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
ICT	03
AJK	01
South Punjab	03

Sindh	05
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	03
GB	01

**Benefit:**

From each KSKL food vehicle upto (1000) beneficiaries are provided free meal, (500 lunch and 500 dinners) on the designated routes.

**Procedure:**

Residents/ Citizen of Pakistan including urban/ rural, far away 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. Principle of first come first serve basis is observed.

**4. COCHLEAR IMPLANT**

In Nov, 2019, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal initiated Cochlear Implant Program with the coordination of Capital Development Authority, Hospital Islamabad to provide Cochlear Implant to the by birth deaf and mute children to make them listen, learn and speak. Financial assistance of 2.15 million per patient is provided to the public as well as private empanelled hospitals for Cochlear Implant surgeries under Individual Financial Assistance (IFA) Policy. In this regard, the children requiring Cochlear Implant surgeries are registered on line through PBM Website [www.pbm.gov.pk](http://www.pbm.gov.pk).

**(b) PBM Shelter Homes**

Number of beneficiaries benefitted from the program:

Meal provided	- 8,004,476 (8.00 million)
Night stay + breakfast	- 1,377,518 (1.37 million)
Total	- 9,369,374 (9.369 million)

**Orphan & Widow Support Program**

1759 children (904 female and 855 boys) of 1112 families are enrolled in OWSP. An Amount of Rs.7 8(m) has been disbursed so far while disbursement of Rs.36.33 (M) will be completed by 31-12-2024.

### **Khana Sab Key Liye**

So far, 7,463,134 (7.46 million) meals are served to the beneficiaries from the program.

### **Cochlear Implant**

The detail of the number of beneficiaries who have been provided with cochlear implant surgeries since inception is as follows:

<b>No. of Beneficiaries / Children</b>	<b>Amount (Rs.)</b>
1,538	2,117,045,000

## **Adverse effects of heat waves on populations**

105. \*Ms. Sharmila Sahiba Faruqui Hashaam:

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

- (a) *in light of the Ministry's warning regarding more frequent heat waves in June, what specific adaptation measures and public awareness campaigns implement by the Ministry and to mitigate the adverse effects of extreme heat events on vulnerable populations and ecosystem; and*
- (b) *considering the increasing frequency and severity of heat waves, could the Federal Government outline any collaborative efforts with provincial Government and relevant stakeholders to develop comprehensive heatwave management plans and ensure timely response and assistance for affected communities?*

**Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination:** (a) Under its statutory mandate, the Global Climate-Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC) is tasked with conducting comprehensive research on various dimensions of climate change, including climate variability and extreme events. Such climatic extremes-ranging from heatwaves and droughts to episodes of intense rainfall-poses significant threats by precipitating harvest failures, inducing flooding, and thereby jeopardizing food security. Advancing our understanding of these extreme events is pivotal in mitigating the most severe consequences of climate change. In this regard, GCISC has undertaken extensive research,

yielding critical insights. The Centre's findings reveal a discernible intensification of warm extremes, manifesting in the increased frequency of heatwaves, prolonged summer seasons, and recurring droughts, compounded by episodes of intense rainfall that frequently culminate in severe flooding. GCISC conducted a spatio-temporal analysis of climate extremes in Pakistan's homogeneous climatic zones for 1962-1990 and 1991-2019. Findings indicate an increase in summer days (SU25) and warm days (TX90p) and a decrease in cold days (TX10p) during 1962-1990. Consecutive dry days (CDD) rose between 1991 and 2019, while northern regions saw increases in annual wet-day precipitation (PRCPTOT) and heavy precipitation days (R10). Research on climate change hotspot cities identified Hyderabad as the hottest by the century's end, with temperatures projected to reach 29.9°C (RCP4.5) and 32.0°C (RCP8.5), followed by Jacobabad, Bahawalnagar, and Bahawalpur, primarily in the south. Wettest cities, including Murree, Balakot, and Muzaffarabad, are in the monsoon region, while dry conditions are expected in Dalbandin, Khan Pur, and Jacobabad under both RCPs. Further the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report (IPCC AR6 reports warns of increasing intensity and frequency of extreme events.

(b) Considering the increasing frequency and severity of heat waves, could the Federal Government outline any collaborative efforts with provincial Government and relevant stakeholders to develop comprehensive heatwave management plans and ensure timely response and assistance for affected communities.

The Federal Government, in collaboration with provincial governments and relevant stakeholders, has taken significant steps to address the increasing frequency and severity of heat waves. In response to the growing impact of climate change, the Prime Minister constituted a Task Force on Global Warming and Heat Waves on May 16, 2022. This Task Force, chaired by the Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, brings together key federal and provincial stakeholders to ensure coordinated and comprehensive response.

The Task Force includes high-level representation from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and Ministry of National



Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination. Additionally, members include the Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the Director General of the Pakistan Meteorological Department, and Chief Secretaries from Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The Task Force regularly convenes to evaluate the measures being implemented, assess the ongoing situation, and develop strategies to mitigate heatwave impacts. As part of its mandate, three subcommittees have been constituted to:

Propose action plans with specific timelines for mitigation and precautionary measures.

Develop medium to long-term strategies to address global warming and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with Pakistan's international commitments.

Combat illegal logging and interprovincial wood transit in consultation with provincial forest departments.

Furthermore, NDMA has formulated a contingency plan for the monsoon season and conducted simulation exercises to ensure preparedness. The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination continues to issue heatwave advisories to raise public awareness and enhance resilience. These collaborative efforts demonstrate the Government's commitment to protecting communities from the adverse effects of heat waves and advancing Pakistan's climate resilience.

## **Research on radiations emitting from Mobile Phone Tower**

106. **\*Mr. Anjum Aqeel Khan:**

*Will the Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division be pleased to state whether there is any proposal under consideration by the Government to conduct research on effects of electromagnetic radiations emitting from Mobile Phone Towers in the country on human health?*

**Minister In-charge of the Cabinet Division: International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) provides scientific advice and guidance on the health and environmental effects of**

non-ionizing radiation (NIR) to protect people and the environment from detrimental NIR exposure. The ICNIRP Guidelines on Limiting Exposure to Electromagnetic Fields are for the protection of humans exposed to radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (RF) in the range 100 kHz to 300 GHz. In this regard, it is pertinent to mention that:

- (i) Ministry of Information Technology & Telecom (MoIT & Telecom), adopted ICNIRP Guidelines of 1998 for public and professional exposure to radiation, as a national standard for Pakistan.
- (ii) In pursuance to aforesaid Policy Directive and national standard, “**Protection from Health Related Effects of Radio Base Station Antennas Regulation, 2008**” has been Gazette notified on 19th January, 2009.
- (iii) PTA alongwith FAB checks the Power Level of BTSs (Towers) in accordance with said Regulations. So far, 5 planned surveys have been conducted in **36 cities** wherein power level of **2,429 BTSs (towers)** have been checked.
- (iv) Additionally, complaint based surveys are also carried out along-with FAB. During, 2022 a total of **89 cities** surveyed wherein in power level of **245 BTSs (towers)** have been checked.

#### **Effects on Human Health**

The BTSs (Towers) of all Cellular Mobile Operators (CMOs) and Wireless Local Loop Operators (WLLOs) are transmitting power within the prescribed limits defined in Regulations and hence are not harmful for human health.

### **Post of Managing Director lying vacant**

107. **\*Shazia Marri:**

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

- (a) *whether it is a fact that the post of Managing Director (MD) the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) is still lying vacant since March 2024; if so, the reasons thereof;*

- (b) *the expected time by which said vacancy will be filled; and*
- (c) *whether the Government has taken any interim measures to ensure the smooth functioning of PBM in the absence of permanent MD; if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons thereof?*

**Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety:** (a), (b) & (c) This is to state that Mr. Shaheen Khalid Butt has been appointed as the Managing Director, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, Islamabad for a period of three (03) years w.e.f. 18-12-2024 on honorary basis vide Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Notification F. No. 34-1/2020-(Orgs)/PASS-979 dated 18-12-2024 (**Annex-A**).

*(Annexure has been placed in the National Assembly Library)*

## **Enforcement of cybercrime rules in the country**

108. **\*Dr. Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro:**

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

- (a) *what is the present status of implementation/enforcement of the cybercrime legislations/rules in the country at present; and*
- (b) *the steps being taken by the Ministry to reduce incidents of cybercrime during the last year?*

**Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunications (Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja):** (a) The cybercrime legislation, primarily governed by the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), 2016, is actively enforced across the country. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) operates a specialized cybercrime wing to investigate and prosecute offenses under PECA. Additionally, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) enforces the **Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Online Content (Procedure, Oversight, and Safeguards) Rules, 2021**, which provide mechanisms to regulate, remove, and block unlawful online content. These combined efforts aim to ensure compliance with digital laws and maintain a secure online environment.

(b) Due to the growing complexity of cybercrimes and rapid technological advancements, the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT) has reviewed the PECA law and further proposed amendments to enhance Pakistan's cybercrime legislative framework. Key features of these amendments include:

- Establishing the Digital Rights Protection Authority (DRPA) to safeguard digital rights and ensure online safety.
- Comprehensively defining and regulating unlawful online content.
- Enhancing penalties for offenses such as the dissemination of fake or false information.
- Establishing a new specialized investigation agency for the purpose of investigating and prosecuting of cybercrime offenses under the PECA Act.

These amendments have been vetted by the Law and Justice Division, approved by the Cabinet Committee for Disposal of Legislative Cases (CCLC), and are currently pending approval by the Federal Cabinet.

109. Admissibility is being re-considered because the Information Technology and Telecommunication Division referred the question to Finance Division for acceptance.

## **Persons living in poverty in Pakistan**

110. **\*Sahibzada Sibghatullah:**

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

- (a) *the current number of individuals living in poverty in Pakistan, whether it has increased or decreased in recent years;*
- (b) *what factors have contributed to this change;*
- (c) *what specific innovations have been incorporated into the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) to enhance its*

*impact on poverty alleviation and how can the public put their on its trust effectiveness;*

- (d) what data and metrics does BISP rely to formulate its schemes;*
- (e) how does it ensure the accuracy and transparency of this data;*
- (f) what concrete steps are being take to reduce poverty and improve the living standards of vulnerable populations; and*
- (g) whether there are any significant poverty alleviation goals in Pakistan, which has not yet been achieved and also what obstacles are hindering progress?*

**Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety:** (a) The assessment of poverty does not fall under the mandate of BISP.

(b) The assessment of poverty does not fall under the mandate of BISP.

(c) BISP's core initiative *i.e.* Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) also termed as Benazir Kafaalat programme was initiated in 2008 with an immediate objective to cushion negative effects of slow economic growth, food crisis and inflation on the poor, particularly women, through provision of cash transfers. Its long term objectives include meeting the targets set by Sustainable Development, Goals (SDGs) to eradicate extreme and chronic poverty and empowerment of women. Beneficiaries of Benazir Kafaalat programme were initially provided cash assistance @ Rs. 1,000/- per month or Rs. 3,000/- per quarter which has been enhanced overtime to Rs. 13,500/- per quarter. The Number of Kafaalat beneficiaries' families has also been increased gradually from 2.2 million in 2008-09 to more than 9.3 million in 2023-24. The target of beneficiaries for current FY 2024-25 is 10 million to be achieved by June, 2025.

Benazir Kafaalat is the largest cash transfer programme in the country and one of the largest in the world. Beneficiaries of the programme are identified/selected through scientific mode of National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) survey. Cash assistance to beneficiaries is provided by opening their bank accounts with BISP's partner banks.

Beneficiaries can withdraw their payments only through live Biometric Verification from NADRA which is the most advanced authentication system currently available in the country. Moreover, various initiatives undertaken by BISP are as under:

**Skill Training Vouchers (STVs) Program:**

Skill Training Vouchers (STVs) Program is signed between BISP & NAVTTC on 22nd April 2024 to provide access to quality technical and vocational education for BISP beneficiaries, especially orphans, to empower them economically through skills development. The STVs program has been launched in 18 districts of all provinces of Pakistan including ICT, AJK & GB with an aim to train 1000 beneficiaries in sectors, of hospitality & services, construction, manufacturing and information technology. Further as per draft contract, the technical trades for training have been selected for not only local employability potential but 40% trainees will seek international employability in collaboration of other stakeholders of NAVTTC i.e. POEPA & Akhuwat. Under STVs program, it has been envisaged to help the poorest to get out from poverty and promote set (reliance by increasing their socio economic condition. In all six regions, in 18 districts, 1000 trainees will be targeted (ICT including AJK & GB 300, Punjab 275, KP 150, Sindh 150 & Balochistan 125).

**MOU between BISP & Nestle Pakistan:**

BISP and Nestle Pakistan entered into a new MoU to replicate and upscale, the previously executed by onboarding 1,166 BISP beneficiaries as Rural Sales Agents.

Nestle, Pakistan as the implementing Partner will onboard 2100 selected BISP beneficiaries under the New NSER Data as BISP-Nestle Rural Sales Agents in selected districts of all provinces during 2024 & 2025. Under the signed MOU, Nestle Pakistan will provide Livelihood opportunity On commission-based structure (8-10%) on wholesale and door to door sales to selected BISP-Nestle Rural Sales Agents. By this intervention, we believe that the targeted households will overcome poverty and play a crucial role in income generation.

### **MoU between BISP & Islamic Relief Pakistan (IRP):**

The primary goal of the MOU between BISP & IRP is to establish a framework for collaboration, aiming to enhance the welfare and Support mechanisms for communities in need. IRP will use BISP Beneficiaries (0 to 32 PSC) for verification & validation of target households. By using the BISP data, IRP will execute the activities including Skill Development component, (men, women & youth). The trainee beneficiaries will also be provided with income generating assets, small enterprises and job placement in the relevant industry. The other part of MoU will be executed in Sindh where small farmers and small entrepreneurs will be targeted. According to this collaboration, we believe that the targeted households will overcome poverty and play pivotal role for income generation for their family/household.

(d) BISP is the flagship government program providing financial support to the poorest households in Pakistan. It utilizes its National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER), a comprehensive database containing socio-economic data collected through surveys of over 35 million households, nationwide, to effectively identify and target eligible beneficiaries.

Eligibility for financial support is determined through a rigorous Proxy Means Test (PMT) mechanism, which evaluates the Socio-Economic Status (SES) of households based on indicators such as assets, demographics, education, occupation, and income sources collected during surveys. Households with a PMT score of 32 or below are eligible for BISP's financial support.

Initially, NSER data was gathered through door- to-door surveys, but since February 2023, BISP has transformed it into a Dynamic NSER through the Multiple Entry Localized Access (MELA) approach. This system allows continuous updates and access, eliminating the need for nationwide surveys. For the implementation of dynamic NSER, BISP has established 647 Dynamic Registry Centres (DRCs) across the country, providing local registration and data updates, as well as addressing grievances.

Furthermore, 25 Mobile Registration Vans (MRVs) (Balochistan 18, Sindh 5, KPK 1, IBD 1) have been deployed to extend facility of registration through NSER surveys to the vulnerable population of the far-flung and hard to reach areas at their doorsteps.

Based on the BISP's National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER.) data, presently 9.3 million beneficiary households are getting financial assistance under BISP's Unconditional Cash Transfer (Benazir Kafaalat) and Conditional Cash Transfer (Benazir Taleemi Wazaif and Benazir Nashonuma.) Programs.

BISP has initiated several steps for the betterment of people living below the poverty. Some of these steps include:

1. Cash Transfers
2. Conditional Cash Transfers
3. Social Mobilization

In addition to this, BISP has increased PMT score from 32 to 37 for families with differently abled persons and from 32 to 60 in backward/poor districts & Balochistan for CCT program in order to ensure maximum coverage of vulnerable population.

(e) BISP ensures the accuracy and transparency data through a robust and Dynamic National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER). Data is collected using a comprehensive Proxy Means Test (PMT) and validated in real time through integration with NA DRA's citizen registry.

Additionally, various background checks against government administrative databases (e.g., government servants, pensioners, taxpayers) are conducted to ensure that only vulnerable HHs are enrolled in the program.

(f) Same as given at (c).

(g) Does not pertain to BISP.

## **Increased in the Benevolent Fund grant**

111. **\*Ms. Shaista Khan:**

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

(a) *when was the last board meeting held, what were its priorities and when was the benevolent fund grant was last increased;*



- (b) *whether the number of widows of Government employees who receive grant at very low rates and are not eligible for pensions;*
- (c) *reasons not to give monthly grant to these widows in accordance with the current rate from benevolent fund;*
- (d) *whether it is a fact that some cases are observed in which monthly grant is less than 1500/-;*
- (e) *if so, the reasons for not to increase monthly grant of such widows in accordance with the current monthly grant by the board?*

**Minister In-charge of the Establishment Division (Mr. Ahad Khan Cheema):** (a) Meeting of the Board of Trustees was last convened on 14-11-2024. The agenda items are enclosed at **Annex-I**. The BOT in its 86th meeting held on 17-07-2012 decided to increase rates of monthly benevolent grant from maximum Rs. 4,000/- to Rs. 10,100/- w.e.f. 01-09-2012 (**Annex-II**).

(b) Yes, there are number of widows who are receiving monthly benevolent grant on prescribed rate in accordance with the provisions of the FEBF&GI Act, 1969 and the rules made thereunder amended from time and are not eligible for pension because the services of their spouses at the time of death were less than the qualifying service for pension.

(c) According to the section 13 of the FEBF&GI Act, 1969 and the rules made thereunder, a widow is entitled to receive monthly benevolent grant in accordance with the prescribed rate applicable at the time of occurrence of death of her husband during service or after retirement and employee on invalid retirement (on medical ground).

(d) The rate of monthly benevolent grant is proportionate to the subscription made by the employee and in accordance with the schedule applicable for time being. Since 04-09-1988, every widow became entitle for grant for life. However, rate of grant has been changing from time to time. The current minimum rate of the grant is Rs. 4000 and maximum is Rs. 10,100/- per month.

(c) The Board of Trustees, FEBGIF with the concurrence of the Federal Government granted 20% increase w.e.f. 01-12-2003 and 40% on 01-09-2012 to all those beneficiaries who became entitle for grant. Moreover, the rate for the monthly benevolent grant are revised from lime to tune. Above all FEB&GIF has to make payment on account of the monthly benevolent grant in accordance with the nomination made by the employee during his life; or in the absence of nomination, distribute the amount of the grant among the eligible family members of employees. In this scenario, share of each beneficiary could become less than Rs. 1,500 per month.

*(Annexures have been placed in the National Assembly Library)*

## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

19. Admissibility is being re-considered because the climate change and Environmental Coordination has referred the question to Prime Minister's Office for acceptance.

### Financial Assistance for Heart Treatment through Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM)

20. **Ms. Kiran Haider:**

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government of Pakistan, helps the Pakistani citizens in some diseases, specially "heart diseases" for heart treatment through the Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM);*
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the PBM make un-necessary delay, as the people lives are at risk in particular application vide Registry Receipt No.358RLG142058866 dated 19-11-2024;*
- (c) if the answers to part (a) and (b) above are in affirmative, the reasons for making delay; and*
- (d) what steps are being taken by the Government to pay amount to the applicant's hospital through PBM as the applicant is still waiting for assistance?*

**Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety:** (a) Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) is executing an Individual Financial Assistance (IFA) Medical policy wherein, poor/deserving people suffering from fatal diseases like Cancer, Heart disease, Hepatitis, Tuberculosis, Vital Organ Surgeries, Kidney are provided financial assistance up to Rs.1 million per

patient for treatment through government hospitals. Year-wise detail of heart patients who have benefited from the Individual Financial Assistance (IFA) program of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) is as under:

SUMMARY OF HEART CASES (01-07-2021 TO 31-12-2024)									
2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25		Total	
No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount	No.	Amount
382	78,880,449	132	30,961,218	248	84,898,486	247	78,465,893	1009	273,206,046

(b) For this particular CNIC 37405-0524240-5 Muhammad Zareen S/o Muhammad Shafi resident of Rawalpindi, the case received in Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal on 21-11-2024 and after scrutiny, the case was registered in EBMS on the same date. However, the Inquiry Report of the applicant was pending which caused delay in processing of this particular case. On 02.01.2025, Inquiry Report of the application received and now after fulfilling all required codal formalities medical case of the applicant has been approved for amounting to Rs.248,500/- for medical treatment of the applicant and crossed cheque will be issued to the concerned hospital i.e. Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology, Rawalpindi within 2-3 days positively.

(c) Most of the time medical cases being urgent in nature processed well in time however, the reason of delay in cases are incomplete documents or delay in receiving inquiry report from district office as in the subject case.

(d) Medical cases are processed through Medical Directorate of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal and after completion of all codal formalities; cases are approved by Competent Authority. Crossed cheque in favor of concerned government hospital will be issued thereafter. Same is applicable for this specific case.

**Mr. Speaker:** The House is adjourned to meet again on Monday, the 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2025, at 5:00 P.M.

*(The House was adjourned to meet again on Monday, the 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2025, at 5:00 P.M)*