

The News

June 26, 2007

June 26, 2007

DEVELOPMENT

Govt allocates budget for UC offices



Punjab Local Government DG Hamid Ali Khan briefs a UNDP delegation at Local Government Complex. —The News photo

CITY NEWS 19

By Our Correspondent

LAHORE

DIRECTOR General (DG) Punjab Local Government (PLG) Hamid Ali Khan said Punjab government had allocated a budget for the construction of Union Council offices in Punjab. The DG said this while addressing a meeting on Gender Justice Programme through Musalihat Anjuman Project that was attended by officials from UNDP at LG Complex on Monday.

According to the plan, each union council would have a meeting hall and three rooms, however, he did not disclose the amount of the budget. He said the PLG Ordinance 2001 provided plan for devolution of powers at the grassroots level and the objective of the devolution was to create an enabling environment for citizens' participation and to solve most of the problems of most of the people within the districts. He said the PLG's areas of focus included respect for rights, improving service delivery and bringing justice to people at their doorsteps so that they could be assured of being respected and protected. He said the PLG 2001 provided procedure and an excellent community based forum for Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) in the shape of Musalihat Anjuman (MA).

He said the MAs had been assigned the vital role to resolve disputes between the individuals, either civil or criminal in nature, through amicable settlements with free consent of the people. He said, with the technical and financial assistance of United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP), the initiative to form MAs was taken in 2005 and the project was launched in eight districts, taking two districts from each province of Pakistan. Having seen the tremendous response of MAs, the project had been up-scaled and extended for further five years from 2007 to 2011 and three districts had been included in existing two pilot districts in each province. The pilot project of MA Attock received 2040 cases in the last year and resolved 1433 cases amicably while only 607 cases were in balance.

Similarly, MA Bahawalpur received 1415 cases and resolved 1184 cases and only 231 cases were in balance while the nature of the cases was of family, monetary and civil disputes. Talking about the capacity building of elected women councillors and training of UC nazims and naib nazims, he said almost 14300 elected women councillors were benefited from that programme against a target of 16,164 councillors through 537 training sessions. Similarly, the training of UC nazims and naib nazims, on gender sensitization, was launched on May 5, 2007 to June 19, 2007 in which 6928 nazims and naib nazims were benefited. He also informed the UNDP delegation that MAs had been constituted in the new districts of Jhelum, Mianwali and Multan and those districts were selected for the project due to high incidence and history of gender violence and abuse against women like forced marriages, wani, watasatta, rape and deprivation of women from lawful rights.