

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT

“QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWERS AND THEIR REPLIES”

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

Wednesday, the 3rd May, 2023

20. ***Dr. Mahreen Razzaq Bhutto:**
(Deferred during 50th Session)

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that in recent years a programme was launched in the name of Kamyab Jawan Programme;*
- (b) if so, the criteria on which the programme was based;*
- (c) whether such criteria have been evaluated to assess programme success;*
- (d) if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons thereof;*
- (e) whether its frame work included a one-on-one or group job counseling programme for youth;*
- (f) the details of the years-wise budget reserved, released and utilized for the programme since its inception; and*
- (g) whether it was a successful programme or otherwise?*

Reply not received.

25. ***Mr. Salahuddin:**
(Deferred during 50th Session)

Will the Minister for Finance and Revenue be pleased to state the head-wise utilization of loan obtained by the PTI-led Government?

Reply not received.

103. ***Mr. Sikandar Ali Rahoupoto:**
(Deferred during 50th Session)

Will the Minister for Finance and Revenue be pleased to state the details of total monthly salary given to the Governor, State Bank of Pakistan alongwith perks and privileges thereof?

Minister for Finance and Revenue (Mr. Muhammad Ishaq Dar):

The matter was taken up with the State Bank. It has been informed that under Section 14A (1) of the SBP Act 1956 (as amended up to 28th Jan., 2022), the “Remuneration, terms and conditions of services” of the Governor SBP, are yet to be decided by the Board of Directors.

@104. *Admisibility is being re-considered.

89. ***Ms. Shamim Ara Panhwar:**
(Deferred on 5-4-2023)

Will the Minister for Finance and Revenue be pleased to state:

- (a) *the reasons for increase in inflation rate in the country during the present regime; and*
- (b) *the steps being taken by the Government to control the said rate?*

Minister for Finance and Revenue (Mr. Muhammad Ishaq Dar):

(a) Since April 2022, many developments have contributed to the sustained inflationary pressures in the economy. In general, continuous upward adjustments in administered energy prices, specifically the rise in fuel prices, electricity, gas tariffs, floods and exchange rate depreciation, are the main drivers. The major reasons are summarized as follows:

- The Russia-Ukraine war that started in February 2022 led to a reversal of the post-covid falling trend in international commodity prices. The prices of energy and food in particular rose sharply as both countries have significant share in world exports of these two commodities.
- Rise in commodity prices inflated imports on the one hand and affected foreign inflows through tightening global financial conditions and flight to safety. These together increased pressures on exchange rate, which further increased the prices of imported goods.
- Initially energy prices were frozen to protect domestic consumers from rising international prices; however, as these remained high, government passed on the increase to domestic consumers in June 2022. Besides there was a sharp increase in few essential food prices. This pushed the National CPI inflation from 13.8 percent y/y in May to 21.3 percent in June 2022. The top five items electricity charges, petrol, milk, vegetable ghee, and cooking oil - contributed around 60 percent to m/m inflation for both urban and rural CPI in June 2022.
- During summer of 2022, Pakistan was hit by devastating floods that washed away crops and killed livestock beside precious loss of human lives. The resultant supply shortages further pushed the inflation to 27.3 percent in August 2022. Inflation remained around this level during August to October before slightly easing to around 24 percent in the following two months.
- Over the past three months, inflation has risen further reaching 35.4 percent in March 2023. Major reasons included adjustment in administered energy prices, tax measures announced in the Finance (Supplementary) Bill, and weak currency.
- The surge in March 2023 inflation also reflects seasonal Ramadan-induced increase in prices of fresh fruits and vegetables.

(b) In order to reduce inflation, both the SBP and the government have taken several measures. Some of these are discussed below:

- Since April 2022, the SBP has increased the policy rate by 11.5 percent, to 21 percent, to slow demand and reduce inflationary pressures in the economy. Tight monetary policy is aimed at lowering inflation expectations so that inflation could be brought down to the medium-term target of 6-8 percent over the medium term. As a result of SBP's efforts, demand-side pressures on inflation have moderated substantially, as reflected in the slowdown in sales of consumer goods.
- The government announced significant fiscal consolidation in FY23 budget, which is expected to supplement monetary tightening to reduce demand and lower inflation.
- Further, despite fiscal constraints, the government has also so far continued to provide subsidized inputs to industry and agriculture sectors (including energy, fertilizer, and imported raw materials) in a targeted fashion.
- The federal government in partnership with the government of Punjab has set-up free flour distribution centers in the month of Ramadan to help the most vulnerable, segment of the society.
- Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiative is holding the National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) meetings regularly to ensure smooth supply of essential items and to monitor the prices with consultation of provincial governments and federal organizations.
- Government is expanding the network of Sasta Bazaars and Utility Store outlets for provision of smooth supply of daily use items.
- Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) is taking measures to control Cartelization and undue Profiteering.
- District Price Control Committees are monitoring the prices of essential items to ensure their availability at reasonable prices.
- M/o National Food Security & Research and M/o Industries & Production are working to maintain strategic reserves of wheat, sugar and pulses.

- Under Prime Minister relief package, Rs. 12 billion is allocated for subsidies for the Utility Stores Corporation (USC) in FY 2023 for the provision of essential commodities *i.e.* Wheat flour, Sugar, ghee/oil and Pulses on subsidized rates in, all USCs. Subsequently, an additional amount of Rs. 17.22 billion is allocated to the USC for provision of subsidized item.
- Rs. 5.00 billion Ramzan Package for the provision of subsidized items through USCs is also implemented.
- Government has provided Rs. 540 million for provision of supply of essential commodities through USCs in flood affected areas.

128. ***Sheikh Rohale Asghar:**
(Deferred on 17-04-2023)

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

- (a) *the number of persons applied for the loan under Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan Programme from district Faisalabad and Mianwali;*
- (b) *the number of persons to whom said loan have been given?*

Minister In-Charge of the Prime Minister's Office: (a) & (b) The detail regarding number of applicants of loan and its disbursement in District Faisalabad and Mianwali under the **Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan Programme** is as under:-

	No. of Persons Applied for Loan	No. of persons to whom Loan Disbursed
Faisalabad	38,835	565
Mianwali	26,416	105

161. ***Mr. Sikandar Ali Rahoupoto:**

Will the Minister for Finance and Revenue be pleased to state:

- (a) *the total amount of crypto currency purchased by Pakistanis during the present Government up till now; and*
- (b) *details of the impact of the purchase of said crypto currency on national economy?*

Minister for Finance and Revenue (Mr. Muhammad Ishaq Dar):

(a) Crypto Currencies are not Legal Tender, issued or guaranteed by the Government of Pakistan, therefore, SBP has not authorized or licensed any individual or entity for the issuance, sale, purchase, exchange or investment in any such virtual currencies/ coins/ tokens in Pakistan. Moreover, SBP has refrained its regulated entities from processing, using, trading, holding, transferring value promoting and investing in crypto-currencies. Further, SBP has instructed its regulated entities not to facilitate their customers in transacting in virtual currencies/tokens. However, if there is a suspicion about any transaction, the regulated entities have to file STR with Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU) for onward investigation as per AML Act, 2010.

SBP does not maintain any data regarding crypto currencies purchased or sold by Pakistanis. Since, the crypto-currencies are traded on virtual platforms such as Crypto Exchanges located in overseas jurisdictions and not monitored by any authority in Pakistan, therefore, activity of sale and purchase of crypto currencies by Pakistani individuals cannot be ascertained.

(b) Since there is no central data available regarding sale/purchase of crypto-currencies, therefore, impact of such transactions on national economy cannot be determined.

ISLAMABAD:
The 2nd May, 2023.

TAHIR HUSSAIN,
Secretary.