

UNDER UTILIZATION OF FEDERAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

PRESS RELEASE

Rao Muhammad Akhtar - Private Secretary

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PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD

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Islamabad (March 21): Senator Professor Khurshid Ahmad has expressed his serious concern over the disturbing slow pace of utilization of the Federal Development Funds in the first six months of the current fiscal year. The data released by the Planning Commission is alarmingly disappointing. Only 29 per cent of the funds have been used in the first six months as against the 45-50 percent which has been the experience in the past. On the one hand the Government is claiming reduction in poverty on the basis of the statistics of which no details have been made public, but the official analysis of the Planning Commission shows that there has been serious under-utilization in sectors that have a direct bearing on the improvement of life for the people. While the average utilization is 29 per cent, the areas which are directly related to poverty reduction utilization is only between 5 to 10 per cent. The Ministry of Labour and Manpower have utilized only 1.2 per cent, Woman Development only 5.3 per cent, Local Government zero per cent, and Industries 5.7 per cent. On the other hand, allocations which have been over-utilized relate to the sectors of Defence and Atomic Energy Commission.

Prof. Khurshid Ahmad has expressed profound disappointment on the failure of the Government to give priority to social sectors and to ameliorate the lot of the poor and less-privileged. He also expressed his serious regrets about lack of proper management in the resource utilization. The uneven utilization if deliberate is a departure from declared policy and if inadvertent, it reveals absence of proper control, monitoring and effective mechanism for timely utilization of development funds.

Prof. Khurshid Ahmad demanded that the Parliamentary Committees on Economy should immediately take up this issue. This performance in respect of the Public Sector Development Budget, in spite of the Government's false claims about reduction in poverty and improvement of the people's living conditions, is alarmingly unsatisfactory.
