

**KARACHI:** The Planning and Development Division has released Rs286.74 million to the Commerce Division and Rs277.509 million to the Industrial Division to carry out various development projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), according to official figures released by the Planning Commission.

The Planning and Development Division has released Rs95.30 billion, or 42 percent, in the first five months of the current fiscal year to various ministries and divisions for the development projects under the Public Sector Development Programme against the full-year target of Rs233 billion, it revealed.

Of total Rs95.30 billion released, Rs51.60 billion has been released for infrastructure projects, Rs40.60 billion for social sector projects and Rs1 billion for projects in other sectors under the PSDP 2012-13, according to the data.

Total size of the PSDP stands at Rs360 billion, including foreign aid component of Rs100 billion and funds of Rs27 billion for special programmes.

Releases against special programmes are being made by the Cabinet and Finance Division, while foreign aid disbursement amount is received in the Economic Affairs Division.

The PSDP envisages 344 infrastructure development projects, 685 social sector development projects and 68 projects in other sectors.

Against an allocation of Rs29.655 billion for the power sector, only Rs3.114 billion were released, it said.

Of the total releases in five months, Rs873.869 million were released to the Defence Division, Rs84.886 million to the Economic Affairs Division, Rs3.512 billion to the Finance Division and Rs213.617 million to the Petroleum and Natural Resources.

The target for the last year's PSDP releases was missed by 25 percent and the entire scheme was marred by inadequate funding and several shortcomings in the identification and preparation, appraisal, approval, execution and completion phases.

Though the PSDP projects contributed to the national economy but these were not enough in the wake of rapidly growing population and consequent increased demand for infrastructure facilities, according to a Planning Commission document.

Proper feasibility studies were not undertaken in some projects, resulting in ill-conceived, weak project preparation; ownership issues between provinces and districts generated sustainability issue during operational phase and unrealistic financial phasing resulted in delayed, insufficient funding and delayed projects execution, it said.

Besides, the lack of holistic approach in planning initiated projects with overlapping objectives.

In certain projects, envisaged results were not achieved due to weak scrutiny and inaccurate economic analysis, it added.

Courtesy: The News