

### **Foreign loans rise to \$8.837 billion in April**

Total foreign loans acquired by the government rose to \$8.837 billion in April reflecting a rise of \$ 2.997 billion from March. This does not include \$6 billion loan from friendly countries - \$ 3 billion each from Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (with \$1 billion yet to be disbursed).

Total foreign loans acquired during July-April 2019 are \$14.837 billion, 45 percent higher than the amount in the comparable period of last year. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led government borrowed \$76.05 million from foreign commercial banks in April, bringing the total to \$3.183 billion under this head in the current fiscal year (July-April) 2018-19, compared to \$2.922 billion during the same period of last year.

The latest data of Economic Affairs Division (EAD) shows that the country provisionally received over \$8.837 billion of foreign assistance in the first ten months (July-April) of current financial year 2018-19, with loans from friendly countries not included, against \$9.6 billion during the same period of last year (2017-18), showing a reduction of about 8 percent.

The EAD data for April reflects \$2 billion under the China Safe deposit loan though it was acquired before April. The PML-N government had budgeted foreign assistance of \$9.69 billion for 2018-19 including \$394.34 million grant and \$9.297 billion loans, as shown in the EAD data.

The country received \$11.486 billion against the budgeted assistance of \$8.094 billion for 2017-18 including \$3.716 billion from foreign commercial banks. According to the latest figures, the country provisionally received \$330.52 million including \$321.56 million loans and \$8.96 million grants in April. The previous government had budgeted \$2 billion from foreign commercial banks for 2018-19, but borrowing under this head reached \$3.183 billion in April.

China Development Bank disbursed \$2.234 billion, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) \$300 million, the Suisse AG, UBL and ABL consortium \$295 million, Dubai Bank 184.44 million, Ajman Bank \$150.09 million and Noor Bank \$20 million during the current fiscal year (July-April). Multilaterals disbursed \$1.338 billion during the first ten months of the current fiscal year including Asian Development Bank (ADB) \$406.77 million, IDB (S-Term) \$572.37 million, International Development Association (IDA) \$205.89 million, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) \$17.53 million, IBRD \$44.11 million and Islamic Development Bank (IDB) \$5.80 million.

The country received \$3.653 billion from bilaterals including China \$1.999 billion, U.K \$80.40 million, USA \$63.82 million, France \$66.57 million, Saudi Arabia \$24.11 million, Germany \$14.50 million and Japan \$62.10 million. According to the EAD report, the country received \$8.619 billion in loans and \$218.09 million grants.

**TAHIR AMIN**