

REPORT

PAKISTAN

NATIONAL DIGITAL CENSUS

2023

IMPACT ON KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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Pakistan National Digital Census 2023 and its impact on KP Province

Introduction:

The 2023 National Census in Pakistan holds particular importance, serving as a crucial source of information for understanding the country's population dynamics. This report, meticulously crafted by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Pakistan, sheds light on the intricacies of the census results and their potential impact on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. This document has been prepared by Eng. Irfan Ullah and assisted by Muhammad Murtaza, both IRS associates. It is meticulously curated to furnish a comprehensive report, offering detailed insights into the Pakistan National Digital Census and its consequential impact on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.

As experts and politicians express their concerns over the implications of the 2023 National Census, this post-seminar report serves as a vital resource, offering insights that transcend numerical data and delve into the potential socio-economic ramifications for the dynamic region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This report, prepared by IRS, strives to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse surrounding the census results, fostering a nuanced understanding of their implications for the province and beyond. I am particularly thankful to my elder brother Muhammad Javed Khalil who provided all the facts and figures to make this report woeful.

Dr Muhammad Iqbal Khalil
Chairman IRS Peshawar

Executive Summary

The constitution of Pakistan requires that a population census be held every ten years, as a result resources be allocated based on the latest census, as well as for sampling frames, constituency delimitation, appointment, and policy planning in future. The seventh and first ever digital national census was conducted by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics from March 1, 2023, to May 30, 2023. After the approval of the census results on 5th August 2023 the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Peshawar, a Premiere think tank Organization of Pakistan conducted a seminar titled “National Census 2023 and its impact on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province” on 10 August 2023.

KP Political Leaders and statistical experts participated in the seminar and highlighted the following concerns:

1. Constitutionality of the census results approval
2. Objections to the digital census of 2023 discrepancies raised by all provinces – reflects a problem with the overall census process.
3. Undercounting KP household size 8.06 members per household in 2017 and 6.97 household members in 2023
4. Decline in KP population growth rate 2.82% in 2017 vs 2.38% in 2023 digital census compared to national growth rate of 2.55%.
5. Impact on allocation of resources to KP and its representation in assemblies and NFC award
6. Lack of transparency and quality assurance checks - data collection integrity.

“Observations of the Participants of the Seminar”

The above high-level issues were highlighted by the KP Provincial leaders representing all major political parties and experts:

- Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Khalil – Chairman IRS (Institute of Regional Studies)
- Inayat Ullah Khan - Leader Jamaat e Islami KP, Pakistan
- Ahmad Khan Kundi – Leader Pakistan People’s Party KP, Pakistan
- Salahuddin Khan – Leader Awami National Party KP, Pakistan
- Jawaid Iqbal Khalil – Renowned Banking and Statistical expert KP, Pakistan
- Dr. Fazl Ur Rehman Qureshi– Professor Qurtaba University Peshawar, Pakistan

“Concern Over the Results of Census 2023”

Addressing the seminar organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Peshawar on "National Census 2023 and its impact on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa", experts and leaders of various political parties have expressed concern by saying that the population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been shown to be less than the actual population in the census 2023, which will not only affect the representation of the province in the form of a reduction in the seats of the province in the National Assembly, but the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's share in the distribution of resources based on population in the NFC award will also have to be borne in the form of a loss of Rs.2 trillion.

IRS Chairman Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Khalil, former senior provincial minister of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Inayatullah Khan, former member of provincial assembly of Pakistan People’s Party Ahmed Khan Kundi, former member of provincial assembly of Awami National Party Salahuddin, Statistical expert Javed Khalil and Prof. Dr. Fazl ur Rehman Qureshi spoke at the seminar.

The speakers said that the new census will have a negative impact on KP as the population growth of the province has been shown to be lower than the average population growth of the country while some districts have recorded a decrease in population. They said that the Council of common Interests (CCI) is incomplete and the caretaker

government does not have the power to approve the census results. The speakers felt that the caretaker governments of KP and Punjab had violated their mandate and constitution by approving the census results while the CCI in the present composition had no right to approve the results. They urged the political forces raise your voice for the rights of the province.

Inayatullah Khan said that there is anxiety among the people of the province over the results of the census. Millions of people belonging to KP are living abroad and the rules should be relaxed to enumerate them. The JI leader said that in several areas of the province, the number of families has decreased instead of increasing, which is incomprehensible and worrisome. He said that the delimitation of the constituencies of the National Assembly will be done on the basis of population, due to which there is a serious fear of reduction in the seats of KP, especially the merged tribal districts. He added that 82 percent of the National Finance Commission (NFC) shares are distributed on the basis of population and the alleged lapses in the recent census will hurt KP a lot.

Ahmad Khan Kundi said that the census is very important for policy making and planning as most of the resources are distributed on the basis of population. The PPP leader said that ignoring the results of the recent census would be tantamount to criminal negligence. He said questions were being raised on the digital census as more families than individuals were recorded in KP. He said that he will raise this long-standing problem of the province on every platform, regardless of party affiliation. Aham Kundi said that the tragedy of East Pakistan also happened as a result of imbalance in population and resources, but unfortunately, we have not learned from the past.

Salahuddin Khan Masud said that injustice has been happening to KP and this process continues till date. He said that the province is not being given its constitutional rights and ANP will not remain silent on this injustice. This important issue will be raised strongly in the meetings of the working committee and the provincial council.

Speaking at the seminar, expert on provincial rights Javed Khalil said that it is surprising that even in the 70s, tribal districts had six seats in the National Assembly and now six seats have been allocated for them in 2023 as usual which is unbelievable. He said that on the one hand, developing countries like India, Malaysia and Korea also give special importance to census and distribution of resources on the basis of population, but unfortunately, here in Pakistan it is done behind closed doors in such meetings whose constitution is doubtful. He said that the interim provincial governments do not have the mandate to decide on this important issue related to the fate of the people of the provinces. He said that the seats of Balochistan have been increased from seven to seventeen since the 70s until now, while the seats of tribal districts have been decreased from twelve to just six, which is open injustice to Pakhtuns.

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Khalil said that KP has shown the lowest population growth rate. He said that the difference between the National Assembly seats in KP and Sindh was only one. He said that in the same way, one less seat will be made for women from the province. Six National Assembly seats taken from KP will be given to Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan. Each province will get two seats. This is not acceptable to KP and there is a need to raise a united voice against it.

He said that IRS is a Peshawar based think tank, which has been highlighting the problems of the province and the region for the past several years. These activities will be expanded in the near future.

“Pakistan National Census and its impact on KP”

1. Constitutionality of the census results approval of Digital Census of 2023 by CCI (council of Common Interest)

According to the 1973 constitution of Pakistan

Article 153: Council of Common Interest

1. There shall be a Council of Common Interests, in this Chapter referred to as the Council, to be appointed by the President.

2. The Council shall consist of –

- a. the Prime Minister who shall be the Chairman of the Council.
- b. the Chief Ministers of the Provinces; and
- c. three members from the Federal Government to be nominated by the Prime Minister from time to time.

3. 90[***]

4. The Council shall be responsible to Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) and shall submit an Annual Report to both House of Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament)

However, the member of CCI representing KP & signatory to the approval of the council was not elected but filling in as a caretaker Chief minister. The provincial Chief Minister representing a province in CCI for the approval of the census results must be elected not in a caretaker capacity.

2. Objections to digital census of 2023 discrepancies raised by all provinces – reflects a problem with the process across the board.

Controversy raised by Sindh Province: Before the outset of the digital census, members of the Sindhi intelligentsia and nationalist parties in Sindh raised their concerns. They demanded the federal government postpone the census, since many parts of Sindh were still under water and a large population is displaced. A provincial level event titled “Census 2023, A Sindh Perspective” was organized by the Sindhi Association of North America (SANA) in collaboration with mainstream and nationalist political parties, and civil society activists in Karachi on February 25.

They put forth their demand that the digital census be postponed, as hundreds of thousands of flood-hit people in Sindh have still not returned to their homes. 1.7 million houses in 23 districts of Sindh were wiped out in the devastating rains and floods of 2022. All the infrastructure of Sindh was destroyed.

The Sindh government has also expressed serious concerns for excluding those parts of the province where “population growth rate has been recorded higher than a certain benchmark” and warned that the province would reject the result if its reservations were not addressed.

Refer to the following web page for details:

Controversy Over Digital Census Brewing in Sindh
(thefridaytimes.com)

“Controversy raised by Baluchistan Province”

The census staff is yet to reach the people living in sub urban parts of the province. What to speak about the remote areas of the province, which covers half of the country in terms of area and houses only 6% population of entire Pakistan.

Specific law and order situations, rugged mountains, long distances, plains, and administrative issues make it very difficult to make sure proper and accurate counting of all individuals in Balochistan, specifically using Geo fencing technology due to unavailability of cell towers to make wireless connection.

As per the 2017 national census, Balochistan makes hardly 6% population of the entire country. Indeed, this is equal to salt in the flour. It is ironic fate if this meager population is not counted properly during the census of 2023.

The data integrity is not because of the access to the population living in sub urban, parts of the province. Refer to the following web page for details:

Flaws in the Balochistan census (quettavoices.com)

“Controversy raised by Punjab Province”

The results of the country’s first digital census place the count for Punjab at 116.8 million, according to the PBS, which accounts for a little less than half of Pakistan’s total population. The results, however,

have drawn concern from both political parties and citizens, who believe the numbers will be manipulated to reshape constituencies for the next elections.

Syed Waleed Ahmed, a resident of Baghbanpura, Lahore, shared that he and his two brothers live in the same house with their mother. All three brothers are married, and they have separate portions in the house. Waleed Ahmed mentioned that on the day the census team visited their house, they provided all the information on a simple piece of paper. When they asked the census team why they were not doing online entry since the government provided tablets, they were told that they would do this work sitting at home.

Similar statements were given by Azmi Khan, Robina Ahmed, and Aisha Amer, who are residents of a renowned society in Lahore. These women said that the census team did not collect much information from them. They were asked about their educational background, and their ages were roughly written on a simple piece of paper. They stated that it seems like the field staff of the census might have been instructed not to enter data in real time. Aisha Amer said that she filled out her own survey form online and provided the code to the survey team, but she does not know if the team used that code.

Azhar Khalid, a political analyst and human rights activist, stated in an interview with The Express Tribune that there were several flaws in the digital census. He mentioned that he had long meetings with the census team, and he told them that he had shifted his current residence to another block in the society after some time. However, the team did not reflect the change of residence in their data.

Khalid claimed such tactics were used deliberately to increase the vote bank of specific political parties in Punjab's electoral constituencies and reduce the vote count of opponents. The members of a single family have been counted as one in different areas. He said that these results will undoubtedly be used in the upcoming elections' constituency demarcations. He added that the decreased population ratio in Punjab

and its impact on the seats in the National Assembly is a clear example of how the digital census has been politically exploited.

Refer to the following web page for details:

More than a count: insights from Pakistan's first digital census (tribune.com.pk)

Skepticism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

There have been complaints that the staff which was hired was neither trained nor equipped with the gadgets which were required for the digital process. Imran, a resident of Qambrani Road said that “Only our house was marked in the recent census, but no one came in the house to conduct the proper process of the census at all.”

Similar concerns were raised by residents in KP. Waris Shah a student of the Statistics Department of the University of Peshawar said that although the PBS involved teachers to carry out the digital census, most of them did not know the digital approach and there were chances that the wrong figures could have been added. “In the area where I am living, no one came to ask for the census. Although an online form was available, most of the people in village did not know how to fill these forms,” he shared. Criticizing the current method, he suggested the PBS would have been better served by recruiting staff on a permanent basis and training them specifically for the digital approach.

A PBS official from KP, speaking on condition of anonymity, shared that the headcount had only been 90 per cent completed in the province. “In areas which were snowed in or where the law-and-order situation isn't good, we will start the census exercise soon,” he said. He added that the PBS is committed to completing the digital census before October and if some areas, for any reason, remain inaccessible, an approximate number will be calculated to complete the exercise, a practice he claimed other countries use as well.

Refer to the following web page for details: More than a count:

insights from Pakistan's first digital census (tribune.com.pk)

3. Undercounting KP household size 8.06 members per household in 2017 and 6.97 household members in 2023

One of the seminar panel experts raised concerns of KP household negative growth rate, is an indication of excluding KP expatriates in the 2023 population census, if the 8% of KP population is added that will make up for the household deficit, see **table below**:

4. Negative Growth rate of KP in 2023 VS 1998/2017 Census:

Pakistani population in the middle east as of 2023 - Wikipedia		KP population in ME	KP Household size 2023 in Pakistan	KP Population in ME equivalent to Household size	% KP Population in ME
	Saudi Arabia	2,714,684	1,900,279		
	United Arab Emirates	1,600,000	1,120,000		
	Kuwait	339,033	237,323		
	Oman	250,092	175,064		
	Qatar	235,505	164,854		
	Bahrain	117,000	81,900		
	Afghanistan	102,500	71,750		
Total		5,422,448	3,751,170	5,883,007	465,406 8%

Annual Growth rate nationwide:

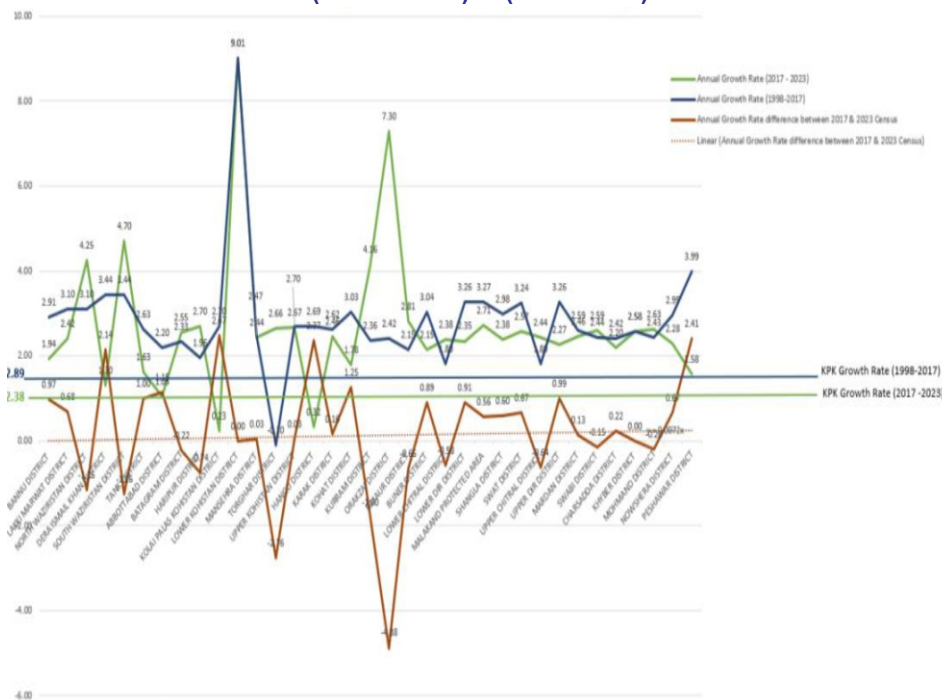
District Population Growth Rate 2.55% as compared to 2.89 nationally: KP



Across all the districts of KP the highest average population growth rate as observed in lower Kohistan at 9.01 annually between 2017 and 2023 followed by Orakzai and Upper Kohistan. The lowest average population growth rate was in Hangu at .32% annually followed by Abbottabad and Dera Ismail Khan.

Based on the data retrieved from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 12

KP District Level Population Growth Rate Chart (1998 - 2017) & (2017-2023)

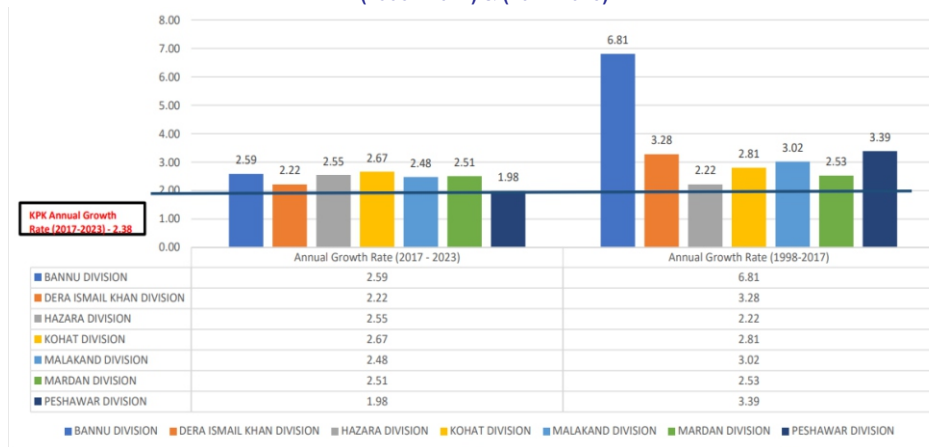


districts out of 35 KP districts are showing negative growth rate as compared to the last census of 1998/2017. Which is raising concerns and doubts of the KP leaders about the digital census of 2023, had it been conducted using the good old method of paper and pencil the results would've been significantly different?

Name of Admin Unit	Households	Pop 2023	Pop 2017	Pop Change (2017 & 2023)	Annual Growth Rate (2017 - 2023)	Annual Growth Rate (1998 - 2017)
KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA	5,883,007	40,856,097	35,501,964	5,354,133	2.38	
BANNU DIVISION	414,765	3,092,078	2,652,867	439,211	2.59	
BANNU DISTRICT	183,246	1,357,890	1,210,183	147,707	1.94	
LAKKI MARWAT DISTRICT	131,894	1,040,856	902,138	138,718	2.42	
NORTH WAZIRISTAN DISTRICT	99,625	693,332	540,546	152,786	4.25	
DERA ISMAIL KHAN DIVISION	519,548	3,188,779	2,795,853	392,926	2.22	
DERA ISMAIL KHAN DISTRICT	270,189	1,829,811	1,693,594	136,217	1.30	
SOUTH WAZIRISTAN DISTRICT	178,665	888,675	675,215	213,460	4.70	
TANK DISTRICT	70,694	470,293	427,044	43,249	1.63	
HAZARA DIVISION	1,003,686	6,188,736	5,323,155	865,581	2.55	
ABBOTTABAD DISTRICT	237,020	1,419,072	1,333,089	85,983	1.05	
BATAGRAM DISTRICT	86,224	554,133	476,749	77,384	2.55	
HARIPUR DISTRICT	192,658	1,174,783	1,001,515	173,268	2.70	
KOLAI PALAS KOHISTAN DISTRICT	40,393	280,162	276,325	3,837	0.23	
LOWER KOHISTAN DISTRICT	52,318	340,017	202,935	137,082	9.01	
MANSEHRA DISTRICT	294,113	1,797,177	1,555,742	241,435	2.44	
TORGHAR DISTRICT	29,417	200,445	171,349	29,096	2.66	
UPPER KOHISTAN DISTRICT	71,543	422,947	305,451	117,496	2.67	
KOHAT DIVISION	473,606	3,752,436	3,205,114	547,322	2.67	
HANGU DISTRICT	61,163	528,902	518,811	10,091	0.32	
KARAK DISTRICT	96,026	815,878	705,362	110,516	2.46	
KOHAT DISTRICT	169,734	1,234,661	1,111,266	123,395	1.78	
KURRAM DISTRICT	94,575	785,434	615,372	170,062	4.16	
ORAKZAI DISTRICT	52,108	387,561	254,303	133,258	7.30	
MALAKAND DIVISION	1,345,243	9,959,399	8,603,594	1,355,805	2.48	
BAJAUR DISTRICT	181,632	1,287,960	895,250	392,710	2.81	
BUNER DISTRICT	118,632	1,016,869	895,460	121,409	2.15	
LOWER CHITRAL DISTRICT	46,050	320,407	278,328	42,079	2.38	
LOWER DIR DISTRICT	202,899	1,650,183	1,436,082	214,101	2.35	
MALAKAND PROTECTED AREA	113,159	826,250	717,806	108,444	2.71	
SHANGLA DISTRICT	125,551	891,252	759,609	131,643	2.38	
SWAT DISTRICT	381,246	2,687,384	2,308,624	378,760	2.57	
UPPER CHITRAL DISTRICT	26,368	195,528	169,297	26,231	2.44	
UPPER DIR DISTRICT	149,557	1,083,566	947,401	136,165	2.27	
MARDAN DIVISION	679,939	4,639,498	3,998,876	640,622	2.51	
MARDAN DISTRICT	400,904	2,744,898	2,373,399	371,499	2.46	
SWABI DISTRICT	279,035	1,894,600	1,625,477	269,123	2.59	
PESHAWAR DIVISION	1,446,220	10,351,171	9,225,505	112,666	1.98	
CHARSADDA DISTRICT	263,993	1,835,504	1,610,960	224,544	2.20	
KHYBER DISTRICT	166,829	1,146,267	984,246	162,021	2.58	
MOHMAND DISTRICT	63,982	553,933	474,345	79,588	2.63	
NOWSHERA DISTRICT	259,911	1,740,705	1,520,995	219,710	2.28	
PESHAWAR DISTRICT	691,505	4,758,762	4,331,959	426,803	1.58	

Annual Growth Rate difference between 2017 & 2023 Census	Annual Growth Rate difference between 2017 & 2023 Census	Projected Population of KP divisions & districts - had it been counted at a national population growth rate of 2.89%					
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
2.89	0.51	37,277,062	39,140,915	41,097,961	43,152,859	45,310,502	47,576,027
6.81	4.22	2,785,510	2,924,786	3,071,025	3,224,576	3,385,805	3,555,096
2.91	0.97	1,270,692	1,334,227	1,400,938	1,470,985	1,544,534	1,621,761
3.10	0.68	947,245	994,607	1,044,338	1,096,554	1,151,382	1,208,951
3.10	-1.15	567,573	595,952	625,750	657,037	689,889	724,383
3.28	1.06	2,935,646	3,082,428	3,236,549	3,398,377	3,568,296	3,746,710
3.44	2.14	1,778,274	1,867,187	1,960,547	2,058,574	2,161,503	2,269,578
3.44	-1.26	708,976	744,425	781,646	820,728	861,764	904,853
2.63	1.00	448,396	470,816	494,357	519,075	545,028	572,280
2.22	-0.33	5,589,313	5,868,778	6,162,217	6,470,328	6,793,845	7,133,537
2.20	1.15	1,399,743	1,469,731	1,543,217	1,620,378	1,701,397	1,786,467
2.33	-0.22	500,586	525,616	551,897	579,491	608,466	638,889
1.96	-0.74	1,051,591	1,104,170	1,159,379	1,217,348	1,278,215	1,342,126
2.70	2.47	290,141	304,648	319,881	335,875	352,669	370,302
9.01	0.00	213,082	223,736	234,923	246,669	259,002	271,952
2.47	0.03	1,633,529	1,715,206	1,800,966	1,891,014	1,985,565	2,084,843
-0.10	-2.76	179,916	188,912	198,358	208,276	218,690	229,624
2.70	0.03	320,724	336,760	353,598	371,278	389,841	409,334
2.81	0.14	3,365,370	3,533,638	3,710,320	3,895,836	4,090,628	4,295,159
2.69	2.37	544,752	571,989	600,589	630,618	662,149	695,256
2.62	0.16	740,630	777,662	816,545	857,372	900,241	945,253
3.03	1.25	1,166,829	1,225,171	1,286,429	1,350,751	1,418,288	1,489,203
2.36	-1.80	646,141	678,448	712,370	747,989	785,388	824,657
2.42	-4.88	267,018	280,369	294,388	309,107	324,562	340,790
3.02	0.54	9,033,774	9,485,462	9,959,736	10,457,722	10,980,608	11,529,639
2.15	-0.66	940,013	987,013	1,036,364	1,088,182	1,142,591	1,199,721
3.04	0.89	940,233	987,245	1,036,607	1,088,437	1,142,859	1,200,002
1.80	-0.58	292,244	306,857	322,199	338,309	355,225	372,986
3.26	0.91	1,507,886	1,583,280	1,662,444	1,745,567	1,832,845	1,924,487
3.27	0.56	753,696	791,381	830,950	872,498	916,123	961,929
2.98	0.60	797,589	837,469	879,342	923,309	969,475	1,017,949
3.24	0.67	2,424,055	2,545,258	2,672,521	2,806,147	2,946,454	3,093,777
1.80	-0.64	177,762	186,650	195,982	205,782	216,071	226,874
3.26	0.99	994,771	1,044,510	1,096,735	1,151,572	1,209,150	1,269,608
2.53	0.02	4,198,820	4,408,761	4,629,199	4,860,659	5,103,692	5,358,876
2.59	0.13	2,492,069	2,616,672	2,747,506	2,884,881	3,029,125	3,180,582
2.44	-0.15	1,706,751	1,792,088	1,881,693	1,975,777	2,074,566	2,178,295
3.39	1.41	968,630	1,017,062	1,067,915	1,121,311	1,177,376	1,236,245
2.42	0.22	1,691,508	1,776,083	1,864,888	1,958,132	2,056,039	2,158,840
2.58	0.00	1,033,458	1,085,131	1,139,388	1,196,357	1,256,175	1,318,984
2.43	-0.20	498,062	522,965	549,114	576,569	605,398	635,668
2.95	0.67	1,597,045	1,676,897	1,760,742	1,848,779	1,941,218	2,038,279
3.99	2.41	4,548,557	4,775,985	5,014,784	5,265,523	5,528,799	5,805,239

**KP District Level Annual Population Growth Rate
(1998 - 2017) & (2017-2023)**



5. Impact on allocation of resources to KP and its representation in assemblies:

Had KP population been recorded as the national average growth rate of 2.89% instead it would've been 47,579,027:

Net deficit of $47,579,027 - 40,856,097 = 6,719,930$ which means low KP & National Assembly seats, low national finance award and low water resources allocation. One of the seminar panelists alluded that 1% deficit in population count amounts to 1 trillion rupees of financial allocation to the province, the table below shows close 0.9% of population deficit. In grand scheme of things, it means KP will not be able to adequately fund education, health and infrastructure rather adversely impacting its population.

Seminar panel participant, Renowned Pakistani Banker and Statistician Mr. Jawaid Iqbal Khalil rightly pointed out that, due to KP census under counting, is limiting National Assembly Seats from 51 down to 45 including the merged districts thus reducing six seats as compared to the 2018 general elections. That is a major blow not only to its resources but also its representation in the National Assembly.

6. Lack of transparency and quality assurance checks:

There is lack of evidence available to public that adequate population sampling quality assurance steps are taken to ensure to count everyone once, only once and in the right place and it is built in every step of the census process. – from designing to collecting and processing the data.

No reports are available to show that 3rd party organization or internal assessments and evaluations are conducted such as characteristics of the sample design in official products, and document measures of the sampling error, which a standard practice in the developed world.

“Recommendations”

Based on the concerns and insights discussed during the seminar on the impact of the 2023 census on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), it is recommended that a series of actions be taken to address the issues raised by experts and political leaders:

Independent Review of Census Results: Considering the doubts raised about the accuracy of the census results and their potential negative impact on KP, it is imperative to initiate an independent review of the census data. This review should involve statisticians, demographers, and relevant experts to ensure the credibility and accuracy of the population figures.

Engagement with Council of Common Interests (CCI): Given the assertion that at the present CCI lacks the authority to approve census results, it is recommended that the CCI must consider to readdress the approval of Census results and reconsider the issue in the next meeting.

Inclusion of Overseas Population: There is a need to account for the population of KP residents living abroad. Relaxing the rules for enumerating overseas citizens could help capture a more accurate representation of the province's population.

Transparent Delimitation Process: To address concerns about potential seat allocation in the National Assembly, it is advised to establish a transparent delimitation process that considers accurate population figures. The involvement of independent electoral commissions and experts can ensure fair representation for all regions.

Provincial Representation in the National Assembly: The federal government has already announced that the present province wise allocation of seats in the national assembly shall be preserved in the election 2023. This announcement is welcomed and head to be implemented in future elections also.

Resource Distribution Mechanism: Recognizing the impact of population figures on resource distribution through the National Finance Commission (NFC) award, it is recommended to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the allocation formula. The goal should be to ensure that KP receives a fair share of resources based on its actual population and needs.

Comprehensive Awareness Campaign: To build public awareness and support for the issues raised during the seminar, a comprehensive awareness campaign should be launched. This campaign could involve social media, public discussions, and community engagement initiatives to mobilize support for the province's rights.

Collaboration across Political Parties: It is essential for the leadership of the political parties of KP province of their affiliations, to come together and collectively raise their voices for the rights of KP. Political leaders can play a pivotal role in advocating for fair representation, resource distribution, and the integrity of the census process.

Continued engagement with Think Tanks: Recognizing the valuable role of think tanks like the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) in highlighting regional issues, it is recommended to continue engaging with such institutions. This collaboration can lead to well-informed policy recommendations and a better understanding of the challenges faced by KP.

Long-Term Planning for Census: To prevent future discrepancies and controversies, it is advisable to develop a long-term strategy for conducting future censuses. This strategy should include comprehensive planning, training of enumerators, technology upgrades, and a focus on transparency and to setup an independent Census Commission.

Constitutional Reforms: If it is found that the existing constitutional framework lacks clarity in terms of census approval and resource distribution, it might be necessary to consider constitutional reforms to address these issues and prevent similar challenges in the future.

Conclusion:

In the concerns raised during the seminar regarding the 2023 census and its impact on KP's representation and resource allocation are crucial and warrant immediate attention. By taking these recommendations into consideration, stakeholders can work together to ensure a fair and accurate representation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's population and protect its rights within the national framework.

This report provides main reasons why and how the Pakistan National Digital Census 2023 will impact the KP province;

- Will curtail its due share in the NFC award, close to 0.75 trillion rupees.
- Reduce its seats in the National Assembly from 51 down to 46.

Per the seminar participants, had the census taken into account the KPK diaspora in the middle east, access to the far-flung population of rural areas and the growth rate at par with the national growth rate, the KPK population figures would have been different and wouldn't have to lose the resources it is losing as a result of the population deficit.