**Federal Minister of Water Resources chaired a high level meeting.**

**Islamabad June 26th, 2019:**

This was the crux of an annual coordination session of the federal and provincial authorities held on **Wednesday, 26th June 2019**, under Federal Flood Commission, Ministry of Water Resources to review preparedness for 2019-Monsoon Season.

The meeting presided over by the Minister for Water Resources, Muhammad Faisal Vawda, noted with concern that the encroachments in the river waterways besides major Nullahs by the public masses in Provinces are so frequent and in such magnitude that even the low floods create havoc in the communities the recent example of this is the case of 105,000 cusecs outflow from Jhelum River at Mangla. He urged the provinces and federal line agencies for prompt approval of their respective Flood Plain management Acts and their strict enforcement to prevent the encroachment in the waterways on permanent basis.

Head, Flood Forecasting Division, PMD, Lahore apprised the meeting that this year’s monsoon rains will be normal with above normal rains expected in Northern Areas (GB, KP, Punjab, AJ&K) which coupled with westerly incursion and snow melt may result into an extreme flood event.

The meeting expressed dissatisfaction over the late submission of priority flood protection projects by the provincial governments and hence their late implementation. The Secretary Ministry of Water Resources urged the provinces and federal agencies for timely submission of PC-Is of emergent nature flood protection projects being funded through the federal Government PSDP so that their timely approval and implementations can be ensured in the best public interest towards protection from floods.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Muhammad Ashraf, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Mr. Ahmed Kamal, Chief Engineering Adviser & Chairman Federal Flood Commission and other senior officials of the related federal and provincial government organizations, including representative from Pak Army to discuss all issues related to 2019 flood preparedness.

All the stakeholders briefed the meeting on pre-emptive measures taken to minimize the effects of damages in the event of occurrence of floods. The Federal Minister for Water Resources, Mr. Muhammad Faisal Vawda directed all concerned to remain vigilant with reinforced and round-the-clock coordination throughout the monsoon season. Meeting was further informed that PMD’s and WAPDA’s related equipments are fully functional.

WASA Rawalpindi and District Government, Rawalpindi were directed for the complete clearing of Lai Nullah beds/ sides at critical locations from waste material dumped by the locals and also removal of encroachment at different places in compliance with the early warning system installed.

In view of forecast of rains and expected urban flooding, the provinces were advised to be fully vigilant and clear all storm drains in cities and towns especially in cities like Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Islamabad etc.