

**Government of Pakistan**  
**Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division**  
**Press Release**

**Ehsaas disburses Rs. 13.18 billion to 1.098 million people in 60 hours amidst COVID-19 crisis. 40 retailers arrested**



April 11, 2020- Islamabad: With special instructions of the Prime Minister, the Ehsaas Emergency Cash payments have been started countrywide on Apr 9, 2020 to financially aid more than 12 million deserving families whose incomes are adversely affected by the Coronavirus lockdowns. Since the Ehsaas cash distribution began two days ago, as many as **1.098 million** families all over the country have withdrawn Rs.12,000 each that cumulatively sums up to Rs. **13.18 billion**. Out of the planned 17,000 biometrically enabled Ehsaas cash distribution points, 7,317 have been opened countrywide with special protective measures for COVID-19 to facilitate speedy cash payments to those in need. Further, to ensure wellness and safety of recipients coming to collect cash handouts, Ehsaas has set out special protocols to safeguard Corona preventive measures through Ehsaas Emergency Cash distribution including social distancing, sanitization and handwashing. The number of cash distribution centres and counters is being increased to prevent over-crowding of beneficiaries.

Dr. Sania Nishtar, Prime Minister's Special Assistant to the PM said, "Since the Ehsaas Emergency Cash operations began nationwide on Thursday, Ehsaas has witnessed long queues in some places but in majority of cases, things are orderly and Rs. 12,000 is being given to hundreds of thousands of people in just two days."

According to details, overall cash distributions are running smooth across the country except few cases. However, 40 Ehsaas Emergency Cash retailers have been arrested over swindling beneficiaries in different ways in some parts of the country particularly Sindh, South Punjab and KP. Taking strict action on the complaints of beneficiaries lodged through around 34 FIRs, fraudster device operators were arrested by the police and sent to lockups for fraudulently deducting Rs. 500 - 1,000 from every recipient for processing their payment. District Administration, Police, military personnel and Ehsaas regional offices jointly stepped up against the corrupt payment operators and arrested them from payment sites. The arrested device operators will be dealt in accordance with the law.

In the meantime, Ehsaas regional monitoring teams are closely monitoring payment operations across Pakistan to ensure that deserving families get full payments without any deduction. Talking about few cases reported on mismanagement and corruption, Dr. Nishtar stated, "I have written a stern letter to Ehsaas regional officials countrywide to stringently ensure transparent operations in emergency cash disbursements. I shall not tolerate any mismanagement or embezzlement and will continue fighting corruption till my last breath." Urging recipients of Ehsaas Emergency Cash assistance to insist on getting full payment of Rs. 12,000 cash handouts from the retailers, she said, "If any device operator demands any favour or deduction, it should be immediately reported, and the concerned authorities should come into action immediately to take strict action against such persons." "For queries, the citizens can call on the toll-free number 0800-26477," the Special Assistant added.