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PRESS RELEASE

Pakistan's First-Ever Digital Census – Largest Digital Census Activity of its kind in South Asia Launches with Great Success -

Islamabad, February 27, 2023: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics started the 7th Housing and Population census process on February 20, 2023, with an option to self-enumerate through the specially designed <https://self.pbs.gov.pk> portal. The response from the public has been great with over 4 million people visiting the portal in just a few days. This is the first of its kind digital census in South Asia. The self-enumeration option will continue till March 3, 2023, while the field enumeration will start on March 1, 2023.

While speaking at a press conference held today in Islamabad, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Mr. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, Member (Support Services/Resource Management), shared that "Pakistan is making history with the first-ever digital census and Pakistan is the first country in South Asia who is conducting not only the digital activity of huge level but also taken initiative of launching of self-enumeration portal (first country of south Asia to launch portal) Pakistan Bureau of Statistics shares with great pride that the people are participating actively and stakeholders are appreciating and supporting the exercise."

He explained the digitised census approach and methodology extensively. He informed that extensive system for the Digital Census has been devised after comparative studies of region/ globe and all stakeholders have been taken in to confidence. PBS has worked with different government organizations and provincial governments for successful activity of this exercise of paramount importance. He informed that PBS has established 495 census support centres all over Pakistan fully equipped with IT facilities and trained staff of PBS and NADRA for technical assistance to the enumerators. 121000 field staff provided from provincial governments have been extensively trained and 126000 tablets with SIMs with compatible network have been provided for secure transformation of data. He said that as with any first-time technology initiative, there are some minor issues that are being reported, which have been communicated to NADRA, who is taking care of the technology solutions behind the census. Mr Gondal was grateful for the positive feedback as it is helping NADRA improve their systems.

Responding to a question regarding concerns being raised on the process from Sindh, in particular Karachi, Balochistan and a few other quarters, Mr Sarwar Gondal, Member SSRM, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics shared that prior to the census extensive and intensive consultations were held at levels, especially with provincial stakeholders to explain the complete digital process. The apprehensions being raised are due to a lack of understanding of what the census process entails. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics is once again engaging with the stakeholders to explain the facts and clear all misunderstandings to ensure that the census is being held in a transparent manner, counting each and every one living in Pakistan, at the

location they are living in for provision of services as per requirement for policy planning. He informed that traditionally census is decennial activity, however keeping in view the rapidly changing realities and digital transformation, worldwide now census is being conducted every 5 years for provision of updated data for policy & Planning. It is for this reason that a digitized methodology with geo tagging of every structure was chosen for this census for provision of timely and credible data with broader acceptability. He also informed that this census will also provide the frame for conducting Pakistan first ever Economic Census which will provide basis for Economic planning of country.


Further explaining the census objective, Mr Gondal shared that “as per the General Statistics Reorganization Act 2011 and UN Conventions, census is a national duty to inform policymaking, future planning and development for the progress of the country. Participation in the census is mandatory and providing reliable information is a civic duty for everyone living in Pakistan.”

Mr Gondal emphasized people should be careful of fake news and misinformation. Any slander to the national census is dishonesty to the country and to the people. Census is our national duty and together we have to make this first-ever digital census a global success.

While responding to questions, Mr Gondal also shared the details of how the safety and security of the data has been secured. He assured that over 100,000 fully trained enumerators will be using tablets to fill out census information visiting door to door, while geo-tagging the structures.

He said that “we urge each and every one to actively participate in the census either through self-enumeration at <https://self.pbs.gov.pk> or with the help of enumerators who will be visiting door to door from March 1, 2023.”

Staying true to the principles of honesty and integrity, fulfilling its main mandate and the decision of the Council of Common Interest (CCI), Pakistan Bureau of Statistics is conducting the first-ever digital census with the objective of providing credible, transparent and timely data for decision-making. The digitization of the census guarantees transparency, accountability and efficiency.


(Muhammad Sarwar Gondal)
Member (Support Services)
Official Spokesperson PBS

Some Glimpse from Press Conference





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