



ERRA

Monthly

NEWS BULLETIN

Earthquake Reconstruction & Rehabilitation Authority
Pakistan

April 2009

MARCHING ON TOGETHER BUILD BACK BETTER



Editor's Note

Monthly news bulletin for the month of April 2009, highlighting important meetings and news about ERRA is presented to our readers. ERRA gives high priority to information sharing and keeping our stakeholders onboard regarding what's happening in ERRA. We look forward to your input, suggestions and recommendations for improving the news bulletin. We also look forward to news, pictures and images of reconstruction from our implementing partners so that we can add them in our quarterly news letter and news bulletin.

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Important Information

You can download the copy of this News Bulletin and subscribe for our quarterly News Letter from our website www.erra.gov.pk. You can contribute articles and your experiences for publication in our News Letter and Annual Review. Articles sent specifically for Annual Review will be peer reviewed by the Editorial Board.

MEETINGS/VISITS

Chairman ERRA, Altaf Muhammad Saleem and Deputy Chairman ERRA Meet PM AJ&K: As part of ERRA's proactive policy to engage public representatives and to promote ownership of ongoing projects, Chairman ERRA Altaf Muhammad Saleem and Deputy Chairman ERRA Lt. Gen Sajjad Akram met PM AJ&K Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan to review progress of reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in AJ&K. Chairman ERRA, Altaf Muhammad Saleem informed the participants that Rs 4.187 billion have been released to AJ&K government for land acquisition and pointed out that early completion of the projects was directly linked to the early acquisition of land. Deputy Chairman informed the participants that MoU for urban development had been signed with two Chinese construction companies and physical work on reconstruction of Bagh, Rawalakot and Muzaffarabad cities is expected to start in June 2009. He also said that 17 priority projects had been identified but land had



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been acquired only for 5 projects. He urged the government of AJ&K to acquire land for rest of the priority projects within two months time.

ERRA's Work Termed Outstanding by Business Community in Canada: On a private visit to Canada, Chairman ERRA Altaf Muhammad Saleem took time out to make a presentation on ERRA in a high level meeting with the Canada-Pakistan Business Council (CPBC). CPBC, which is chaired by well known Canadian businessman Mr. Anwar Merchant, is a strong organization of leading business community of Canada interested in investing in Pakistan. The presentation got wide coverage and was termed as "outstanding" by leading Canadian national print media. Presentation was highly appreciated by the Canadian Parliamentarians including Jim Karygiannis, MP, Bryon Wilfert, MP, Tassaduq Hussain, Consul General of Pakistan, and many other senior bureaucrats who were also present during the presentation.



Chairman ERRA Gives a Talk to Academicians and Researchers at Queens University Kingston, Canada and Represents ERRA on Asian TV Network Canada: Chairman ERRA, Altaf Muhammad Saleem, during his visit to Canada delivered a lecture at Queens University highlighting ERRA's activities and social responsibility. A large number of academicians, researchers and students attended the lecture followed by a lively question and answer session. The visit and presentations were very well received by the Canadians. Chairman ERRA was later invited to a 30 minute interview on Asian TV Network which is aired in seven Asian languages. The network catering for Asian Diaspora residing in Canada in particular and Canadians in general also aired ERRA documentary which is indicative that ERRA is viewed as a successful and interesting model of reconstruction providing post disaster intervention in more than twelve sectors.

Deputy Chairman Visits Rawalakot and Bagh in AJ&K: Extensive visits and inspection program of ongoing projects has been initiated with Deputy Chairman ERRA himself taking the lead. On 28 April, Lt. Gen. Sajjad Akram visited Rawalakot

Meetings/Visits

and Bagh, inspecting District Health Office, CMH Rawalakot, Post Graduate College for Boys and Girls High School. It is noteworthy that 431 projects worth Rs 10 billion are being undertaken in Rawalakot, out of which 60% have been completed.



Bagh was next stop after Rawalakot, where Lt. Gen. Sajjad Akram inaugurated Boys High School Khana Muri and later Qadir Abad Bridge.



Deputy Chairman Visits Battagram, Mansehra and Balakot: On 29 April, Lt. Gen Sajjad Akram inspected the ongoing projects in Balakot & Mansehra and met public representatives. While ERRA has disbursed Rs 66.34 billion to the beneficiaries of Rural Housing Grant, special consideration has been given to the provision of safe drinking water, sanitation, and reconstruction of houses. Visiting Government High School Battagram, he offered prayer at the

grave of 63 children who had lost their lives in Earthquake 2005. Paying homage to the courage and determination of people, he said that EQ 2005 was a reminder of nature's wrath and nation's resilience.

Deputy Chairman Chairs Meeting at NESPAK HQ: NESPAK has been ERRA's partner since 2006, and has been closely associated with reconstruction efforts of ERRA. Recently ERRA has facilitated NESPAK in capacity building and human resource procurement to effectively deal with challenges of Reconstruction and Rehabilitation. A detailed briefing was given to Deputy Chairman during his visit to NESPAK, who asked the GM to redouble their efforts for early completion of the projects.



Meetings/Visits

ERRA-FMIS Fixed Assets Implementation Workshop: Financial Management System has been fully functional in ERRA, giving top management a clear view of all ongoing financial transactions. A workshop was held to deliberate upon providing ERRA with a model for fixed assets management which will be available to all locations that constitute the ERRA family. ERRA is now finalizing its fixed assets policy and will soon provide list of fixed assets to FMIS for uploading.



ERRA Takes Lead in Interaction with Civil Society on Gender Issues: Gender mainstreaming being one of the crosscutting themes in all ERRA Strategies, ensures equal opportunity for all. ERRA Gender Team at PERRA held a gender awareness workshop for senior management staff of civil society organizations, where 25 participants attended the workshop. The workshop focused on awareness raising and enabling environment for inclusion of women in all sectors. A similar discussion forum focusing on Gender and Health was held in Abbottabad where EDOs Health from 5 earthquake affected districts participated in the forum.

IMPORTANT NEWS

50 Chinese Contractors Reach Muzaffarabad: ERRA formally signed contract for Umbrella Urban Development Project with two Chinese companies earlier this year, according to which, two Chinese companies are to execute nearly 200 projects in cities of Muzaffarabad, Bagh and Rawalakot. In this regard, 50 Chinese contractors have arrived at Muzaffarabad to start the work on priority projects to be implemented in three cities of AJ&K.



ERRA Pays Rs 66.34 Billion as Rural Housing Subsidy: Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) is taking care of reconstruction of 463,469 houses that were completely destroyed during the October 8th earthquake of 2005. So far, 394,437 houses have been completely reconstructed as per seismic resistant designs given

by ERRA and affectees have been provided Rs 66.34 billion as the Rural Housing Subsidy by ERRA. This is in addition to 101, 091 houses that were partially damaged and 46,725 houses that suffered negligible damage for which the owners were paid Rs 5 billion and Rs 1.1 billion respectively by ERRA. It is pertinent to mention that ERRA is disbursing Rural Housing subsidy only for the houses that have been reconstructed as per ERRA's design and are seismically resistant. This program of ERRA will be coming to an end in June 2009, after successful completion of 36, 000 houses that are presently under construction in the earthquake affected areas.

Transitional Houses Distributed Among 6,766 Families: With 71% prefab houses completed for Bagh, Balakot and Muzaffarabad, 6,766 families have shifted to these new houses. By mid-June another 1,537 houses will be given to people enabling 86% of the affected population to be settled in new prefab houses. The project to provide prefab houses for Bagh, Muzaffarabad and Balakot was funded mainly by Kingdom of Saudi Arabia & Kuwait Governments, while IOM, Samaritan Perth and International Church Foundation were also partners in this project.

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Regional Workshop on Structural and Non Structural Solutions for Earthquake Risk Reduction: Regional Workshop on Structural and Non Structural Solutions for Earthquake Risk Reduction was held in Islamabad. The workshop was organized by Earthquake Risk Reduction and Preparedness Program (for South Asian Region), which attracted representatives from Pakistan, India, Japan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal along with officials of UNDP, NDMA and Asian Disaster Reduction Centre. COS Brig. Masuood Ahmed presented ERRA's experiences and apprised the audience about the rapid progress made by ERRA in various sectors. He also updated the audience about ERRA's initiatives to build seismic resistant structures in the affected areas and disaster risk reduction techniques being introduced. ERRA documentary was also shown to the audience which was highly appreciated.



ERRA- UN HABITAT to Train People for Rain Water Harvesting: In a meeting between DG Planning II and UN- HABITAT representatives, UN-HABITAT has principally agreed to coordinate and collaborate with ERRA for training people for rain water harvesting project. WatSan program manager has requested UN-HABITAT to formalize the partnership and in this regard UN-HABITAT has already visited Chitral, Topi, Bagh in mid April, 09.



Disaster Risk Management Conference at Pearl Continental Hotel: The State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) AJ&K organized one day "Disaster Risk Management Conference" at Pearl Continental Hotel, Muzaffarabad on 27th April 2009. The Conference was chaired by the Prime Minister of AJ&K and attended by a large number of officials of the AJ&K Government, members of NGOs and stake holders.

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Air Cdre. (R) Naunehal Shah in his presentation explained ERRA's Disaster Risk Management Programme (DRMP) in the earthquake affected areas. The participants of the conference took keen interest in his presentation, which was followed by a lengthy but lively discussion.



Development Partners Actively Liaison with Donors and Sponsors Cell and Health Sector ERRA: While Chinese team arrived at Baffa for reconstruction of school and Tehsil Head Quarters Hospital, UAE Review Mission met Donors and Sponsors Cell and Program Manager Health to oversee progress and provision of utilities for CMH Muzaffarabad and Rawalakot. Progress is visible due to ERRA's active collaboration with international partners, and recently drawings of Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Dir Kot, Bagh have been finalized. Recently six million US dollar funding for a mosque gifted by Prince Ahmed to be built in Muzaffarabad has materialized and land has been acquired.

Italian Cooperation has pledged one million pounds for a composite project of education, health and livelihood in Bagh. The project is at the moment in planning phase.

ERRA's Legal Aid Centres Pick Up Pace to Resolve Cases: Legal Aid Centers have been successfully operational for a period of one year with Norwegian Refugee Council as implementing partner. For second year residual cases are being handled by ERRA at a much reduced cost compared to the first year. During last six months, number of the pending cases has been reduced from 5806 to 1100 only.



PMP Certification Session Held: Dr. Azhar Masood Khan, a qualified OMP Certification Trainer conducted the session for Project Management Professionals Certification Introductory course at ERRA. The aim was to apprise top

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management on latest techniques of project management. This is one of the many efforts of ERRA to enhance capacity of employees by providing on-job training.



"Tree Plantation Vital for Environment" Says Deputy Chairman ERRA: While working mainly with brick and mortar on reconstructing and rehabilitating the earthquake affected areas, environment remains an important and crosscutting theme in all ERRA projects. To commemorate the Earth Day, Deputy Chairman ERRA, Lt. Gen Sajjad Akram planted an araucaria tree at the new ERRA Headquarters, which initiates the drive for a greener environment at ERRA headquarters.



ERRA Initiates Measures to Expedite Reconstruction: Speedy reconstruction being focus of present administration, a review of "Slow Moving Projects" was carried out in a meeting chaired by Deputy Chairman. He instructed that efficient flow of information from top to bottom should be assured so that DRUs and Project Managers are onboard about important decisions. Since debris removal was identified as one of the hindrances to speedy reconstruction, it was decided that debris removal should not be outsourced and rather be added in the contractor's defined work so that delays in debris removal are effectively handled. At the same time NESPAK was asked to provide details of NESPAK staff deployed in field for easy access by the contractors.