

PRESS RELEASE

2nd MEETING OF CENSUS MONITORING COMMITTEE HELD ON 26th July, 2022

2nd meeting of the Census Monitoring Committee to oversee/ monitor Census activities to ensure an expeditious, transparent and credible census operation was held on 26th July, 2022 under chair of Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission (DCPC) at Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Pak Secretariat Islamabad. The main objective of the meeting was to review Progress of the Pilot Census. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretaries of all provinces/ regions with relevant Secretaries, Additional Commissioner Islamabad, DG Military Operations Directorate, Chairman NADRA, MD NTC and senior officers from Education, Local Government, Finance, and PBS.

Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister/ Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, emphasized that the population census is an important and critical exercise so it should be completed in February 2023 by utilizing all the possible resources. He directed the Chief Secretaries to assure their full cooperation and give full support to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in this process to make this census successful. He also directed NADRA that they should expedite the process of procurement of tablets and accessories for conduct of digital census as the exercise of paramount importance due to linkages with resource allocation and delimitation of constituencies. Any delay in the process will create constitutional crises as conduct of next General election of 2023 depends of the census 2022. He appreciated the role of Pak Army in this process and emphasized to provide fool proof security to the enumerators in this whole census process. He also assured full support of government for successful conduct of this gigantic task.

Dr. Naeem uz Zafar, Chief Statistician sensitized the relevant departments by presenting the progress and issues of PBS related to Pilot Census. He further explained that PBS has started Pilot Census of 7th Population & Housing Census-2022 for testing tools, technology, field operation & security mechanism, communication strategy etc. in 33 selected Administrative Districts (417 Blocks) w.e.f 20th July, 2022 all over Pakistan, including AJK and GB. Training to enumerators for the Pilot Census was imparted at 27 stations in Pakistan.

For the field operation the responsibility of provision of security rest with Armed Forces with the involvement of Civil Armed Forces and Police of respective Government. NADRA will provide tablets and census software, however, data infrastructure (Computing and storage) is the responsibility of National Telecom Corporation (NTC). Similarly, SUPARCO is also awarded contract for the provision of high resolution imagery for coverage and Geo Tagging.

On the other hand, the State of AJ&K has 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 and fir planning purposes as well. Therefore, 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.

Participants from other Departments and provinces were also invited to share their point of view and all the queries raised by provinces were addressed. The participants appreciated the efforts of PBS to bring transparency and confidentiality and suggested to form working Committees for smooth functioning of Census process. All the Chief Secretaries assured their cooperation to fulfil this National Task. This meeting was an effort of PBS to involve all stakeholders for the successful Pilot Census process. Due to presence of relevant persons from provinces and departments, the

meeting proved to be the best forum to resolve issues and queries of all Departments related to Pilot Census process and present progress and ambiguities of PBS to all concerns well before time.

