LAHORE CHAMBER NEWS

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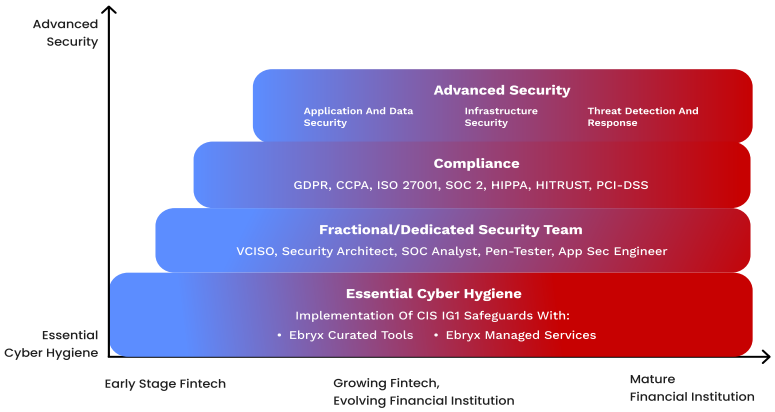
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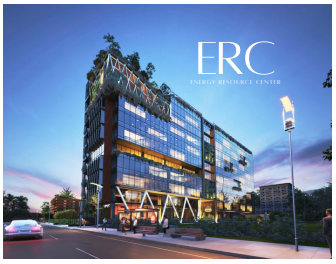
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Field Marshal Asim Munir's Thousand Days: A Glorious Journey

By Mian Abuzar Shad

President

Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry





In the history of Pakistan, certain personalities emerge who not only bring hope to the nation but, through their vision, determination, and sacrifices, possess the ability to change the destiny of the country. Today, as Field Marshal Asim Munir completes one thousand days of his leadership, I, as President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry, believe that these days are not just dates on the calendar, but rather a story of Pakistan's stability, progress, and survival.From the very outset of his leadership, Field Marshal Asim Munir made it clear that the security of Pakistan, economic revival, and the prosperity of its people were his foremost priorities. Over the past one thousand days, through wisdom and sacrifice, he has proven that a true leader not only rescues his nation from difficult times but also lays the foundation for a brighter future.

Pakistan has always faced both internal and external challenges. Yet, Field Marshal Asim Munir, with his courageous strategies, conveyed a clear message to adversaries that Pakistan is an indomitable state. Be it disputes with India or the war against terrorism, his leadership demonstrated that our armed forces remain vigilant and united on every front. In recent years, India's aggressive designs were thwarted with remarkable strategy and robust defense, marking a shining chapter in history. The message was loud and clear — Pakistan's borders will always remain secure.The gravest challenge confronting Pakistan has been its economic crisis. As a representative of the business community, I fully understand how uncertainty, energy shortages, inflation, and inconsistent policies have disrupted trade and industry. Yet, within these one thousand days, Field Marshal Asim Munir prioritized the economy. His leadership has witnessed initiatives to promote exports, regulate imports, and encourage local industry.From the platform of the Lahore Chamber, we also observed how the armed forces extended crucial support to the government in achieving economic stability. Improved law and order restored business confidence, while foreign investors once again began to take interest in Pakistan. His vision was clear: alongside military strength, economic power is the true foundation upon which a strong Pakistan must be built.

Another vital dimension of Field Marshal Asim Munir's leadership has been foreign policy. Improved relations with the United States and strengthened ties with Middle Eastern nations provided Pakistan with a renewed identity on the global stage. His diplomacy not only elevated Pakistan's prestige but also enhanced prospects of peace in the region. Through his pragmatic approach, Pakistan emerged as an important player on leading international forums.

Equally significant has been his emphasis on unity and cohesion within the nation. He consistently conveyed the message that Pakistan's survival lies in collective strength as one nation. His stance on interfaith harmony, social justice, and the protection of minority rights has promoted tolerance and peace within society.

A Tribute from the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry

As President of LCCI, I firmly believe that under the leadership of Field Marshal Asim Munir, Pakistan has regained a renewed sense of confidence. He has proven that no matter how daunting the challenges, with sincere leadership they can be overcome. The business community of Lahore Chamber pays rich tribute to his services and fully supports his vision.We hope that the Field Marshal will continue to involve the business community in policymaking for economic stability. The business sector believes that for a prosperous future of Pakistan, the government, armed forces, and traders must move forward hand in hand. Such a partnership alone can pull Pakistan out of crises.

Today, as we pay tribute to his thousand days of leadership, we also pray that Almighty Allah blesses him with greater strength and resolve to keep Pakistan firmly on the path of development and prosperity. Future generations will take pride in his sacrifices and achievements.

"Field Marshal Asim Munir – Pride of Pakistan, Heart of the Nation."

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Fund for flood-hit brothers











DETAILS OF HONORABLE DONORS FOR THE FLOOD RELIEF FUND

S.#	COMPANY NAME	AMOUNT
1	LCCI	2,500,000
2	ABUZAR GRINDING MILLS (PVT) LTD	1,000,000
3	MUGHAL IRON & STEEL INDUSTRIES LIMTED	1,000,000
4	PUNJNAD FEED LIMITED	1,000,000
5	NATIONAL FEEDS LTD	1,000,000
6	MUHAMMAD BASHIR BOXBOARD MERCHANTS	1,000,000
7	ALPHA CHEMICALS (PVT) LTD	1,000,000
8	KHALIL AHMAD	540,000
9	ADNAN IJAZ	500,000
10	FILTER HOUSE (PVT.) LTD	500,000
11	ZUBAIDA ASSOCIATES	500,000
12	ONLINE THROUGH ATM	500,000
13	QUDRAT ULLAH CO	500,000
14	SHALIMAR TRADERS	450,000
15	VICTORIA TEXTILE MILLS	300,000
16	AL FATHA TEXTILE MILLS	300,000
17	PRIME ALUMINIUM INDUSTRIES PVT LTD	200,000
18	SYED MUKHTAR ALI (FORMER E.C)	200,000
19	ABID & COMPANY PVT LTD	125,000
20	MALIK AHAD AMIN (E.C MEMBER)	100,000
21	MR ZAHID MUBASHAR SHEIKH	100,000
22	MR TARIQ MEHBOOB	100,000
23	MUHAMMAD NADEEM QURESHI	100,000
24	MR TARIQ MEHMOOD	100,000
25	SHEIKH SALEEM (MEWA MANDI)	100,000
26	TAUSEEF SHARAFAT	100,000
27	SHALIMAR GOLD RICE MILLS	100,000
28	SHAHID & CO	100,000
29	AKHTAR HUSSAIN & CO	100,000
30	SAEED AHMAD	100,000
31	BADRE ALAM TRADERS	25,000
32	MEGA HUB	25,000
	TOTAL	**14,265,000**

LCCI hails China for expanding CPEC cooperation

President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman and Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry have hailed China for again showing its commitment to expand economic cooperation with Pakistan and launch new projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship program of the Belt and Road Initiative. They said that the meeting between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar marks a new milestone in the long-standing "iron brotherhood" between the two countries. The LCCI office-bearers praised China's unwavering support for Pakistan's development and termed CPEC a true game-changer for the national economy. President Mian Abuzar Shad said that the fresh momentum in CPEC will attract investment, accelerate industrialization, enhance exports and generate thousands of employment opportunities in Pakistan. He hoped that upcoming CPEC projects would prioritize energy security, modern infrastructure, special economic zones and agricultural modernization, which are vital for achieving long-term sustainable growth. The LCCI office-bearers said that LCCI fully supports initiatives that strengthen regional connectivity and make Pakistan a hub for global trade and investment. They also underscored the importance of a secure and business-friendly environment for Chinese investors and professionals. The LCCI office-bearers said that CPEC is more than just an economic corridor, it is a symbol of Pakistan-China strategic partnership and a guarantor of mutual prosperity for generations to come.









LCCI Expresses Solidarity with Iran, Rejects Excessive Powers to FBR under Section 37AA



The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry at a Press Conference on Monday expressed unwavering solidarity with Iran and registered the business community’s serious reservations over key proposals in the Federal Budget 2025-26. The press conference was presided over by LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad and attended by Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, former presidents Mian Anjum Nisar and Muhammad Ali Mian and former Vice President Faheemur Rehman Saigol. Members of the LCCI Executive Committee were also present.

Participants strongly condemned the Israel attack on Iran saying that the entire Pakistani nation stands in complete solidarity with Iran. They termed Israel a global menace and said that the people of Pakistan support Iran like a wall of steel in the face of oppression.

Shifting focus to domestic economic challenges, all the participants of the Press Conference expressed grave concern over Section 37AA of the Income Tax Ordinance, under which the Federal Board of Revenue has been granted sweeping powers, including the authority to arrest traders without a court warrant. They categorically rejected these powers, warning that such measures are harsh and will only lead to more fear and uncertainty in the business environment.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad said that the business community is not a scapegoat and should not be sacrificed to cover up the failures of the bureaucracy. He said that every single day, around four billion rupees are lost to speed money, a reflection of deeply rooted corruption within the system. Mian Abuzar Shad held the bureaucracy responsible for the collapse of state-owned enterprises, saying that these losses are consistently compensated from the hard-earned taxes paid by the business community.

Raising alarming questions, he asked who will investigate the Rs. 80 billion over-invoicing in the import of solar panels and the Rs. 565 billion refund scam. He further highlighted an outrageous incident in Lahore where FBR officers allegedly drew weapons on each other during a confrontation over bribes, questioning whether any action had been taken in response.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that over Rs. 8,000 billion are being spent on debt servicing, yet no one is being held accountable for who took these loans. He demanded an immediate audit of such financial obligations. Citing economic mismanagement over the past 15 years, he said that Pakistan has suffered losses of Rs. 24,000 billion in capacity payments to IPPs and Rs. 25,000 billion due to under-invoicing and smuggling. He demanded to know why no one had been held responsible for these gigantic losses and why bureaucrats and policymakers remain beyond accountability.

LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman and Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry said that due to these flawed policies and rising uncertainty, Pakistan is witnessing dangerous levels of capital flight.

LCCI and Pakistan Products House Sign MoU to promote 'Made in Pakistan' products in African markets

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Pakistan Products House have signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at enhancing bilateral trade, industrial collaboration economic cooperation between Pakistan and African countries.



The MoU was formally signed by LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad and Managing Director of Pakistan Products House Shahid Sajjad Hussain. LCCI Executive Committee Members Khuram Lodhi and Ahsan Shahid were also present on the occasion.

Under the agreement, both organizations will work together to strengthen business-to-business cooperation and expand economic linkages based on mutual interests. The MoU also outlines the exchange of business reports, research studies, market surveys, magazines, newsletters other trade-related information to enhance mutual understanding of market dynamics and policy frameworks.

The two sides have agreed to jointly organize B2B meetings, trade exhibitions, seminars, conferences other trade-related events to build strong connections between the business communities of Pakistan and Africa.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad said that the agreement marks a significant step forward in boosting Pakistan's exports and promoting "Made in Pakistan" products in emerging African markets. He noted that Africa presents vast untapped potential for Pakistani industries such collaborations can unlock new trade opportunities.

Shahid Sajjad Hussain, Managing Director of PPH, said that Pakistan Products House, established in six key cities across Africa, serves as a robust platform for showcasing high-quality Pakistani products. He said that the MoU will provide Pakistani exporters with enhanced access to new markets and buyers.

This strategic partnership is expected to open new doors for Pakistan's business community looking to establish or expand their footprint in Africa. It is anticipated that this collaboration will not only boost exports but also strengthen bilateral economic ties between Pakistan and African nations.



Finance Act 2025

LCCI happy over Pro-business amendments in Finance Act 2025

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry President Mian Abuzar Shad has expressed his optimism that the pro-business amendments, incorporated in the Finance Act 2025 on the LCCI's demand, would serve as a cornerstone for a new era of economic revival, pave the way for sustained progress, enhance investor confidence and shared prosperity for both the business community and the national economy. He was addressing a Press Conference, along with Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry and former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian, at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The LCCI President said that the Federal Board of Revenue has decided to implement a transparent and structured procedure before initiating inquiries under sub-sections 8 and 9 of Section 37A of the Sales Tax Act 1990. For this purpose, Sales Tax General Order No. 02 of 2025 has been issued. Mian Abuzar Shad extended heartfelt thanks to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Ali Pervaiz Malik, Haroon Akhtar, Bilal Azhar Kayani, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider and FBR Chairman Rashid Langrial. He paid rich tribute to Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal General Asim Munir, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad, SIFC's General Sarfraz and General Asad Cheema, for listening attentively to the Chamber's concerns and ensuring their implementation. They have proven that while Pakistan's defense remains impregnable, our military leadership is equally committed to strengthening the nation's economic frontiers. The LCCI President said that Pakistan's recent tariff advantages over India were a result of Field Marshal Asim Munir's luncheon with former U.S. President Donald Trump. Mian Abuzar Shad also lauded the efforts KCCI President Javed Balwani, former LCCI Presidents Miān Anjum Nisar and Muhammad Ali Miān, former Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar, former Vice President Faheem Rehman Saigol, Kh. Shahzaib Akram, Gohar Ejaz and S.M. Tanveer. He revealed that multiple Zoom meetings were held with government representatives, alongside seven personal visits to Islamabad. Our consistent stance was that no inquiry or legal action should be initiated without prior consultation with business community representatives, to prevent fear and to build trust. The LCCI President explained that under the original budget provision of Section 37A, FBR officers had unlimited powers to arrest, creating serious concerns within the business community. Now, no arrest will be made unless approved by a three-member committee nominated by the FBR Chairman and relevant chambers will be taken into confidence — ensuring transparency. He further added that concerns over the immediate rollout of e-invoicing had been addressed: it will be implemented in phases, beginning with multinational companies and will be operated solely via FBR's PRAL system, with nationwide awareness sessions beforehand. Regarding the controversial Clause 21(S) that disallowed 50% of expenses on cash payments exceeding PKR 200,000, Miān Abuzar Shad confirmed that FBR has now clarified: if payment is deposited directly into a seller's bank account, it will be deemed as made via the banking channel, effectively removing the limit.

LCCI celebrates Independence Day with Flag Hoisting and Cake Cutting Ceremony

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry celebrated Pakistan's Independence Day with a grand ceremony featuring a flag hoisting and cake cutting. The event commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran followed by the national anthem.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, former President Muhammad Ali Mian, former Vice President Faheem-ur-Rehman Saigol and Executive Committee members jointly hoisted the national flag. A large number of members of the business community were also present at the occasion. Special prayers were offered for the security, progress and prosperity of Pakistan, while the atmosphere echoed with chants of "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Quaid-e-Azam Zindabad.

In his address, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad said that Independence Day is not just a celebration, but a reminder of the sacrifices, unity and hard work of our forefathers who struggled for this homeland. He stressed that Pakistan's development requires collective efforts from all segments of society.LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman said that the true spirit of independence lies in fulfilling national responsibilities and taking concrete measures to strengthen the economy. Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry remarked that the business community is playing a vital role in fortifying Pakistan's industrial and trade structure. Former President Muhammad Ali Mian stressed the need for unity and harmony to send a strong message to the world that Pakistan is a stable and peaceful country. Former Vice President Faheem-ur-Rehman Saigol underscored the importance of business-friendly policies and industrial growth for economic progress.

They said that Independence Day is an opportunity to renew the pledge to put Pakistan on the path of growth and prosperity.

The ceremony concluded with the cutting of a special Independence Day cake, where participants exchanged greetings and waved the national flag, expressed love and commitment to the homeland. President Mian Abuzar Shad added that true independence is economic prosperity, which can be achieved through national unity, sound government policies, and the promotion of investment.







LCCI President Mian Abuzar shad urges Government to address visa issuance problems with UAE, Dubai and Saudi Arabia through High-Level Diplomatic engagement

President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry Mian Abuzar Shad has urged the Government of Pakistan to take immediate and concrete diplomatic steps to resolve the mounting challenges in the issuance of business and labor visas by the United Arab Emirates, Dubai and Saudi Arabia.

The LCCI President said that continued delays and restrictions in visa issuance are causing serious disruptions to trade, investment and workforce mobility, which is affecting Pakistan's overall economic prospects in the region.





Mian Abuzar Shad expressed deep concern over the growing number of complaints being received from businesspersons, exporters, investors and human resources who are facing significant obstacles in obtaining visas from these countries, which have traditionally been among Pakistan's most important trade and labor partners.

He said that the business community is suffering due to the lack of access to key Gulf markets where Pakistan has deep-rooted commercial and labor ties. These restrictions are not only causing distress to our entrepreneurs but also harming Pakistan's economic interests abroad. He strongly urged the federal government to immediately initiate high-level diplomatic dialogue with the concerned countries to resolve these issues on an urgent basis. As a concrete step, he recommended that a special delegation led by a senior Federal Minister be sent to the UAE, Dubai and Saudi Arabia to engage directly with relevant authorities and advocate for the relaxation of current visa restrictions.

Mian Abuzar Shad also appealed the governments of these countries to take into consideration the historic economic, social and cultural ties they share with Pakistan. He said that thousands of Pakistani businesses operate in these regions and that a significant portion of Pakistan's foreign remittances and exports are linked to the Gulf market. In light of this, any hurdles in the issuance of business and labor visas would not only dent Pakistan's economy but could also affect the development of host countries that benefit from skilled Pakistani labor and investments.

"We urge the leadership of UAE, Dubai and Saudi Arabia to review their current visa policies toward Pakistan and facilitate genuine businesspeople and workers who contribute positively to their economies," he added.

The LCCI President feared that if these issues are not addressed promptly, Pakistan may lose vital opportunities in trade, joint ventures, foreign investment and manpower export. The fallout would be particularly damaging for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which rely heavily on regional trade and on-ground presence for business expansion.

He also called on Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce to coordinate and adopt a comprehensive foreign policy approach aimed at resolving these diplomatic and procedural barriers on a priority basis.



Some Gains but Broader Economic Relief Missing in Federal Budget 2025-26: LCCI

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry in a press conference following the federal budget 2025-26 speech, stated that while several of their demands were accepted, the business community had expected broader relief measures to boost investment, industrial growth, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the agricultural sector.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, former presidents Mian Anjum Nisar, Muhammad Ali Mian, former senior vice president Ali Hussam Asghar and former vice president Faheem ur Rehman Sahgal addressed the conference. A large number of executive committee members and market association presidents were also present.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad stated that the increase in the defense budget was a necessary step, but further increments should have been made. He welcomed relief for the construction sector and appreciated the higher allocation for water projects, though he emphasized that even more funds should have been allocated given current challenges.

He said that the LCCI's long-standing demand for simplified tax returns had been accepted. While the super tax was reduced, the cut was insignificant and should have been more substantial. Shad praised the imposition of taxes on FATA/PATA, a measure the LCCI had long advocated for.

He mentioned that 45 government entities are being merged or abolished but stressed the need to divest all loss-making public sector enterprises. Other positive steps included tax reductions in the real estate sector, lower duties on property transactions, the establishment of Daanish University and measures to curb sales tax evasion. Bringing e-commerce into the tax net was also a good decision.

He said that under-invoicing and Afghan trade have cost Pakistan Rs. 25 trillion over the past 15 years, while unchecked petroleum imports are negatively impacting foreign exchange reserves. He expressed disappointment over the lack of measures for SMEs.

Engineer Khalid Usman criticized the budget for lacking a clear growth strategy. He said the minor tax relief for salaried individuals was insufficient and called for further reductions. Taxing petroleum products, he argued, would discourage the documented economy.

Shahid Nazir Chaudhry stated that policies formulated without stakeholder consultation cannot be beneficial.

Mian Anjum Nisar said the budget should have focused on promoting investment. The allocations for industry, agriculture and water resources were too low and the cost of doing business remains unaddressed. The existing tax base is being overburdened.

Muhammad Ali Mian pointed out that local taxes were not reduced, electricity prices remained unchanged and questioned why the FBR's discretionary powers were increased amid automation.

Faheem ur Rehman Sahgal emphasized that the budget should have been prepared in consultation with the trader community.

"Hum Sab Pakistan" Interfaith Conference to Promote Unity, Harmony & National Integration at LCCI

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry on Thursday organised "Hum Sab Pakistan" Interfaith Conference to express national unity and interfaith solidarity.

Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian, former Vice President Faheem ur Rehman Saigol, senior political figures including Liaqat Baloch, Khurram Nawaz Gandapur, Chairman of LCCI Standing Committee on Interfaith Harmony Sardar Bishan Singh Bedi and religious scholars spoke on the occasion.

Provincial Minister Ramesh Singh Arora said that holding such interfaith events is a need of the hour. He said that Pakistan is a country for all its citizens, regardless of religion or ethnicity. The efforts of the Lahore Chamber in advancing the cause of interfaith dialogue and harmony are truly commendable. It is time for all segments of society to unite and play a proactive role in building an atmosphere of respect, equality and peace.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad said that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry is committed to promote interfaith harmony and will continue to lead initiatives that bring different communities together under the banner of peace and patriotism. He said that we salute the armed forces of Pakistan for their unmatched sacrifices in protecting our beloved homeland. At the same time, we also recognize and deeply value the contributions of religious minorities in the nation's development. Their role in the country's progress, democracy and social fabric is nothing short of remarkable. He said that a strong economy cannot be built in isolation from a strong and cohesive society and that both are essential for long-term national stability.

LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman stressed the need for unity. He said that we may belong to different faiths but we are united by one identity, Pakistan. Our purpose must be collective progress, national strength and peace for all. He said that mutual understanding and respect are the building blocks of a just and prosperous society. Former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian urged all segments of society to come together to build a stronger and more peaceful Pakistan. He said religious harmony is a necessity for national development. We must all work together to ensure that our future generations inherit a tolerant and united country. Chairman of the Standing Committee on Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Bishan Singh Bedi, praised LCCI's leadership for taking tangible steps to bring people of different faiths together. He highlighted how economic growth, communal peace and religious coexistence are interlinked and should be pursued together.



LCCI Chief hails SIFC National Coordinator Lt General Sarfraz Ahmed for boosting investment climate





President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Abuzar Shad has hailed the untiring efforts of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) National Coordinator Lt General Sarfraz for his outstanding role in creating a business-friendly environment and attracting both local and foreign investments to Pakistan. He said that Lt General Sarfraz's efforts have significantly contributed towards restoring investor confidence and opening new avenues of economic opportunities. Mian Abuzar Shad said that under the dynamic coordination of Lt General Sarfraz Ahmed, the SIFC has emerged as a true game-changer platform, aligning federal and provincial stakeholders to streamline policies, remove bottlenecks, and ensure fast-track approvals for investment projects. He appreciated the Council's initiatives in the fields of agriculture, information technology, energy, mining, and defense production which are expected to bring long-term benefits to Pakistan's economy. "Lt General Sarfraz deserves immense appreciation for introducing a new culture of efficiency, transparency and investor facilitation in Pakistan. His vision and dedication have not only strengthened Pakistan's image abroad but also provided fresh hope to the domestic business community," the LCCI President said. He said that the private sector stands ready to fully support SIFC initiatives, as these are crucial for industrial growth, job creation and enhancing exports. He particularly lauded the recent efforts of Lt General Sarfraz in engaging with international stakeholders, highlighting Pakistan's vast investment potential and strategic advantages. Mian Abuzar Shad also underlined the importance of public-private partnership , stressing that LCCI is eager to work closely with SIFC in identifying priority sectors, facilitating trade delegations, and ensuring that investment projects translate into tangible benefits for the economy. He concluded that the leadership of Lt General Sarfraz in SIFC has paved the way for economic revival, regional integration, and sustainable growth , and the business community of Pakistan fully acknowledges and appreciates his invaluable contributions.

Pakistan E-Commerce Association delegation call on LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, express concern over new Tax Measures



Pakistan E-Commerce Association (PEA) has sought help of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry for support in mitigating the potential damage to the e-commerce ecosystem because of new taxation policies.

In a meeting with the LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, the PEA delegation shared industry apprehensions and emphasized the urgent need for collaborative efforts to protect Pakistan's emerging digital economy.

Former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian, delegation members Shahbaz Siddique, Imran Haider also spoke on the occasion while LCCI Executive Committee members Khurram Lodhi, Amina Randhawa and Rana Muhammad Nisar were also present.

The PEA delegation apprised the LCCI President that the sudden introduction of complex taxation measures has caused widespread unrest among stakeholders in the e-commerce industry. They said that the government's recent policy changes were implemented without prior consultation and have created confusion due to vague legal definitions. This has raised fears of operational uncertainty among online sellers and marketplaces. They said that the requirement for mandatory registration for GST, Sales Tax and Income Tax, even for small and home-based businesses, will place an undue compliance burden on micro-entrepreneurs and discourage new entrants from participating in the digital economy. Moreover, the imposition of a higher withholding tax on Cash on Delivery (COD) transactions, compared to digital payments, was described as discriminatory and counterproductive to the government's stated goal of promoting digital transactions and financial inclusion. The delegation members said that the absence of stakeholder dialogue has left the industry unprepared to deal with these changes, which are being enforced without a clear roadmap. They also expressed concern over the lack of clarity in the definitions of key terms such as "platforms" and "intermediaries," which could result in inconsistent enforcement and further confusion in the market.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad assured full support to digital entrepreneurs and startups. He said that government policy-making must be inclusive, well-informed and designed in consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure fairness and sustainability. He stressed the need for urgent dialogue between tax authorities and the digital business community to resolve these issues amicably.

LCCI, Turkish Consul General Pledge to deepen economic and trade relations

The Consul General of Turkiye, Durmuş Bastug, Monday visited the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry to explore ways to expand trade and investment cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

The key areas, which came under discussion for enhancing collaboration, were trade, investment, technology, tourism and agriculture, along with the regular exchange of business delegations.

LCCI Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, Executive Committee Members Khurram Lodhi, Irfan Ahmad Qureshi, Amina Randhawa, Karamat Ali Awan, Rana Muhmmad Nisar, Shouban Akhter and Asif Khan also spoke on the occasion. .

Durmuş Bastug said that many of Turkiye's leading companies are already operating in Pakistan which reflects the confidence of Turkish investors in Pakistan's market. He stressed the importance of strengthening business-to-business relations and shared Turkiye's interest in initiating more joint ventures with Pakistani counterparts. He said that Pakistan and Turkiye share a bond rooted in brotherhood and mutual respect and assured that all possible efforts are underway to elevate the level of bilateral trade and cooperation.

LCCI Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry said that Pakistan holds its relationship with Turkiye in the highest regard. He said that the bond between the two countries is not just diplomatic but deeply historical and cultural, with both nations standing side by side during moments of celebration as well as times of adversity. He also recognized the crucial role played by both countries as members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in fostering unity, peace and progress within the Muslim world. Turkiye's consistent support for Pakistan on key international matters, particularly highlighting the love and respect extended by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.



While acknowledging the strong relationship, he pointed out that the current volume of bilateral trade remains modest.

He shared that Pakistan's exports to Turkiye during FY 2023–24 amounted to $337 million, while imports stood at $491 million, making the total trade volume around $828 million.

He stressed the need for greater efforts to unlock the untapped trade potential and fully utilize the Trade in Goods Agreement, which came into effect in May 2023. He expressed optimism that with mutual collaboration, the trade volume could be increased to at least $5 billion in the coming years. He also identified significant potential for growth in areas such as textiles, construction, food processing, pharmaceuticals, energy, tourism, sports goods and especially the information technology sector. LCCI Vice President underlined the role of business institutions in strengthening bilateral ties and assured that the Lahore Chamber is ready to take the lead in promoting joint ventures, hosting trade delegations, participating in international trade exhibitions and organizing Pakistan–Turkiye business forums. He added that the Turkish Consulate General in Lahore can serve as a vital link between Turkish investors and the Pakistani business community, particularly in a vibrant city like Lahore, which serves as the cultural, industrial and economic hub of Punjab.

Increase in Withholding Tax on Logistic Services will devastate Transport Sector; Government must review the decision immediately: LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad



The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Pakistan Goods Transporters Association have jointly urged the federal government to withdraw the increase in withholding tax on logistic services announced in the federal budget 2025–26 and to address other critical issues confronting the transport sector without delay.

Addressing a joint press conference held at the Lahore Chamber, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad said that the increase of withholding tax on logistic services from 4% to 6% is a harsh and unjustified blow to the goods transport sector, which is already struggling for survival. He sai dthat such a move could push the sector to the brink of collapse and demanded that the government immediately reverse the decision and reinstate the previous rate of 4%.

The LCCI President said that the only general truck stand in Lahore, located on Ravi Link Road, has become severely insufficient due to the city's expanding population and commercial activity. He urged the Punjab government to allocate land outside the city limits for the establishment of a modern, international-standard truck terminal, which would facilitate the relocation of goods forwarding agencies out of urban areas. This move would help reduce traffic congestion, lower environmental pollution and improve logistic efficiency.

The press conference was also addressed by LCCI Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, Executive Committee Member Riaz Tajik and leaders of the Pakistan Goods Transporters Association including President Nabeel Mehmood Tariq, Senior Vice President Haji Irfan Sultan and Vice Presidents Muhammad Ahmad Khan, Mirza Arshad Iqbal Baig, Mumtaz Ali Khan, among others. They collectively voiced deep concerns over the mounting challenges faced by the goods transport sector.

The association's office bearers strongly criticized the government's practice of increasing toll taxes every two months, describing it as unbearable for transporters. They added that the establishment of new toll plazas at various locations has opened the door for unjustified extortion, severely impacting the sustainability of transport businesses.

They also condemned the unwarranted fines and harassment by traffic police under the guise of document checks, which, they argued, not only demoralize drivers but also negatively affect operations and reputation. They stressed that transporters are being penalized for minor issues, which adds to the already immense financial burden.

Warning of the dire consequences, they said that the national economy is already under pressure and if immediate steps are not taken to resolve the ongoing issues, transporters would be left with no option but to shut down their operations, for which the government would be solely responsible.

Kenya eyes closer Economic Bonds with Pakistan, says High Commissioner

High Commissioner of Kenya Lt. Gen.(Retd.) Peter Mbogo Njiru has said that Kenya and Pakistan have a lot of potential to boost trade and economic tires. The growing interest of Pakistani entrepreneurs in strengthening bilateral trade and investment ties with Kenya is a good omen.

He was speaking at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. LCCI President presented the address of welcome and shed light on the possibilities of trade and investment in the two countries. Commercial Attache of Kenya Bonface Njoroge Njuguna, Honorary Consul Dr. Faisal Khokhar and LCCI Executive Committee members Khurram Lodhi, Ahsan Shahid, Amina Randhawa, Syed Salman Ali, Amir Ali and Karamt Ali Awanwere also present.

The High Commissioner said it is encouraging to see the desire among Pakistani businessmen to build trade linkages with Kenya and said that business-to-business partnerships are fundamental to sustainable commercial growth between the two nations.

He said that Kenya is open for foreign direct investment across all sectors the government is committed to ensuring full facilitation to international investors. He encouraged the Pakistani business community to take advantage of the vast economic opportunities available in Kenya, particularly in sectors such as health, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, textile manufacturing and leather.

Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Njiru said that Kenya's strategic geographic location offers a critical gateway to East and Central Africa. He said that shipping goods from Karachi to Mombasa is feasible and cost-effective, which makes Kenya an ideal entry point for Pakistani exports targeting African markets. He also appreciated Pakistan's Look Africa initiative, describing it as a forward-thinking and visionary policy framework that aligns



well with Kenya's economic aspirations. He assured the business community that any issues impeding mutual trade will be addressed through coordination with relevant stakeholders.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad said that diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Kenya were established in 1964 and have remained cordial and productive ever since. He said that both countries are members of the Commonwealth of Nations, share common values and trade potential.

He said that LCCI views Kenya as one of the most important trade partners for Pakistan in the African continent and considers it a vital gateway to East Africa. He said that the Government of Pakistan launched the Look Africa Policy in 2017 to boost economic and trade relations with African countries including Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Morocco, Senegal, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Tanzania Ethiopia. Under this initiative, Pakistan is seeking to negotiate Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) with various African regional blocs to enhance trade volume.

He said that the Look Africa Plan is expected to significantly contribute to Pakistan's efforts to unlock the vast export potential in African markets.

Mian Abuzar Shad added that the support and cooperation of the Kenyan High Commission would be crucial in achieving these goals. He shared key trade data and informed that during the fiscal year 2023–24, Pakistan's exports to Kenya amounted to $315 million while imports from Kenya were around $614 million.

Issues of new industrial gas connections and over billing being resolved on priority: CEO SNGPL

CEO of Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) Aamir Tufail has said that the gas-related issues of industrialists are being resolved on a priority basis. Pending applications for new industrial gas connections and over billing complaints are being addressed swiftly while a focal person will be appointed to ensure timely resolution of complaints.

He expressed these views while speaking at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. LCCI Acting President Engineer Khalid Usman and Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry also spoke on the occasion.



Executive Committee Members Rana Muhammad Nisar, Ahtesham-ul-Haq, Rana Shouban Akhtar, Imran Saleemi, Muhammad Muneeb Munnoo, Aamna Randhawa, Aamir Ali, Waqas Aslam, Irfan Qureshi and former Executive Committee Member Arshad Chaudhry were also present.

Aamir Tufail said that where industries or industrial areas require additional gas, dedicated pipelines will be laid upon their request. He said that domestic consumers are being supplied gas at a loss with around 40% recoveries which is one of the reasons for gas load shedding and the 3 million new connections pending applications pending.

He also admitted that gas for industries is expensive and reducing rates is beyond SNGPL's authority. However, industries can be facilitated through gas blending. He said that industry plays a vital role in national economic growth and its development is equally important for SNGPL, as industrial growth leads to higher gas demand.

LCCI Acting President Engineer Khalid Usman said that gas is the backbone of Pakistan's industrial sector. He said that gas reserves are depleting over time, which has created various challenges for industrialists across the country, including Lahore. He said that gas comprises about 29% of Pakistan's energy mix. Promoting alternative energy sources could allow gas to be diverted from power generation to industrial use.

Engineer Khalid Usman said that SNGPL's gas losses were 5.15% in 2022–23, which were reduced to 4.93% in 2023–24. He said further improvement is possible. He raised concerns that gas pressure is extremely low in many industrial areas, which severely affects the production process, resulting in significant production losses and financial damage to units.

He said that the restriction on new domestic gas connections is harming SNGPL itself. LCCI members are also facing unexpected gas shutdowns, disrupting factory schedules and preventing timely fulfillment of export orders. This undermines foreign buyers' confidence. Due to these reasons, industries are relocating and many have ceased manufacturing operations altogether.

Engineer Khalid Usman said that gas tariffs in Pakistan are very high, causing problems for the engineering and production sectors. Recently, RLNG prices have increased by around 4.9%, further escalating industrial production costs. He said reducing prices is essential.

LCCI Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry added that industrialists complain of long delays in the approval of their new gas connection applications. Moreover, SNGPL demands hefty amounts under the security deposit and overbilling remains a serious concern. Permanent solutions to these issues are needed.

PPP Alliance Pledges to Contribute Towards Economic Revival



An important meeting of the PIAF Pioneer Progressive Alliance (PPPA) was held under the chairmanship of Mian Anjum Nisar. The session featured comprehensive discussions on the prevailing trade and economic situation of the country, challenges faced by the business community, performance of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry and government initiatives for economic revival.

The meeting was attended by LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian, Chairman Pioneer Business Group Ali Hussam Asghar, Chairman PIAF Faheem-ur-Rehman Saigal, Nasrullah Mughal, Khurram Lodhi, Tanveer Ahmed, Abdul Wadood Alvi, Chaudhry Mohsin Bashir, Arshad Khan, along with other senior members.

During the meeting, Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar highly appreciated the outstanding performance of LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman and Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry. The participants gave them a standing ovation in recognition of their services. He said that safeguarding the interests of the business community and creating a conducive environment for trade and investment is the collective responsibility of every institution and leader.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad said that from the very first day, the LCCI has remained committed to addressing traders' issues and providing guidance and facilitation to every business entity.

Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman said that close cooperation with the government and regular engagement with policymakers is vital to stabilize the business environment. He also urged traders to play a constructive role in the development of the national economy and industrial growth.

Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry said that pro-business policies, improved facilities and industry-friendly initiatives will accelerate industrial development in Pakistan.

Ali Hussam Asghar said that the PPP Alliance is actively working to safeguard the interests of the business community, while ensuring immediate attention is given to their problems in order to boost investment and strengthen the national economy.

Former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian presented a resolution to pay tribute to the LCCI leadership, which was unanimously approved and acknowledged with a standing ovation by all participants. He underlined that resolving the problems of the business community is key to ensuring economic stability and attracting investment.

Former Vice President Faheem-ur-Rehman Saigal added that robust linkages between the government and trade institutions are essential to promote industrial growth and business-friendly policies.

The participants also observed that while government initiatives for economic revival are commendable, their implementation requires active involvement of the business community and trade bodies. The meeting stressed the urgent need to address critical issues such as electricity and gas tariffs, industrial rates and access to financial facilities to support trade and industry in the country.

Environmental Protection a Shared Responsibility of Government, Industry, and Society: LCCI Chief



President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Abuzar Shad has said that the business community is fully aware of its responsibilities regarding environmental protection is taking every possible measure in this regard. He urged the government to provide maximum facilitation and support to the business sector in this regard.

He expressed these views during a meeting with Director General Environment, Dr. Imran Hamid Sheikh. LCCI Executive Committee Members Syed Salman Ali and Waqas Aslam were also present on the occasion.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and the business community have always extended cooperation to the government for environmental improvement. He said that the solution to industrial challenges does not lie in restrictions or closures but in consultation and mutual cooperation. He said that if industries are taken into confidence while formulating policies, not only can environmental pollution be effectively controlled but industrial growth and employment opportunities can also be ensured.

The LCCI President said that instead of imposing bans on industries, attention should be focused on technology upgradation, environment-friendly practices and provision of necessary facilities. He underlined that environmental protection is a shared responsibility of the government, business community and civil society.

Mian Abuzar Shad pointed out that the major cause of smog in Punjab is traffic emissions, followed by the burning of crop residues, while industries contribute only 9% to the problem. Therefore, holding industries solely responsible for smog and pollution is unjustified. He suggested that the government should provide zero-markup loans for the installation of scrubbers and environment-friendly machinery. Furthermore, industries adopting green initiatives should be given special incentives and certificates.

He also proposed the establishment of a facilitation desk at the Lahore Chamber for direct coordination with industries to ensure timely resolution of issues. Public awareness campaigns on smog and environmental issues should also be made more effective so that citizens may act responsibly.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that the Lahore Chamber has always guided its members on tackling smog and environmental challenges and will continue to extend full cooperation to the Environment Protection Department in the future.

Speaking on the occasion, DG Environment Dr. Imran Hamid Sheikh acknowledged that environmental issues are a serious challenge that requires collective efforts from all segments of society, including industries. He lauded the role of LCCI, stating that the Chamber has always been at the forefront of initiatives for environmental betterment. He also announced the appointment of Anjum Riaz as a focal person for addressing industrial concerns.

Pakistan Needs a Balanced and Strategic Budget: Engr. Khalid Usman

A balanced and strategy-driven federal budget is essential for Pakistan's economic future, as it can define the country's direction and stabilize a struggling business climate. This was upshot of the speeches delivered by the LCCI Acting President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian, former Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar and experts from different sectors while speaking at the awareness session on the upcoming Federal Budget 2025-26, organized by the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Executive Committee Members Asif Malik, Firdous Nisar, Sheikh Muhammad Fayyaz, Abdul Majeed, Karamat Ali Awan, Syed Hassan Raza, Syed Salman Ali. Ehtsham ul Haq, Rana Muhammad Nisar, Shouban Akhter, former EC members Naeem Hanif, Malik Muhammad Usman, Yousaf Shah and Chaudhry Muhammad Arshad were also present.



Speaking at the session, Acting President Engr. Khalid Usman said that the key pillars of the budget should include expansion of the tax net, relief for existing taxpayers, protection of domestic industry, elimination of duties on imported raw materials, growth of GDP and exports meaningful economic reforms.

He said that tariffs must be used as a policy tool to protect domestic industries and reduce Pakistan's reliance on imports. He advocated for zero-rating customs duties and sales tax on raw materials to ensure cost-effective industrial production. He also called for targeted incentives and protections for SMEs and the auto sector which are critical for employment and economic resilience.

While talking about the government's reported plan to offer electricity at five cents per unit for crypto mining, he questioned why such a competitive rate is not being extended to local industries, which are far more impactful in terms of job creation and economic contribution.

He said that LCCI was the first chamber to submit budget proposals to the government. These included recommendations for reducing the cost of doing business, improving the ease of doing business, enabling SME growth using digital technology to minimize human interaction in tax administration. The LCCI also emphasized simplifying regulatory frameworks and promoting deregulation to encourage industrial expansion.

Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry said that high operational costs and unpredictable tax policies have discouraged both local and foreign investors. He urged the government to craft a budget that offers long-term predictability, particularly in taxation. He stressed the importance of stakeholder consultation, especially with the business community, before implementing any new tax regime. He said that unless energy costs and policy instability are addressed, Pakistan's manufacturing sector will remain uncompetitive in regional and global markets. He further added that restoring business confidence requires continuity in policy and a fair taxation system that supports genuine businesses instead of penalizing them. Former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian talked about tariff rationalization and gave various suggestions. He called for a pro-growth and industry-friendly federal budget that supports macroeconomic stability, promotes investment strengthens the country's industrial backbone.

Former LCCI President Ali Hussam Asghar said that Pakistan's export potential remains largely untapped due to inconsistent policy frameworks and lack of facilitation for exporters. He said that enhancing exports is the only sustainable way to address Pakistan's trade deficit and foreign exchange challenges.

Industries under RUDA's Jurisdiction in Saggian face severe Challenges, LCCI Demands CM Punjab's immediate intervention



The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry has raised serious concerns about the plight of industrial units operating in Saggian Lahore and surrounding areas under the jurisdiction of Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA).

In an emergency meeting held at LCCI, industrialists unanimously appealed to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz to take immediate notice of the crisis.

LCCI Acting President Engneer Khalid Usman, former LCCI President Muhammad Ali Mian, Convener of Standing Committee Ali Sheraz, Zafar iqbal, Akram dewan, Muhammad Ameen, Muhammad Hanan, Muhammad Yonus, Tanveer Hussain, Muhammad Adeel and Advocate M Waqar also spoke on the occasion.

Engineer Khalid Usman and Muhammad Ali Mian highlighted that major issue is imposition of DC rate that is 10 times higher than standard rates in the jurisdiction of RUDA.

They said that over 1,000 industrial units, ranging from small workshops to large factories, are facing existential threats due to these inflated charges.

They said that these industries employ more than 10,000 workers directly and support thousands of families indirectly," Usman emphasized. If RUDA continues with this unfair taxation, we will see massive job losses and industrial collapse.

While painting a grim picture of the potential consequences, they said that forcing industries to pay unaffordable DC rates will lead to shutdowns. When factories close, workers lose livelihoods, and that creates social unrest and law-and-order problems.

They demanded immediate reduction in DC rates to reasonable levels, restriction on sealing or eviction of industrial units and consultation with stakeholders before finalizing new rates.

Participants of the meeting said that industrialists have pin their hopes on CM Maryam Nawaz's intervention. "We believe the Chief Minister, who has prioritized economic development, will understand our plight and take necessary action.

They warned that destabilizing this industrial hub could have ripple effects across Punjab's economy. These industries feed into larger supply chains.

SNGPL Facilitation Desk inaugurated at LCCI

A dedicated facilitation desk of Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited has been inaugurated at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry to address gas-related issues of the business community.



LCCI Acting President Engineer Khalid Usman and SNGPL General Manager Lahore West Bilal Asghar jointly inaugurated the SNGPL Facilitation Desk. This initiative is part of the LCCI's efforts to strengthening public-private partnership.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by LCCI Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, Chaudhry Mohsin Bashir, Chief Engineer SNGPL Lahore West Muhammad Khurram, Deputy Chief Officer Syed Rehman, LCCI Executive Committee Members Shouban Akhtar, Syed Hassan Raza, Abdul Majeed and former Executive Committee Member Chaudhry Muhammad Arshad.

Speaking on the occasion, LCCI Acting President Engineer Khalid Usman lauded SNGPL and said that the establishment of Facilitation Desk at LCCI is a significant.

He said that this dedicated desk will now serve as a direct and effective communication bridge between SNGPL and LCCI members.

He said that the facilitation desk will not only help in providing immediate support to LCCI members but will also strengthen the relationship between SNGPL and private businesses. It is a win-win initiative that reflects LCCI's commitment to improving the ease of doing business.

GM SNGPL Lahore West Bilal Asghar termed the collaboration with Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry as a welcome step. He assured the business community that SNGPL is committed to resolving issues in a proactive and responsive manner. He said "we believe in facilitating the business sector to the best of our capacity and this desk will help us engage more efficiently with the industrial stakeholders.

Chief Engineer Muhammad Khurram and Deputy Chief Officer Syed Rehman also expressed their resolve to remain engaged with the LCCI and its members to ensure uninterrupted gas supply and quick resolution of technical issues. LCCI Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry welcomed the initiative and said that such collaborations reflect a positive change in the approach of public sector service delivery. He said that this facilitation desk would serve as a model for other. He said that the establishment of the SNGPL facilitation desk is a practical step towards public-private sector synergy, which can lead to more responsive governance and ease of doing business. Chaudhry Mohsin Bashir said that the facilitation desk is expected to become fully operational in the coming days and would be proved a great facility for the LCCI members.

TWO RAILWAYS, TWO DIFFERENT STORIES

By Mian Abuzar Shad

President

Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry

A country's railway is like its veins and arteries. It moves people and goods everywhere but running a railway is very expensive. Some railways lose money, while others find ways to earn it. This is the story of two neighbours, Pakistan Railways and Indian Railways. For the years, Pakistan's railway has been struggling. Meanwhile, India's railway performed an amazing financial turnaround under former Indian Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav. After Pakistan was created, it inherited a good railway system from the British. For many years, it was the best way to travel between big cities like Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi. It made money and helped connect the country. Over time, many problems piled up. The tracks, signals and trains became very old and broken. Because of this, trains must go slow and are often late or cancelled. The railway employs far more people than it needs. Most of its money is spent just on paying salaries and pensions, with little left for repairs. Politicians keep passenger ticket prices very low to make people happy. This means the railway loses money on every passenger trip. Lost cargo business is the biggest problem. Moving goods (like coal, cement and food) is how railways make real profit. But because the service was unreliable, businesses switched to using trucks. Losing this cargo business was a huge financial blow. The financial situation is bad. The total amount lost over the years is over Rs. 400 Billion. In the



2022-23 financial year, it lost Rs. 37.5 Billion. The railway survives because the government gives it emergency financial support every year to keep it running. There is a big plan with China (CPEC) to upgrade the main railway line. However, this project is moving very slowly. Adding a few new trains isn't enough to fix all the deep-rooted problems. In the early 2000s, Indian Railways was in deep trouble. It was losing money fast. Experts thought it was heading for bankruptcy. Prasad Yadav became the Railway Minister. His team used simple, clever ideas to save it. They focused on making more money from moving cargo, not by raising passenger ticket prices. They allowed each goods wagon to carry a little more weight. This one change meant each train could carry more cargo and make more money per trip without any extra cost. They unloaded and turned around goods trains much faster. This meant they could use the same trains and wagons more times every day. They lowered their prices for cargo to compete with trucks. Because they were cheaper and reliable, more businesses used them again. They made less money per package but moved a much larger volume, so total revenue soared. The changes worked incredibly well. Instead of losing money, Indian Railways started making record profits.





Massive show of support at Traders Convention

LCCI President puts conditional acceptance on government talks offer



The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry witnessed a massive show of strength at its Traders Convention, where thousands of traders declared their unwavering support for the LCCI.

Following overwhelming input from the trader community, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad conditionally accepted the government's offer for negotiations saying that any talks must be meaningful and solution-oriented. He said that the July 19 nationwide strike will proceed as scheduled.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, Former LCCI Presidents Mian Anjum Nisar, Muhammad Ali Mian, former Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar, former Vice President Faheem ur Rehman Saigol, representatives of trade and industrial associations and LCCI Executive Committee Members spoke on the occasion.



President LCCI Mian Abuzar Shad said that the business community has been pushed to the wall through oppressive policies. We don't enjoy going on strike. We have been squeezed to the point of compulsion. He said that when Lahore moves, the entire country follows. He condemned the imposition of Section 37AA of the Income Tax Ordinance and called it a draconian law aimed at destroying trade and industry. Dual nationals are drafting policies for this country. No wonder the economy has reached this crisis point. He said that the business community did not take these massive loans, we are not liable to bear their burden. Why are the $200 billion held abroad not brought back?, he questioned. Mian Abuzar warned that if even a single trader is harmed, the entire national business community will rise in protest. We will pay our taxes and we will also demand accountability for the corruption eating up our economy.

Former LCCI President and SAARC Chamber Vice President Mian Anjum Nisar said that we do not want to strike but the government has left us with no choice. Doing business has become nearly impossible due to the harsh and impractical budget measures imposed by FBR.

He revealed that in Lahore, FBR officials pulled guns on each other over bribery money disputes. He said that the politicians set a Rs. 500 million corruption limit for NAB but businesspersons are arrested over suspicion of Rs. 50 million. Why this double standard? He warned that Section 37AA would further promote corruption and destroy economic confidence.

LCCI, Bangladesh High Commission vow to Strengthen Bilateral Trade and Economic Ties



High Commissioner of Bangladesh Muhammad Iqbal Hussain Khan has said that Bangladesh has recently simplified visa requirements for Pakistani citizens to encourage bilateral trade and cultural exchanges. He said that work is also underway to introduce an e-visa facility for Pakistani nationals in the near future.

During his visit to the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the High Commissioner highlighted the importance of regular business delegation exchanges to explore new opportunities and deepen market understanding between the two countries.

LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry andHonorary Consul General of Bangladesh Qazi Humayun Fareed also addressed the session and pledged to further deepen economic and commercial relations between the two nations. LCCI Executive Committee Members Waqas Aslam, Syed Hassan Raza, Shouban Akhter, Firdous Nisar, Ahad Amin malik, Asif Malik, Ahsan Shahid and Asif Khan were also present.

Highlighting Bangladesh's interest in expanding economic ties, the High Commissioner mentioned potential trade sectors including coconut and coal from Bangladesh andleather, meat, rice, sugar, fish andcoal from Pakistan. He further disclosed that direct flights and shipping routes between the two countries are being considered to boost trade connectivity.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, welcoming the envoy, said that Pakistan and Bangladesh, being the largest economies in SAARC after India, should utilize regional trade opportunities for mutual benefit. He said that Bangladesh's GDP has reached $437 billion while Pakistan's GDP stands at $373 billion. It is time we join hands to maximize trade potential," he added.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that the balance of trade currently favors Pakistan, with total bilateral trade volume recorded at $718 million in 2023-24. Of this, Pakistan exported goods worth $661 million to Bangladesh and imported goods worth $57 million. From July to March in the current fiscal year (2024-25), Pakistan's exports to Bangladesh stood at $603 million and imports at $63 million.

He said that with consistent efforts and mutual commitment, it is very feasible to raise the trade volume to at least $2 billion andeven $5-10 billion in the near future, as envisioned by LCCI.

"Currently, Pakistan exports cotton fabrics, yarn andcement to Bangladesh. However, the LCCI President sees huge potential in pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments, sports goods andauto parts. He also stressed the importance of moving towards a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), given the favorable political and economic climate", Mian Abuzar Shad added.

The LCCI President assured the High Commissioner of LCCI's full support in promoting trade and investment between the two countries. "Our doors are always open for facilitating businesses and sharing trade-related information," he said.

LCCI President hails PM Shahbaz and economic team's efforts for boost in Pakistan's Credit Rating and Global Recognition for Sustainable Development

The President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry Mian Abuzar Shad has warmly welcomed the boost in Pakistan's credit rating by S&P Global to B- from CCC+ and the commendation by the World Bank for Pakistan's strides in sustainable development.



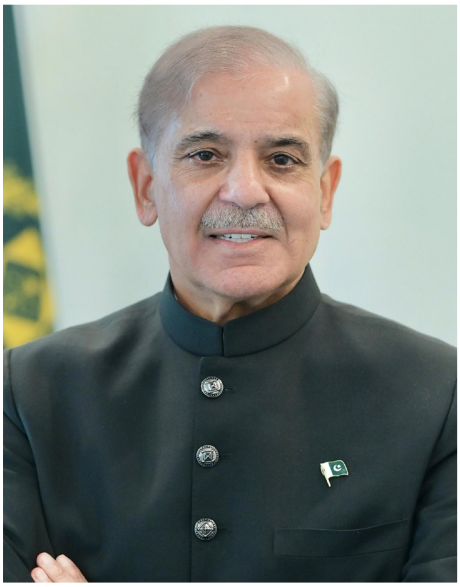
He termed these achievements as a reflection of the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and his economic teams's prudent economic policies, strategic planning and commitment to long-term economic growth and global integration.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that recognition from World Bank and S&P is a significant milestone that will play a vital role in boosting foreign investment, enhance business credibility and creating a more stable financial environment for the private sector. He said that the improvement in credit rating by a globally known institution like S&P Global sends a strong message to the foreign investors that Pakistan is on a path to economic recovery and resilience.

He said that despite numerous global and regional economic challenges, the Government of Pakistan has made commendable efforts in steering the country toward macroeconomic stability. The credit rating upgrade is not just a statistical improvement but a strong endorsement of the government's efforts to stabilize the economy, reduce fiscal deficits, enhance tax collection and implement structural reforms.

The LCCI President further stressed the importance of this positive development for the business community. He said that such international recognition boosts the morale of local entrepreneurs and provides them with confidence to invest, expand and innovate. "It will help reduce borrowing costs for the government and private sector, improve access to international financial markets and strengthen Pakistan's position in global trade and commerce", he added.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that Pakistan's shift toward inclusive and environmentally responsible economic growth is in line with global goals and will open new doors of cooperation and funding from international development partners. It is very encouraging to see Pakistan being recognized for its efforts in climate action, renewable energy, poverty alleviation and social sector reforms.



He hoped that the government would maintain this momentum and continue focusing on policies that foster ease of doing business, reduce regulatory bottlenecks, support export-led growth and incentivize small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These developments should now be translated into on-ground facilitation for traders, manufacturers and exporters so that the benefits of macroeconomic stability reach every level of the economy.

The LCCI President assured the government of full cooperation from the business community in further strengthening Pakistan's economic position.

Pakistan's Trade Ties with US set to expand: LCCI

Pakistan's trade ties with United States is all set to expand after a productive visit of Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

In a statement, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad commended the diplomatic and economic initiatives led by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Deputy PM Ishaq Dar, adding that their collective leadership has steered Pakistan back onto the path of macroeconomic stability and international confidence. The recent visit to Washington D.C. by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar is a landmark step that reflects the government's seriousness in reviving economic momentum and enhancing global partnerships.

The LCCI President said that during his visit, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar held a significant meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio. The two leaders discussed strengthening bilateral ties, particularly in trade, investment, technology, agriculture, and mineral development. He said it is very encouraging that they are committed work together to create structured and sustainable mechanisms for cooperation.

Mian Abuzar Shad also welcomed Ishaq Dar's remarks made during his address at the prestigious Atlantic Council in Washington, where he highlighted Pakistan's macroeconomic stabilization and a clear shift from aid dependency to trade-driven progress.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry fully endorses Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar's vision of replacing aid with mutually beneficial trade. His message at the Atlantic Council reflects a confident and forward-looking economic policy that resonates with the aspirations of Pakistan's business community. The commitment to open Pakistan's markets to American products and the pursuit of a comprehensive trade agreement with the United States is a highly strategic move that will significantly boost investor confidence and bilateral commerce.

He added that this trade-centric approach is exactly what Pakistan needs to revitalize its economy, attract foreign investment, and position itself as a competitive player in global markets.



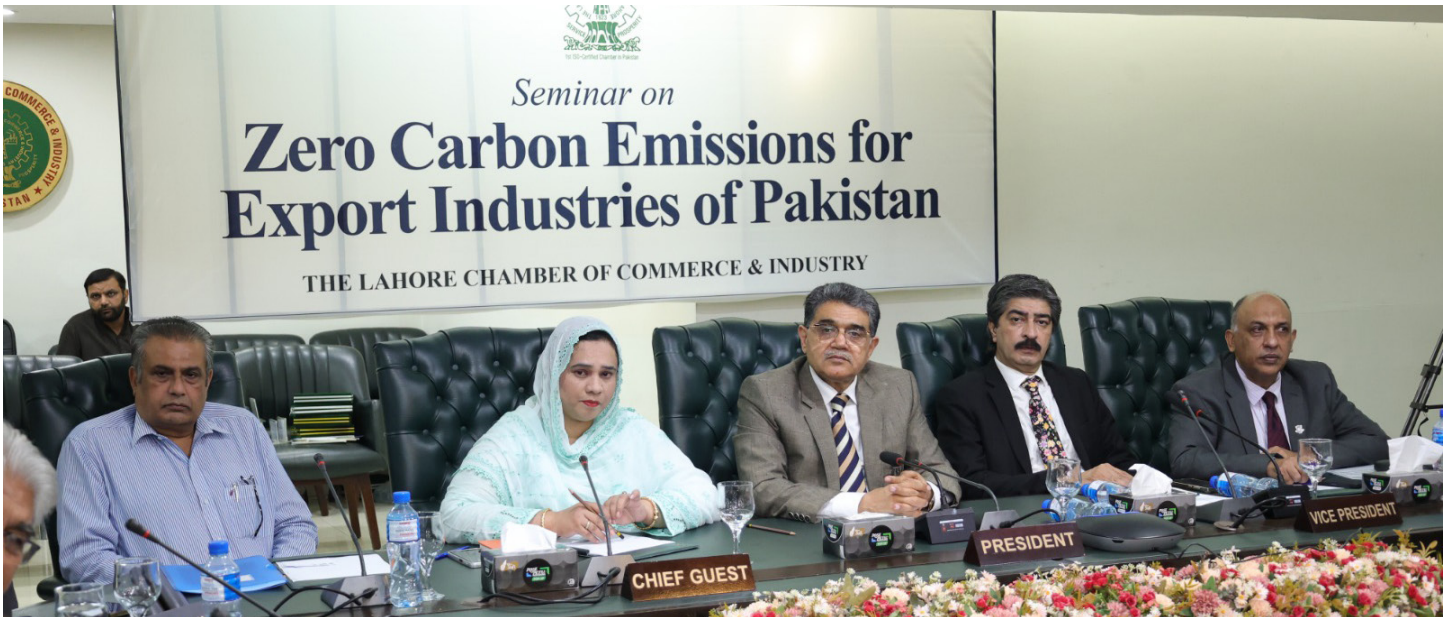
He said that it would also boost confidence of the U.S. business community that Pakistan is undertaking significant reforms to attract foreign investment, improve ease of doing business, and enhance institutional transparency. His engagements signaled to global investors that Pakistan is ready to re-engage with the international economy on strong, stable, and mutually beneficial terms.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad pointed out that the United States is already Pakistan's largest export destination, especially for textiles, garments, leather products and surgical instruments. At the same time, he highlighted an important fact: Pakistan is currently the second-largest importer of U.S. cotton, underlining the deep-rooted trade links between both nations' textile and agricultural sectors.

Mian Abuzar Shad also stressed that the textile sector, which accounts for a large portion of Pakistan's exports, can greatly benefit from more predictable trade frameworks and preferential access to U.S. markets. He said that a free trade agreement or a bilateral investment treaty with the U.S. would be a game-changer for Pakistan's industry. He hoped that the recent dialogues pave the way for such developments.

The LCCI President praised the government for its strategic diplomacy and effective engagement with the global business and political community. "Thanks to the efforts of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his team, the world is once again recognizing Pakistan's economic potential," he said.

Seminar on Zero Carbon Emissions for Export Industries at LCCI



The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry on Monday organized a seminar on "Zero Carbon Emissions for Export Industries of Pakistan" to promote eco-friendly practices among local exporters and raise awareness about global environmental standards.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad presided over the seminar and stressed the urgent need for industries to reduce their carbon footprint to remain competitive in international markets. He said that environmental sustainability is no longer an option but a requirement for accessing global trade opportunities. He stressed that Pakistan's export industries must adopt green production methods, modern technology andmove towards Green Certifications to meet international demands.

LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, Ms. Kanwal Parvez Chaudhary, Parliamentary Secretary, Department of Environment Protection & Climate Change, Government of Punjab was the Chief Guest while Barrister Hassan Nawaz Sheikh, Dr. Nabeel Amin, Sohail Butt and Convener LCCI Standing Committee on Corporate Relations & Market Committee Malik Amir Salam also spoke on the occasion.



Speakers provided technical insights into zero carbon strategies and guided participants on practical measures to transition towards sustainable industrial practices.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad thanked all guests, experts and participants and said that such seminars are part of LCCI's continued efforts to support the business community through knowledge sharing and policy advocacy on critical global issues like climate change and sustainability.

Punjab emerging as Global Role Model & Investment Hub due to CM Maryam Nawaz's Revolutionary Reforms: LCCI President

President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry Mian Abuzar Shad has said that Punjab is swiftly transforming into a global role model for international investors, thanks to the visionary leadership and revolutionary development initiatives by Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz.

In a statement, the LCCI President extended heartfelt congratulations to the Chief Minister



for her commitment to inclusive development, rapid execution of projects and people-centric governance that reflects international standards.

He said that under her leadership, the Punjab Government has launched wide-ranging and impactful reforms in key sectors including infrastructure, health, education, agriculture, water supply and transport which are making Punjab a progressive and investor-friendly province.

"Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz deserves full credit for transforming Punjab into a modern province where public welfare remains at the core of all development priorities," Mian Abuzar Shad added.

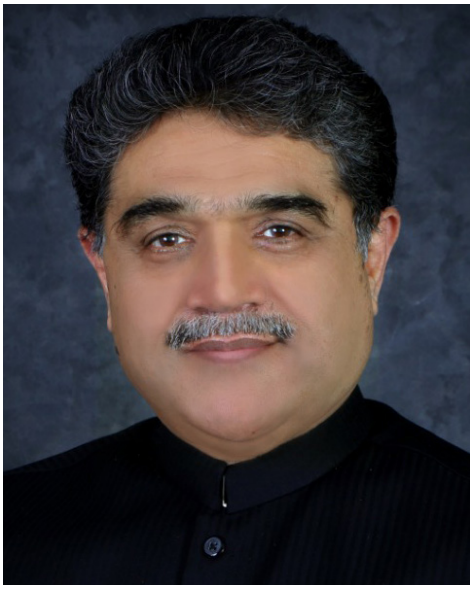
While highlighting the remarkable strides in healthcare, he said that mobile clinics, upgraded health units, free medicine in public hospitals and special cardiac care facilities are making quality medical care accessible for all. These reforms speak volumes about the government's sensitivity to human health and its commitment to improving public services.

The LCCI President also praised the roads from farm-to-market which has significantly improved the cost-effective transportation of agricultural produce and benefiting both farmers and buyers. Construction and repair of roads in urban and rural areas have enhanced connectivity and catalyzed commercial activity.

He said that investments in improving traffic flow through flyovers, underpasses and upgrades to the mass transit system, not only saving time and fuel but also promote environmental sustainability and economic efficiency. Smooth transportation of commercial goods has accelerated trade and commerce throughout the province.

In the agriculture sector, the LCCI President appreciated subsidy schemes, the launch of Kisan Cards, access to modern machinery and real-time information via digital platforms. These steps, he said, are empowering small farmers and bringing them into the fold of modern, profitable agriculture.

Mian Abuzar Shad said Punjab's push for education is encouraging. He said the upgrade of schools and colleges, provision of free books, teacher training and focus on girls' education has laid the foundation for a brighter, knowledge-driven future. The introduction of transport services and scholarships for female students has already



led to a rise in enrollment.

The LCCI President also lauded the revival of clean water supply projects and improvements in drainage systems, ensuring that both urban and rural populations have access to safe drinking water—an essential but long-neglected basic necessity.

He said CM's focus on women empowerment and youth uplift, business support, financial aid, training and skill development would go a long way and inject new energy into the provincial economy.

اپیل برائے
سیلاب زدگان



تباہ کن سیلاب، وجوہات، اثرات اور ہماری اجتماعی ذمہ داری



حالیہ سیلاب نے وہ تباہی و بربادی پھیلائی ہے کہ ہر پاکستانی کا دل خون کے آنسو رو رہا ہے۔ 400 سے زائد افراد جاں بحق ہو چکے ہیں، سینکڑوں لاپتہ ہیں، گاؤں کے گاؤں صفحہ ہستی سے مٹ گئے ہیں۔ لوگوں کی اکثریت اپنے گھر بار، مال مویشی ہر چیز سے محروم ہو گئے ہیں۔ یہ ایک قومی المیہ ہے جس پر فوری توجہ اور ہمارے اجتماعی اقدامات کی ضرورت ہے۔

ساری ذمہ داری مون سون، کلاؤڈ برسٹ اور غیر معمولی بارشوں پر ڈالنا غلط ہے۔ درحقیقت، اس تباہی کے پیچھے کئی انسانی کوتاہیاں کارفرما ہیں۔

پہاڑی علاقوں میں درختوں کی بے رحمانہ کٹائی نے زمین کی سیلاب کے پانی کو جذب کرنے کی صلاحیت ختم کر دی ہے۔ بارش کا پانی براہ راست نیچے کی طرف بہہ جاتا ہے، جس سے تباہ کن سیلاب آتے ہیں۔ ندی نالوں کے قریب غیر قانونی تعمیرات، بشمول بڑے ہوٹل اور رہائشی کالونیوں نے پانی کے قدرتی راستے روک دیے ہیں۔ ہمارے ڈیموں، بیراجوں، اور نکاسی آب کے نظاموں کی حالت زار ہے۔ طوفان سے پہلے آبی ذخائر کو خالی کرنے یا ندیوں کے بہاؤ کو منظم کرنے کے لیے مؤثر منصوبہ بندی کا فقدان ہے۔ موسمیاتی تبدیلیاں اب ایک حقیقت ہیں۔ ہم شدید موسمی واقعات کا زیادہ کثرت سے سامنا کر رہے ہیں۔ ہمیں اپنی تیاریوں اور ڈھالنے کی صلاحیت کو بہتر بنانا ہوگا۔

لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری ملک کے ان متاثرہ بہن بھائیوں کے ساتھ کھڑا ہے جو اس مشکل گھڑی سے گزر رہے ہیں۔ ہم نے فوری طور پر امدادی سرگرمیوں کا آغاز کر دیا ہے۔ ابتدائی طور پر 25 لاکھ روپے لاہور چیمبر کی طرف سے اور 5 لاکھ ذاتی طور پر میری طرف سے یعنی 30 لاکھ روپے کا فنڈ قائم کیا گیا۔ بعدازاں دوستوں نے اس کار خیر میں حصہ ڈالنا شروع کیا اور اب تک تقریباً ایک کروڑ روپے کی امدادی رقم سیلاب متاثرین کو بھیجی جا چکی ہے۔

اگرچہ فوری امداد انتہائی ضروری ہے، لیکن ہمیں طویل مدتی حل پر بھی توجہ دینا ہوگی تاکہ ایسی تباہیوں کو مستقبل میں دہرایا نہ جا سکے۔

فوری طور پر نئے ڈیموں اور آبی ذخائر کی تعمیر کو ترجیح دی جائے۔ سیلاب کے خطرے سے نمٹنے کے لیے جدید الارم سسٹم نصب کیے جائیں۔ سیلاب کے راستوں سے غیر قانونی تعمیرات کو ہٹایا جائے۔ حکومت اور سول سوسائٹی کو مل کر جنگلات کے تحفظ اور نئے درخت لگانے کے لیے کام کرنا چاہیے۔ بحالی کے کاموں میں متاثرہ کمیونٹیز کے لیے مزاحم مکانات اور بنیادی ڈھانچہ تعمیر کرنا شامل ہونا چاہیے۔

یہ وقت ہمدردی، یکجہتی اور فیصلہ کن اقدام کا ہے۔ آیئے، ہم سب مل کر اس بحران پر قابو پانے اور اپنے ہم وطنوں کی بحالی میں مدد کے لیے اپنا کردار ادا کریں۔

میاں ابوذر شاد

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