

No. PBS. CP&C-2(2)/2022
Government of Pakistan
M/o Planning, Development & Special Initiatives
Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
Islamabad

Subject: **MINUTES OF THE 2nd MEETING OF CENSUS MONITORING COMMITTEE HELD ON 26th JULY 2022**

The 2nd meeting of the Census Monitoring Committee (CMC) constituted by Council of Common Interest (CCI) was held on 26th July 2022 at 5.00 pm at 3rd floor P Block Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives (PD&SI) under chair of Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister PD&SI /Deputy Chairman Planning Commission to review the Progress of 7th population & Housing Census 2022. List of participants is at **Annexure A**.

2. Meeting started with the recitation of the Holy Quran. After a round of introduction, Dr. Naeem uz Zafar, Chief Statistician PBS briefed in detail on background and ongoing activities of 7th Population & Housing Census 2022. He informed that Letter of Intent (LOI) was initially issued to National Radio Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC) on 24th February 2022 for provision of tablets with allied accessories and Census Software, however, due to their abrupt pullout, more than 4 months of planning and contracting were lost. A meeting was held under chair of Minister PD&SI on 6th May 2022, where it was decided that consultations may be made with NADRA for early finalization of contract and devising revised timelines. After detailed deliberations, revised timelines were agreed which reduced the delay of 4 months to 2 months. Afterwards the revised timelines were endorsed by CMC in its first meeting held on 10th May 2022 and same were forwarded for approval of upcoming meeting of CCI.

2. Afterwards, the implementation status of decisions of 1st meeting of Census Monitoring Committee (CMC) was shared and it was informed that UNFPA has approached for provision of National/ International observers for monitoring of the Census Process. Minister PD&SI desired that relevant experts from academia may be involved in the monitoring of 7th Population & Housing Census process. Chief Statistician, PBS informed that Letter of Intent (LOI) was issued to NADRA on **14 May 2022 amounting to Rs. 13.41 Billion** for acquisition of software, hardware (126000 tablets with SIMs) and PBS paid **Rs. 2.25 Billion** in advance to NADRA for the acquisition of software and tablets. However, NADRA have not yet procured the tablets and provided the old tablets for Pilot Census, which created impediments in testing and implementation of Census Software. At this point, Mr. Tariq Malik, Chairman NADRA was asked to brief on the updates regarding the procurement process. Chairman NADRA informed that NADRA is working closely with PBS for timely provision of tablets & development of Census Software for national exercise of extreme importance as per agreed timelines. He further apprised the forum that due to delay in opening of Letter of Credit (LC), availability of Foreign Exchange allocation, NADRA is facing difficulties, which may hamper the whole process. It was informed that even if the LC is opened today, 130 days are needed for tablet consignments to reach Karachi and then 5-6 weeks further to harden the tablets for further distribution. It was also informed that even if tablets airlifted, maximum 3 to 4 weeks, delay can be avoided. *At this point Minister PD&SI emphasized that the Conduct of Census 2022 as per decision of CCI is of extreme importance and highly sensitive matter due to its linkage with conduct of Next General Elections, **therefore, no delay in the activities will be accepted. He directed that the results of 7th Population & Housing Census 2022 must be ready by 15th February 2023 to avoid constitutional crises regarding conduct of next General Elections 2023. He reiterated that NADRA***

strictly adhere to the agreed timelines and necessary action must be taken for timely provision of tablets & allied accessories to PBS. He assured NADRA, if needed he may ask Pakistan Embassy to extend full support to NADRA for early acquisition of tablets from China through Chinese government.

3. Mr. Yousaf Khan, Secretary CCI suggested that 15000 tablets used in National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) by BISP may be utilized for the Census activities. At this point, it was informed that 15000 tablets will not serve the purpose as PBS requires 126000 customized and hardened tablets. Further, PBS is already facing severe problems in the pilot census due to provision of old and used tablets by NADRA.

4. Mr. Zafar Ali Shah, Secretary PD&SI asked Chairman NADRA to check the availability of tablets from different vendors in the country to avoid the delay in procurement of tablets. It was informed by NADRA that customized tablets especially designed as per requirements of PBS will be procured from China keeping in view the sensitivity/confidentiality of data.

After detailed deliberations the following decision were made: -

Decisions:

- *Minister PD&SI directed that the results of 7th Population & Housing Census 2022 must be ready by 15th February 2023 as per decision of CCI for delimitation for upcoming General Elections, to avoid constitutional crises. Therefore, NADRA strictly adhere to the agreed timelines for provision of tablets and allied accessories to PBS.*
- *It was also decided that the relevant experts from academia may be involved for monitoring of Population & Housing Census process*

5. Chief Statistician further briefed that Pilot Census being conducted in the 33 districts in all over Pakistan, AJK & GB for testing tools including hardware & software, field operation & security mechanism to identify the major issues and the gaps for timely addressing the shortcomings before the full rollout. Minister PD&SI advised that exercise may also be conducted in some districts which have severe weather conditions in winter to test whole system as the full rollout will be conducted in October – November 2022.

6. Moreover, Chief Statistician, informed that the field operation of Census are the responsibility of Provinces and all activities are carried out by Provincial staff provided by provinces from Education, Population Welfare, Local government & Revenue Departments. He apprised regarding qualification of the staff and also informed that training is the most critical part for the foundation of quality data, therefore provinces/ regions were requested to provide detail of venues at Division and Tehsil level with necessary requirements for Digital Census like electricity, multimedia, laptop, internet connectivity and space along with list of trainers. However, till now only 150 census districts out of 495 have provided the information which need immediate action as the training for full rollout will be commencing from first week of September 2022.

After detail deliberations following decision was made:

Decision

- Minister directed Provinces to resolve training venues availability issue and provision of trainers for training within a week, as information from majority (340 Census Districts) is still pending. PBS may write a DO letter with Ministers Signature on the issue to provinces immediately. He further asked Secretary PD&SI to coordinate with Chief Secretaries for the early provision of information.

7. Regarding Security arrangements of field operations, Brigadier Obaid Khan, OPS & Coord Army Census Security Center informed that their ***role will be in Quick response mode (QRF) in synchronization with Provincial law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to avoid any untoward incident during 7th Population & Housing Census 2022. Further dedicated security of Provincial LEAs will be employed with enumerators.*** At this point, Chief Statistician, PBS informed that as per CCI decision, **“Armed Forces shall be engaged to accompany the enumerators for security purpose only. The conduct of Census is exclusively done by enumerators”**. He added that the decision of engaging armed forces to accompany the enumerators was taken after detailed deliberations at various forums, keeping in view the sensitivity of this national exercise of Paramount importance. *It is informed that the main objective was to lend credibility to whole process as the accompanying of Armed forces with enumerators not only able to avoid the untoward experience but also worked as deterrence against false and exaggerated reporting.* This is based on the PBS experience of conduct of 1990 and 2011 house listing operations (HLO) which were conducted without the support of Armed forces and eventually the CCI discarded the results of HLO 2011 due to overreporting of population which is demographically not possible. Subsequently for conduct of Census 2017, CCI considered the summary of defunct Statistics Division and approved to conduct the 2017 census operations with man to man deployment of armed forces as done in 1998 census to bring credibility to the whole process. PBS experience was shared in the Census Advisory Committee (CAC) constituted for devising recommendations for conduct of 7th Population & Housing Census and subsequently recommended by CAC after due deliberations for forwarding to Cabinet and CCI. The cabinet and CCI accepted point of view of PBS regarding engagement of armed forces for accompanying the enumerators for reliable and quality data.

8. Col Muhammad Jahanzeb Iftikhar, DD (Addl), Directorate of Military operations, informed that decision of the Armed forces to accompany enumerators was not taken with consultation of Armed Forces, however, Armed forces have devised the security plan as per the local requirements in coordination with Police which is being tested in the Pilot Census being carried out nowadays. He also clarified that responsibility of the data security rest with PBS& NADRA.

9. Minister PD&SI informed that the Council of Common Interest (CCI) is the highest forum mandated for decision regarding Census and any decision made by CCI is binding on all the institutions for strict compliance. Further, if there is any change in the implementation of the decision, it must be presented before CCI for approval. He further added that Conduct of Population census is crucial national exercise linked with provision of data for key policy making matters regarding development programs, political representation & resource allocation which have far reaching impacts. Being a critical exercise, it will always invite close scrutiny and critique as that there is negative incentive associated with census data such as resources allocation therefore, it is feared that figures may be inflated to get more financial resources and seats in National & Provincial assemblies. He further added that field staff and the police both are locals and provincial employees can easily be influenced therefore in order to avoid such issues, services of Armed forces are being utilized. DD(Addl) Dte. of Military operations assured that matter will be discussed in the Armed Forces conference to be held on 28th July 2022 regarding census security matters.

Agenda #2: Collection of data of Migrants from Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK)

10. Chief Statistician, PBS informed that Prime Minister Azad Jammu & Kashmir has written to letter to Minister PD&SI and drawn attention **for reckoning details of refugees from Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) for the time being, living in Pakistan separately.**

11. Chaudry Mukhtar Member (BOR), AJ&K briefed the Committee regarding the matter and informed that population data of the refugees living in Pakistan is highly desirable for academic/ *political purposes to study the effects of Indian subjugation and perpetual denial of right to self-determination of the People of the State of Jammu and Kashmir; which can also be safely used for the purposes of electoral rolls of constituencies of AJ&K Legislative Assembly for planning purposes.* Therefore, they have requested that in 7th Population and Housing Census-2022, ***the data of refugees living in Pakistan may be collected through addition of a column in the existing data collection form.*** Minister PD&SI enquired from PBS regarding its inclusion if technically possible. Chief Statistician, PBS informed that questionnaire has already been finalized and approved by the CCI. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, Member (SS/RM)) proposed that as this is sensitive issue so the matter may be resolved through involvement of Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Kashmir Affairs & Northern Areas (KANA). Minister PD&SI asked Secretary PD&SI to work closely with the said ministries to resolve the issue.

Decisions:

- Secretary PD&SI to work closely with the Secretary Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Kashmir Affairs & Northern Areas (KANA) for resolving the issue amicably for collection of data at the earliest.
12. At the end Minister PD&SI, directed that
- Progress report on census regarding targets/achievements/ and other critical items may be furnished to Minister office on weekly basis.
 - Letter of Credit issue be monitored daily and progress conveyed to Minister office
13. Meeting ended with vote of thanks to and from the chair.

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS OF SECOND MEETING OF CENSUS MONITORING
COMMITTEE HELD ON 26TH JULY, 2022**

Physical Attendance

1. Mr. Muhammad Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of PD&SI / DCPC (Chairman)
2. Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Secretary PD&SI, Islamabad
3. Mr. Tariq Malik, Chairman NADRA, Islamabad
4. Mr. Dawood Muhammad Bareach, Additional Secretary, PD&SI, Islamabad
5. Dr. Naeem uz Zafar, Chief Statistician, PBS, Islamabad
6. Brig. Obaid, Director, OPS & Coord ACSC, GHQ, Rawalpindi
7. Mr. Miraj Gul, Managing Director, National Telecommunication Corporation Islamabad
8. Mr. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, Member (Support Services/ RM), PBS, Islamabad
9. Mr. Ayazuddin, Member (Census & Surveys), PBS, Islamabad
10. Col Muhammad Jahanzeb Iftikhar, DD (Addl), M. O. Directorate, GHQ, Rawalpindi
11. Ms. Quratulain Malik, Additional Commissioner, Islamabad
12. Mr. Gohar Ahmed Khan, Chief Projects Officer, NADRA, Islamabad
13. Mr. Qaiser Iqbal, Director (Proj), NADRA, Islamabad
14. Mr. Shafqat Abbas, Deputy Secretary, PD&SI, Islamabad
15. Mr. Amjad Ali Awan, Director (IT), NTC, Islamabad
16. Mr. Faiq Ali, Deputy Director, NADRA, Islamabad
17. Mr. Zahoor Ahmed Khan, Director EMIS AJK
18. Ms. Sobia Munawar, Director, PBS, Islamabad
19. Mr. Muhammad Yasir Ishfaq, Director, PBS, Islamabad
20. Mr. Muhammad Ehtesham, Director, PBS, Islamabad

Virtual Attendance

1. Mr. Abdul Aziz Uqali, Chief Secretary, Balochistan
2. Dr. Shahzad Khan Bangash, Chief Secretary, KP
3. Mr. Kamran Ali Afzal, Chief Secretary, Punjab
4. Mr. Yusuf Khan, Secretary CCI, Islamabad
5. Mr. Hassan Naqvi, Chairman Planning & Development Department, Sindh
6. Syed Zaheer-ul-Islam, Secretary Local Government, KP
7. Mr. Mohtasim Billah, Secretary Elementary and Secondary, Education, KP
8. Mr. Ashique Hussain Shaikh, DDG PID, Islamabad
9. Mr. Ashfaq Ahmed, DG Networks, NADRA, Islamabad
10. Mr. Aftab Alam, RSU, Education Department, Sindh
11. Dr. Liaquat Hussain, Senior Member Board of Revenue, AJ&K, Muzaffarabad
12. Mr. Wali Khan, SMBR, Additional Charge Secretary, Home Department, GB
13. Mr. Junaid Samo, RSU, Education Department, Sindh
14. Mr. Khaliq-ur-Rehman, Director BoS, KP
15. Raja Ijaz Khan, Secretary Local Government and RDD, AJ&K

16. Mr. Shakeel Ahmed Abro, Additional Secretary, Member Board of Revenue, Sindh
17. Mr. Shaukat Ali Khan, Director, PBS, Peshawar
18. Representative School Education Department, Punjab, Lahore
19. Representative, Home Department, KP
