

PRESS RELEASE

**Fifth Meeting of Census Monitoring Committee held under the chair of Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives (PD&SI) at National Census Coordination Centre (N3C), PBS Head quarter, Islamabad**

**Minister PD&SI directed all stakeholders to follow the timelines of Census and assure transparent, credible, and reliable Census**

Islamabad 17<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2023, As per decisions of Council of Common Interest (CCI), Pakistan Bureau of Statistics is working extensively to meet the challenging timelines to conduct first ever **Digital census** of Pakistan. In this regard, fifth meeting of Census Monitoring Committee was held on 17<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023 at 3:30pm at National Census Coordination Centre (N3C) under the chair of Prof Ahsan Iqbal, Minister PD&SI. Census Monitoring Committee was constituted in pursuance of decision taken in 49<sup>th</sup> meeting of Council of Common Interest (CCI) held on 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2022 to oversee/monitor Census activities to ensure expeditious, transparent and credible census conduct. The meeting was attended by Members of Committee from all relevant departments and stakeholders which includes relevant Federal Ministries, Administration of all Provincial and Area governments, DG Military Operations Directorate, NADRA, NTC etc. The main purpose of the meeting was to update all stakeholders about progress / ongoing activities of 7<sup>th</sup> Population & Housing Census, take decisions on methodology of Census in the snow bound areas, and decide take decisions on issue of on overlapping of National events with Census timelines.

Dr. Naeem uz Zafar, Chief Census Commissioner (PBS), presented in detail the progress on 7<sup>th</sup> Population & Housing Census related activities. He informed that 495 Census Support Centers have been established where trained staff is deputed. Provinces have allocated 120,000 Census Field Staff. Pilot Census was successfully conducted in 33 districts. 125,500 Tablets were hardened and delivered to 495 Census Support Centre and training of 121,000 Field Staff is in progress since 7<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2023 at 992 venues. However, problems were faced in attendance in all provinces especially Sindh & Punjab. He further added that NADRA has informed that all the requirements including The security audit will be completed soon and after security audit, Self Enumeration may be launched depending on provision of required Backend Infrastructure by NTC.

This was followed by presenting the overlapping national events with the census timelines and availability of security personnel. Keeping in view the extreme cold weather, methodology of Census field operation in the snowbound areas was also discussed. Issuance of memorable postal ticket to mark the conduct of first ever digital census was also discussed. Dr. Naeem further requested the chair that census is a federation strengthening exercise therefore launch of Self-Enumeration portal and start of Field Enumeration may please be done in a manner to seize the opportunity to increase national integrity. To achieve this end, Self-Enumeration and Field enumeration should be inaugurated by President or Prime Minister at Federal level, and Provincial Administrations at their respective levels.

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives emphasized on the authenticity of Census process which is a huge National exercise. He said there should be no compromise on timelines. Census should be transparent and will be successful with the joint efforts of all organizations involved. Provinces should be onboard and consensus must be made on all issues to avoid any controversy and effective utilization of resources. Standard SOPs should be followed in all Provinces for bringing uniformity and consistency in the whole process. He advised NTC to strictly follow the case of oracle Exadata as it is core component for backup optimal solution. He asked provinces to ensure availability of teaching staff for enumeration and security staff and stressed to share their security plans as soon as possible. He emphasized NADRA that all requested modules of software should be up to mark. He asked to implement strict consistency and quality checks as the data will be respondent based.

Mr. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, Member (RM/SS) informed that the basic purpose of Census is Planning and Policy making and this census has been planned by following UN principles and taking on board all concerns of stakeholders, therefore it will definitely serve the purpose.

Then, Members from other Departments were invited to share their point of view. All the Provinces assured their full support for the successful conduct of national activity. Minister PD&SI appreciated the efforts of PBS to bring transparency and credibility in the process and direct to strictly follow the timelines for provision of data to Election Commission of Pakistan for conduct of General Election 2023.



**Prof Ahsan Iqbal, Minister PD & SI chairing 5<sup>th</sup> Census Monitoring Committee Meeting in National Census Coordination Centre (N3C), PBS Head Quarter, Islamabad**



