

SENATE SECRETARIAT

“QUESTIONS FOR ORAL ANSWERS AND THEIR REPLIES”

to be asked at a sitting of the Senate to be held on

Thursday, the 13th December, 2012

DEFERRED QUESTIONS

- (i) Questions No. 52 and 53 : Set down for answering on 6th September, 2012
(ii) Question No 15 : Set down for answering on 14th November, 2012

52. ***Mrs. Nuzhat Sadiq:** (Notice received on 24-07-2012 at 09.40 a.m.)

Will the Minister for National Food Security and Research be pleased to state:

- (a) *the levels of hunger and malnutrition in the country in February 2008 and at present;*
- (b) *whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government to launch Zero Hunger Plan in the country, if so, its details; and*
- (c) *the steps being taken by the Government to revitalize agriculture production and rationalize pricing mechanism in order to minimize / eliminate hunger and malnutrition in the country?*

Mir Israrullah Zehri: (a) (i) In 2007-08 it was estimated by the World Bank and UNDP that 17.2 per cent of the total population was below the poverty line.

- (ii) According to a study titled “Food Insecurity in Pakistan, 2009” conducted by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in 2009, 48.6 per cent of the population was food insecure. Out of which 22.4 per cent of the population was extremely poor.
- (iii) According to the National Nutrition Survey 2011 conducted by the Berizir Income Support Programme (BISP), Government of Pakistan, around 58 per cent of the population was food insecure. Of the total food insecure population, 29.6 per cent population was food insecure with hunger/severe hunger.

- (b) ● The Ministry of National Food Security and Research presented a ‘National Zero Hunger Programme’ to the Prime Minister in a workshop held on March 21, 2012. The announcement during the workshop has yet to be formally approved by the Prime Minister.
- The Ministry officials have held consultations with the World Food Programme (WFP) which is one of the main stakeholders in the proposed Zero Hunger Programme. A draft Zero Hunger Action Plan prepared by WFP was also examined and found lacking in operational details. To prepare a comprehensive Zero Hunger plan with clearly spelt out activities and modalities, further engagements with donors and local stakeholders would be required.
 - As Food assistance to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) forms an integral part of the proposed Zero Hunger Programme, recently, on the request of Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and WFP for food assistance for IDPs due to critical food supply situation in FATA, MoNFS&R in a Summary submitted to ECC on August 3, 2012 proposed that 50,000 tons of wheat out of PASSCO’s reserves may be donated to the World Food Programme. The cost of 50,000 tons of wheat is Rs 1.546 billion which will be picked up by Government of Pakistan. With this wheat, WFP would be able to provide fortified flour and high energy biscuits to 1.2 million IDPs till December 2012.
 - The ECC has approved the above proposal contained in the Summary submitted by this Ministry.
- (c) Following steps are taken by the Government to revitalize agriculture production:
- (i) In order to provide incentive to the farming community, . during 2011, government increased the support price of wheat to Rs 1050 per 40 kgs in view of high fertilizer prices and cost of production.
 - (ii) The government also provides subsidy on fertilizer in order to encourage balanced input use for increasing agriculture production.
 - (iii) Benazir Tractor scheme was also introduced to provide tractors at subsidized rates for improved farming practices.
 - (iv) The government: also provides research funds to PARC and other provincial agriculture research institutes to promote research activity for high yielding and disease resistant varieties of food crops for better production.
 - (v) National Programme for improvement of water courses in Pakistan was formulated.

- (vi) Water conservation and Productivity Enhancement through High Efficiency Irrigation System.

Following steps are taken by the Government to rationalize pricing mechanism in order to minimize/eliminate hunger and malnutrition in the country:

- (i) The Government has constituted a National Price Monitoring Committee headed by the Finance Secretary with the representatives of Federal Ministries and Provincial Departments. The Committee meets every month.
- (ii) in addition, the Cabinet and the Economic Committee of the Cabinet monitors the prices of essential items and takes corrective measures to ensure that the prices remain under check.

53. ***Mr. Shahi Syed** (Notice received on 25-07-2012 at 11:30 a.m.)

Will the Minister for National Food Security and Research be pleased to state:

- (a) *the number of permits issued by the Ministry for transportation of cattle and poultry to Afghanistan during the last four years;*
- (b) *the number of cattle and poultry transported to Afghanistan through, these permits; and*
- (c) *the criteria adopted for the issuance of permits?*

Mir Israrullah Zehri: (a) As per Open Policy of Export as approved by ECC of the Cabinet vide decision No.: ECC-39/06/2009 dated 03-03-2009, no NOC/ permit is required for the commercial export of livestock for meat purpose. During the last four years (2008-09 to 2010-12), the Animal Quarantine Department of this Ministry issued 913 health Certificates for export of poultry and 1437 health Certificates for cattle from Pakistan to Afghanistan.

(b) A total quantity of 152594 cattle and 468045 poultry birds has been legally transported to Afghanistan against these health certificates during the last four years.

- (c) The following criteria adopted for export of poultry & cattle respectively:
 - i. There is no restriction on the export of poultry as much quantity as exporter wish. Only Health Certificate is required under Pakistan Animal Quarantine Act, 1979.
 - ii. Livestock Export Committee of this Ministry declares exportable quantity of meat animals for each year. Following is the procedure for export of animals—

- (a) The applicant submits application to the Quarantine Officer of the respective station as required under export policy.
- (b) Quarantine Officer upon the receipt of application, allow the exporter to shift his animals in the quarantine premise approved by the Federal Government for Quarantine. During Quarantine period, necessary vaccination and tests are conducted in order to ensure the health status of the animals under the Pakistan Animal Quarantine Act; 1979 and Rules, 1980.
- (c) When the Quarantine Officer is satisfied that the animals meant for export are healthy, he issue health certificate on prescribed proforma as required under the rules.
- (d) Checking Sealing & Confirmation Certificate is being issued when the shipment is ready for export.

15. ***Mr. Hamza:** (Notice received on 18-10-2012 at 20:32 p.m.)

Will the Minister for Industries be pleased to state:

- (a) *the names, designations and addresses of the employees appointed in the National Fertilizer Corporation on regular and contract basis since 1st January, 2010;*
- (b) *whether the above said posts were advertised, if so, the names and dates of publication of the newspapers in which those advertisements were published and if not, the reasons thereof; and*
- (c) *whether written tests / interviews were held for those posts, if so, the date of the same and if not, the reasons thereof?*

Ch. Pervaiz Ellahi: (a) The particulars of employees recruited in National Fertilizer Corporation (NFC) and its attached Organizations are at Annex-A,B and C.

- i. NFC Head Office, Lahore.
- ii. NFC Institute of Engineering & Fertilizer Research Faisalabad.
- iii. NFC Institute of Engineering and Technology Multan.

(b) Yes. The Daily Dawn dated 28-11-2009.

(c) The scheduled of interviews held in aforementioned posts are indicated at Annex-A, B and C.

1. ***Mr. Abdul Haseeb Khan:** (Notice received on 23-11-2012 at 09:20 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Production be pleased to state:

- (a) whether accounts of Pakistan Steel Mills have been audited during the last five financial years, if so, the details of irregularities, if any, pointed out in audit reports; and*
- (b) the names and designations of the persons found involved in those irregularities and action taken against them?*

Mr. Anwar Ali Cheema: (a) The Financial Statements from the year 2007-08 to 2010-11 of the Corporation have been audited and the financial statement for the year 2011-12 is under Audit.

However, in their report on accounts for the year 2008-09, the Auditors have reported the allegations and investigations in Audit report that PSM has incurred a huge loss before tax amounting to Rs.28.960 billion because of wrong doings in the purchase of raw material and higher freight rates as compared to the prevailing market rates. PSM drastically reduced the prices of finished products, as compare to the market rates with a view to benefit some customers. While some inquiries have been conducted, at present, these allegations are under investigation by the Federal Investigation Agency and the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Standing Committee of the Senate have also taken notice of such allegations. Since the outcome of such investigations and possible legal proceedings cannot be determined until the completion of such process, the Audit was unable to determine the impact, if any, on the financial statements, specifically on cost of sales and sales.”

The comments of the PSM on Auditor report are as under;

In the financial year 2008-09, the Corporation had incurred loss of Rs. 26,526 million due to which it had gone through the severe liquidity crunch, while main cause of the loss had been the steep decline in the prices of steel and its underlying raw materials iron ore, coal and freight rates and there had been allegations of corruptions.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan and Federal Investigation Authority (FIA) had initiated investigation against the Corporation. Management had also hired an independent firm of Chartered Accountants to conduct forensic audit to ascertain the act of omission and commission which led to massive loss of Rs. 26,526 million in the year 2008-09.

The management noted that forensic work had not been carried out as per the Terms of References and also challenged that the assignment had not been completed in true spirit of forensic accountancy as generally accepted. The report along with management comments had been submitted to the Court and FIA.

The Court had referred the matter to NAB. The NAB has initiated the investigation process.

2. *Mrs. Nuzhat Sadiq: (Notice received on 23-11-2012 at 10:00 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Production be pleased to state:

- (a) *whether it is a fact that Utility Stores Corporation recently advertised different cadre posts for test/interview at centers in various cities; and*
- (b) *whether it is also a fact that Utility Stores Corporation did not conduct the said test/interview on the fixed date, if so, its reasons?*

Ch. Pervaiz Ellahi: (a) Yes, USC advertised vacancies in various cadres for Test / interviews in leading newspaper at various stations. Copy of the advertisement published in press is enclosed as Annex A.

(b) Necessary Tests / Interview have been conducted on the scheduled dates and timings at the stations mentioned in the advertisement.

3 *Mr. Muhammad Talha Mehmood: (Notice received on 26-11-2012 at 08:40 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Foreign Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) *the number of persons with station wise break-up working in Pakistan mission in Canada; and*
- (b) *whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government to reduce the number of those employees, if so, its details?*

Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar: (a) The total number of Pak-based officers/officials of this Ministry (Diplomatic Wing) working in the four Missions in Canada are as under:

S#	Mission	Number of persons
i.	High Commission for Pakistan, Ottawa	09
ii.	Consulate General of Pakistan, Toronto	07
iii.	Consulate General of Pakistan, Vancouver	04
iv.	Consulate General of Pakistan, Montreal	01

List indicating their names, designation etc is enclosed as **Annexure-A.**

(b) The Ministry has no proposal under consideration concerning reduction of these employees as the Missions already have bare minimum strength.

4. ***Mr. Muhammad Talha Mehmood:** (Notice received on 26-11-2012 at 08:40 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Foreign Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) *the number of persons working in Pakistan embassy / mission in UAE; and*
- (b) *whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government to reduce the number of those employees, if so, its details?*

Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar: (a) The total number of Pak-based officers/officials of this Ministry (Diplomatic Wing) working in the two Missions in UAE are as under:

S#	Mission	Number of persons
i.	Embassy of Pakistan, Abu Dhabi	15
ii.	Consulate General of Pakistan , Dubai	11

List indicating their names, designation etc is enclosed as **Annexure-A**.

(b) The Ministry has no proposal under consideration concerning reduction of these employees as the Missions already have bare minimum strength.

5. ***Mr. Muhammad Talha Mehmood:** (Notice received on 26-11-2012 at 08:40 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Foreign Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) *the number of persons working in Pakistan embassy / mission in Malaysia; and*
- (b) *whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government to reduce the number of those employees, if so, its details?*

Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar: (a) The total number of Pak-based officers/officials of this Ministry (Diplomatic Wing) working in the Mission in Malaysia is as under:—

S#	Mission	Number of persons
i.	High Commission for Pakistan, Kuala Lumpur	10

List indicating their names, designation etc is enclosed as **Annexure- A**.

(b) The Ministry has no proposal under consideration concerning reduction of these employees as the Mission already has bare minimum strength.

6. ***Col. (R) Syed Tahir Hussain Mashhadi:** (Notice received on 26-11-2012 at 09:50 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Science and Technology be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Pak Council of Scientific Industrial Research (PCSIR), Lahore has undertaken research to manufacture solar rickshaws, if so, its details?

Mir changez Khan Jamali: Pakistan is facing acute shortage of energy. On the other hand the prices of fuel/ CNG are going on higher side day-by-day which is unbearable for a common man. Keeping in view the energy crisis and high price of fuel the scientists and engineers of Pakistan Institute of Technology for Minerals and Advance Engineering Materials (PITMEAM) of Pakistan Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (PCSIR) Laboratories complex, Lahore in collaboration with M/s United Services International Group (USIG), 289-PAF, Falcon Complex, Gulberg-III, Lahore have developed the technology of “Solar Auto Rickshaw”. It was collaborative R&D work. The development of Technology was fully sponsored by M/s USIG. Major work in connection with development of Solar Auto Rickshaw and its assembling was carried out by USIG where the PITMEAM of PCSIR, Lahore provided technical assistance. The Rickshaw is now in operative position using Solar Energy instead of Petrol/CNG. The cost of one Solar Auto Rickshaw is about Rs:230000/- its normal speed on road side is 50-70 k.m per hour. The Solar Auto Rickshaw is more economical as compared to Petrol/CNG Rickshaw. Its principal cost can be recovered within 12 months. The Solar Auto Rickshaw operating on 05 Solar Panels along with 5 batteries and driven by one DC Motor.

7. ***Mrs. Zahida Khan** (Notice received on 27-11-2012 at 09:20 a.m.)

Will the Minister for National Food Security and Research be pleased to state:

- (a) *the advantages and disadvantages of organic farming; and*
- (b) *whether it is a fact that organic farming system has not been adopted in the country, if so, the reasons thereof?*

Mir Israrullah Zahri: (a) **The Advantages and disadvantages of Organic Farming**

Advantages:

1. Organic Farming is environment friendly.

2. The organic foods are non toxic and useful for human consumption. of bio-origin.
3. Cost of production will be reduced using the natural bio-products and avoiding use of expensive chemical inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, weedicides and fungicides.
4. Organic farming is a system that benefits from the recycling of useful natural resources.

Disadvantages:

- (a) The yield in Organic farming is far lower compared to prevailing agriculture system.
 - (b) Pest and disease attack is at higher rates, as organic pesticides/insecticides are not presently available in the market.
 - (c) Due to low productivity the product price of agriculture produced commodities are quite higher than non organic system.
- (b) The organic farming system has not been adopted in the country due to following reasons.
- (1) Technology development for Organic Farming is a lengthy process and will required time for setting protocols which includes:
 - (2) Development of fertilizers, pesticides, weedicides, fungicides of bio origin and then conducting proper research trails for different crops to check the effectiveness of the above mentioned developed bio-products.
 - (3) Declaration of “Organic Farming zones” which should be free from the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, weedicides and fungicides.
 - (4) Acquiring ISO organic produce certification.
 - (5) The issues related to this technology such as technology development, certification and marketing have not yet finalized.

8. ***Col. (R) Syed Tahir Hussain Mashhadi:** (Notice received on 27-11-2012 at 09:45 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Production be pleased to state:

- (a) *the loss suffered by Pakistan Steel Mills during the last three years alongwith the reasons thereof;*

(b) the annual production capacity of the Mills alongwith the production registered during the last three years;

(c) the quantum of steel products imported for the Mills during the said period; and

(d) the steps taken to enhance the production?

Mr. Anwar Ali Cheema: (a) Pakistan Steel Mills suffered losses during last 03 years, as under:

(Rs. In million)

	2008-09 (Audited)	2009-10 (Audited)	2010-11 Audited	2011-12 (Provisional)
Loss sustained	Rs.25,526	Rs.11,566	Rs.12,434	Rs.21,434

The main reasons for huge losses are as under:-

- Decrease in sales
- High prices of imported raw material (Cost & Freight)
- Low capacity utilization (low production)
- Inventory Valuation at Net Realization Value (NRV).

(M.Tons)

(b) ANNUAL CAPACITY	PRODUCTION REGISTERED		
1,100,000 MT	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
	44,4390 (40%)	396,104 (36%)	204,064 (19%)

(c) Pakistan Steel does not import any steel product, however, raw materials i.e. Iron Ore and Coal imported from foreign countries is being used for production of hot metal which is subsequently converted into steel product. The imported raw material (Iron Ore & Coal) received during last three years is as follows:

(Quantity in MTN)

Period / Material	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Iron Ore (Imported)	55,551	463,275	113,417
Coal (Imported)	481,201	374,123	330,000

(d) The GoP approved a bailout package for revival and revitalization of Mills. As far as the Budgeted production for the year 2012-13 is concerned, the BoD approved the capacity utilization of 63% for the year 2012-13 in its meeting dated 16-07-2012. A committee has been constituted to set out the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Pakistan Steel Mills and further implementation and monitoring of the (KPIs).

9 *Col. (R) Syed Tahir Hussain Mashhadi: (Notice received on 27-11-2012 at 09:45 a.m.)

Will the Minister for Commerce be pleased to state number of licences for import of arms issued to the private firms / individuals / arms dealers during the last five years alongwith their names, provinces and the countries where from they were allowed to import arms and ammunitions?

Makhdoom Amin Fahim: Ministry of Commerce, during the last 05 years, issued the following authorizations for import of arms and ammunitions:

S. No.	Description	No. of Authorization	Annex
1.	Fresh authorizations for import of NPB weapons issued to commercial importers.	40	Annex-I
2.	Enhancement of import ceiling of existing authorizations of commercial importers for import of NPB weapons.	51	Annex-II

The above commercial importers are allowed to import arms & ammunitions as per their authorizations from world-wide sources except India and Israel.

(Annexures have been placed on the Table of the House as well as Library.)

ISLAMABAD :
The 12th December, 2012.

IFTIKHAR ULLAH BABAR,
Secretary.