

**November 13, 2014- National Assembly Standing Committee on Information,
Broadcasting and National Heritage visited IRS**

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ISLAMABAD, Nov 14 (APP): Appreciating the performance of Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), the National Assembly Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage on Friday called for expansion of its research activities. During the visit to IRS office by the Chairperson of the Committee, Marvi Memon and members of the Committee, they assured the IRS management that the Committee would help IRS to improve its working in coming days.

Marvi Memon said that the Committee has the responsibility to oversee the IRS and to overcome its problems. She asked the IRS management to publish more books and if it had paucity of funds, it should write e-books which do not cost even a penny. She said that the IRS has published its last book in 2008, so it should give multi-tasks to its research fellows and prepare a book based on research work on Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's vision of regional connectivity. She advised the President of IRS to start research work on regional connectivity in terms of infrastructure building as it was key to bringing the countries of region closer both politically and economically. She said that IRS can also write e-books on topics like Look East Policy and proposed Gas Pipelines and added that the books should focus on future to give policy directions to the government. Marvi Memon said that the IRS should do some solid work from their given resources so that the Committee can recommend some special grant for it. She said that the meeting was held at the IRS office to listen to its grievances and provide help in their resolution. The members of the Committee said that the IRS should play a role in formulation of country foreign and economic policies as it has a panel of excellent research scholars. They also suggested that the IRS should try to build its own office as this would save money spent on rent of the hired building.

Marvi Memon directed the Secretary Information Muhammad Azam for launch of a programme on Regional affairs on Pakistan Television and give exposure to the research scholars of the IRS in that programme as they despite doing wonderful work were not given any exposure through media. She said that Prime Minister's vision for regional connectivity should be given focus in programme. The Committee also said that the IRS research scholars should provide talking points for Prime Minister's visit to Nepal in connection with SAARC summit. The Committee recommended that for reconstitution of Board of Governors of the IRS. Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage Senator Pervaiz Rashid asked the IRS management to suggest at least six names so that three vacant posts of the BOG could be filled.

The Committee also issued directives for provision of IRS research scholars should be provided access to the library of National Assembly and IRS research papers should be made available in major public libraries. Marvi Memon also said that the Committee

would write letters to chairpersons of all standing committees to utilize the expertise of the research scholars of IRS who can brief to the Committees of their respective research area. Secretary Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage Muhammad Azam assured that the Ministry would provide IRS a supplementary grant so that it can overcome the problem of paucity of funds. Earlier, President IRS Arif Ayub gave a detailed briefing on the working and achievements of the institute. The meeting was attended by MNAs Ms. Zeb Jaffar, Talal Chaudhry and Naeema Kishwar Khan and senior officials of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. APP/Naheed/anm