

Media Committee:

- **Ayaz Wagha**
Coordinator, C-38, Islamabad
Ph: 0333-6110964
- **William Pervaiz**
Media Coordinator,
Pattan, C-38, Islamabad
Ph: 0302-8516901
- **Ms. Zahida Khan**
CEO, PHDF, Multan
Ph: 0342-7444447
- **Ms. Nasim Jahan**
Woman Rights Activist, Multan
Ph: 0336-6596877
- **Mr. Mushtaq Chishti**
Human Rights Activist, Multan
Ph: 0333-1724236
- **Mr. Ghulam Farid-u-Din**
Social Worker, Advocate,
Muzafargarh.
Ph: 0300-9631110
- **Mr. Riaz Jazib**
Journalist, Columnist, DG. Khan
Ph: 0335-6388381
- **Mr. Mohsin Raza**
President, LWS, Layyah
Ph: 0300-6760170
- **Mr. Muhammad Shoaib**
President, ASWO, Bhakkar
Ph: 0305-5441304
- **Ms. Bismillah Irum**
Chairperson, RRO, Khanewal
Ph: 0300-6892393
- **Mr. Latif Ansari**
Chairman, PLQM, Faisalabad.
Ph: 0301-1470411
- **Sabir Qadri**
Social Worker, Jhang
Ph: 0310-7951171

Pattan-C38 Secretariat:

House 5, Street 58, F-10/3
Islamabad, Pakistan.
Phone: 051 - 2299494, 2211875
Fax: 051 - 2291547
E-mail: info@pattan.org
URL: www.pattan.org

Mauza Bahadurpur,
Bosan Road Multan
PO Box 607, GPO Multan
Tel/Fax: 92-61- 4745672, 4745801

C-38 is comprising approximately 170 civil society organizations, Coalition 38 is a diverse network that encompasses labor unions, farmers' unions, media outlets, legal professionals, and intellectuals.

PRESS RELEASE

Election Commission can restore its credibility only by holding general elections according to Pakistan's Constitution. Civil society demands of ECP to stop the process of delimitation as it is based on flawed population census.

Islamabad, 22 September 2023: Instead of announcing schedule of the general elections, the Election Commission of Pakistan has further deepened the already ever-increasing uncertainty by giving extremely vague statement about next general elections, which will further cause damage to the country's economy. Moreover, the ECP's statement is a clear violation of the article 48(5a) of the Constitution, which categorically orders to hold general elections within 90 days of the dissolution of the assemblies. PATTAN and Coalition38 – a body of more than 150 CSOs and labour unions note with deep anguish that the ECP has eroded its credibility and trust of the public by taking U-turns and by violating orders of the superior courts. For instance, it stubbornly refused to hold general elections for Punjab and KP assemblies on 14th May. It also cancelled local government election for Islamabad Capital Territory while polling was to take place in three days. The ECP also violated its own goals set under Fourth Strategic Plan and the sections (94 and 103) of the Elections Act 2017.

We also note with deep concern that the ECP instead of holding elections within 90 days of the dissolution of National Assembly began delimitation of constituencies which was not only based on flawed and highly politicised population census but also not mandatory under the Constitution.

According to our survey conducted during the last two weeks at 522 locations of 67 districts as many as 17% of the respondents said the census enumerators did not enter their data on the Tab, which was mandatory for geo-tagging, while 10% said the enumerators didn't come at all. These are no doubt very serious omissions. Moreover, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics had announced the preliminary results in May. Why would it had taken four months to make final results public? It is also worth noting that in most countries and in our own country in the past population census have never taken so many months. For instance, in Turkey it takes only one day.

Also, massive changes appear to have been made between May and August. It is worth emphasizing that between May and August share of Punjab's population changed by almost 3% from 49% to 52%, which was equalized to the 2017's. Similar adjustments were made for other provinces too. These unexplained fluctuations naturally cause suspicion about the health of the exercise.

It is also worth noting that most delays appeared to have made to delay general elections.

Therefore, we demand of the ECP not to use the flawed population census 2023 results for delimitation. Instead ECP should use the delimitation time to hold elections in November.

We appeal to the Supreme Court to order the ECP to hold elections in accordance to article 48(5a).

We also demand that ECP takes confidence building measures so that elections take place in a conducive environment.

Under article 218 it is the responsibility of the ECP to hold free, fair, honest, just, and independent elections. For that every player must have level playing field and in order to achieve that all political prisons must be free before election processes begins.

For further information, please contact:

Ayaz Wagha: 0333-6110964
William Pervaiz 0302-8516901