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New law will restructure entire national statistical system of Pakistan: Asif Bajwa

The Secretary, Statistics Division, Government of Pakistan, Mr. Asif Bajwa today said that a new statistical law has been proposed to restructure the entire national statistical system (NSS) of Pakistan.

Inaugurating a one-day Seminar on “Contributions and Achievements of Official Statistics” at SBP Learning Resource Centre in Karachi this morning, he said that with the adoption of this law by the Parliament, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics will be established with the merger of Federal Bureau of Statistics (FBS), Population Census Organization (PCO) and Agriculture Census Organization (ACO).

He said that a National Statistics Development Strategy (NSDS) is being developed to provide a strategy for strengthening statistical capacity across the entire national statistical system (NSS). Quarterly National Accounts (QNA) which is an international obligation, is in its final stage and the 1st QNA will be released probably in the first quarter of the new financial year, he added.

He disclosed that a new Statistics Research and Training Institute (SRTI) will be established in Lahore to train the officials of statistical organizations. Mr. Bajwa said that Census 2011 has been initiated and house listing will be carried out in April 2011 and enumeration will start from September this year. He expressed the hope that Pakistan will qualify for IMF Special Data Dissemination Standards (SDDS) during the current calendar year.

Mr. Bajwa also expressed the hope that the seminar will increase awareness of the importance of good statistics and will lead towards enhanced cooperation and building trust on the statistics generated by the statistical organizations.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Mr. Riaz Riazuddin, Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of Pakistan said that sound policy decisions always depend on up-to-date, efficient and timely statistics. He however, emphasized that the quality of statistics can only be improved through collaboration among the data producing agencies and other stakeholders. ‘The state of a country’s development can be judged from the type and quality of statistics it produces,’ he added.

He said that the official statistics play a significant role in understanding the current economic condition of an economy and is vital for formulation of policies for the development of the country. He said the Governor, State Bank of Pakistan has always taken keen interest in the development of statistical system in Pakistan. "I strongly believe SBP Governor’s continuous

support for the statistical activities undertaken by the State Bank of Pakistan will go a long way in the production and availability of quality statistics in Pakistan,' he added.

Mr. Riazuddin hoped that the interactive and knowledge sharing sessions at this seminar will definitely enhance the users' confidence in the official statistics and will provide opportunities for exploring new avenues of research. 'The motive behind organizing this one day seminar on "Contributions and Achievements of Official Statistics" is to create awareness about the statistical system of the country and significance of the official statistics in analyzing the prevailing economic conditions,' he added.

He expressed his confidence that this seminar will enhance coordination and interaction among users and producers of statistics and will lead to improvements in the quality of data. He however, emphasized that users' suggestions and feedback will help the organizations to make their statistics more user-friendly and according to the needs of the market.

Speaking on the occasion Dr. Azizullah Khattak, Director, Statistics & DWH Department, State Bank of Pakistan said that the seminar has also provided a forum for developing future coordination and interaction among users and producers of statistics, which is essential for an efficient statistical system of a country. 'We also need to work together in order to meet the increasing demand for statistics arising from the rapid changes in global environment. Adopting the international standards is also essential for improving the credibility of our statistics in the international community,' he added.

Mr. Munir Ahmad Aslam, Deputy Director General, Federal Bureau of Statistics made presentations on 'Price Statistics' and 'National Accounts of Pakistan', Mr. Habib Ullah Khan, Census Commissioner, Population Census Organization on 'Population Census Statistics', Mr. Noor Muhammad Dharejo of Agriculture Census Organization on 'Agriculture Census Statistics', Mr. Shamim Wazir Deputy Chief, Economic Affairs Division, Government of Pakistan on 'Foreign Loans & Disbursements', Mr. Shamsul Arifeen, Senior Joint Director, Statistics & DWH Department, SBP on 'Balance of Payments of Pakistan' and Mr. Rizwan Ahmed, Joint Director, Statistics & DWH Department, SBP on 'Monetary Statistics'.
