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PRESS RELEASE

Minister reviews ongoing exercise of Digital Census

April 12 Islamabad: Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday directed to constitute Committee consisting of Secretary Planning, Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Provincial Chief Secretaries and Chief Census Commissioner, Dr Naeem uz Zafar to devise a mechanism and to look into the matter of undercount in big cities and suggest a way forward to resolve the issue to assure a transparent and credible Census Field Operation.

The Minister made these directions while chairing a meeting via Zoom to review progress over the ongoing exercise of Census Field Operation. The meeting was attended by the chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah, Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque, Chief Census Commissioner, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), Dr Naeem uz Zafar, Secretary Planning Commission Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Chairman National Database and Registration Authority NADRA, Managing Director NTC, SPARCO and other stakeholders.

Planning Minister Iqbal directed PBS to constitute Committee comprising of Secretary Planning, Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Provincial Chief Secretaries and Chief Census Commissioner, Dr Naeem uz Zafar to devise a mechanism to look into the matter of undercount in big cities and suggest a way forward to resolve the issue to assure a transparent and credible Census Field Operation. He further directed to call the Census Monitoring Committee to discuss further deliberation in order to complete the deadline. During the meeting the Minister also directed SPARCO to conduct the geo-tagging to identify the count of missing slums.

Earlier, Chief Census Commissioner briefly explained the achieved targets, highlighted the problematic areas (i.e., under coverage in big cities, high rise buildings and Slum areas and explained that PBS has appointed monitoring teams to find gaps in low coverage areas to investigate the real issue. He claimed that a major cause of low coverage is under reporting by the Field Enumerators. Dashboards have been provided to all concerns and this claim can be easily verified. He requested provincial functionaries to be more vigilant to resolve this administrative issue.

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