

LAHORE CHAMBER NEWS

An Official Publication of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry



President Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry Irfan Iqbal Sheikh presenting a souvenir to CCPO Lahore Zulfiqar Hameed after the meeting at LCCI. Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar, Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad and EC Members are also present.

COVID-19

How can you protect yourself ?



Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap for at least 20 seconds



Cover face with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing



Then throw the tissue in a waste bin



Maintain Social distancing



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

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Punjab Energy Minister invites private sector to invest in mini hydel projects



Punjab Minister for Energy Dr. Akhtar Malik has said that production of cheap electricity through all resources is the top priority of the government and various projects are well on way.

He was addressing a meeting at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The LCCI President Irfan Iqbal presided-over the meeting while Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar, Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad, former President Sohail Lashari and former Senior Vice President Mian Nauman Kabir also spoke on the occasion. Executive Committee Members Aqib Asif, Fiaz Haider,

Zeshan Sohail Malik, Nasrullah Mughal and Mian Sheheryar Ali also spoke on the occasion.

The Minister said that government is focusing renewable energy sector while no new fossil-fuel-run plant would be established now. He said that 7000 schools in Punjab have been shifted to solar while Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) have been inked with 13 universities. Investors from private sector have been invited to produce cheap energy through solar that would be purchased by the universities according to their capacity.

Punjab Provincial Minister said that two villages, having 500 houses

each, have also been shifted to bio-gas and solar energy. He said that two wind power plants have been established in Joharabad. He said that in the past governments had costly and long term agreements with IPPs to produce energy. He said that some agreements would be completed in the year 2023 while some would be expired in 2032. New agreements would be re-negotiated after expiration.

Dr. Akhtar Malik said various sites have been identified for mini hydel projects of 1 MW and above. While inviting the private sector to invest in these projects, he said that government would provide all facilities to the investors. They

should come forward, invest and produce cheap electricity for the industrial sector.

He said that government is promoting net metering while front desks are also being established at all DISCOs to encourage people to produce their own electricity through solar. He said that a testing LAB has been established near Kala Shah Kaku for the testing of solar panel quality.

LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that Punjab has a vital importance in Pakistan's Economy as it contributes around 55% to the national GDP and accounts for about 68% of electricity demand in the country.

hydro power) in our energy mix is still strained.

He said that in addition to the environmental concerns, the increased dependence on expensive thermal power generation results in tariff hikes, subsidies, circular debt, inefficiencies which hamper the competitiveness of Industrial sector in Punjab.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that in this scenario, we would like to know that what role the Government of Punjab is playing in improving our energy mix by increasing the share of renewable like Solar Power and Hydro Power so that our industry and businesses can have an affordable, sustainable and clean

President added.

He said that importance of Solar Energy is well understood around the world as global investments in solar power projects are well in excess of 100 billion dollars. Punjab also has abundance of resources in bagasse, biomass, cow dung and municipal waste, which can also be tapped for development of power generation projects in the province. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that irrigation canals and barrages in the Punjab provide an opportunity for low-head hydro projects. We would like to know that what projects has Government of Punjab undertaken to develop small hydropower projects in the province.



He said that Energy is an important component of the investment climate in our province because of its role as an important input in the production process.

The LCCI President said that although Pakistan has enhanced its power generation capacity considerably in recent times, we are still far away from an optimal energy mix as a heavy percentage of our Energy is still derived from thermal sources while the share of renewables (including Solar and

access to energy.

“We would especially like to focus on Solar Power as Punjab is endowed with vast potential of solar energy. The province has considerable sunshine available for more than 300 days (approximately) in a year. We recommend the installation of small solar power projects at all public sector buildings (including offices and education institutions). Industries should also be incentivized to install solar panels for self-consumption”, the LCCI

He said that to fulfill the demand of households and industry through exploring potential of renewable resources, there is a need to attract Private Sector Investment in Renewable Energy. The Government of Punjab should make efforts to develop a mechanism for public private partnership and special financing models should be designed to increase the access to finance for private sector in this regard.

“Teleconference”

LCCI President shares plan for export rise with PM Advisor

Lahore, April 01 – President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry Irfan Iqbal Sheikh had a teleconference with Advisor to Prime Minister for Commerce, Textile, Industry, Production and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood and shared his plan for exports uplifting.

The PM Advisor said that government is committed to cope with the challenges being faced by the country. He said that country's survival lies. He said, “We have to

bring in export culture and export driven growth strategy”.

He said that to bring more liquidity in the economy, it is requested that the Refunds of the Export Oriented Industries should be released on immediate basis. He appreciated the recently announced initiatives by the Government to enhance the exports growth of Pakistan after the economic slowdown by COVID-19 Outbreak.



bring in export culture and export driven growth strategy”.

Abdul Razak Dawood said that responsibility of the government is to correct the things government is rectifying them that went wrong in past. It is government's responsibility to give businessmen market access. He said that engineering and other sectors are also being focused for exports. He also emphasized to bring in quality culture as it would definitely help in enhancing exports. The adviser said that he is persuading Pakistan's manufactures to send their products outside the country in quantity terms at the maximum to attain the market share.

LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that Special permission should be granted to Industries for loading export cargo.

He said that to bring more liquidity in the economy, it is requested that the Refunds of the Export Oriented Industries should be released on immediate basis. He appreciated the recently announced initiatives by the Government to enhance the exports growth of Pakistan after the economic slowdown by COVID-19 Outbreak.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that Government should revive the Zero-Rating facility for the export oriented Industries. He said that Income tax refunds of Rs 100 Billion should be

released immediately for Industry to overcome liquidity issues. The Government should not charge payments for DTRE and DLT so that the issue of refunds is not created. He said that special permission should be granted for transportation of labour of export oriented industries. The Government should re-allow BMR (Balancing, Modernization and Replacement) Tax Credit of 10% under section 65B of Income Tax Ordinance.

In order to reduce the cost of doing business for our local industry, the Gas Tariff should be reduced by for all the Industries. There should also be reduction on gas rates for Industry. He said that Income Tax Exemption certificates on electricity bills should be allowed for all the Industries.

The raw materials for export oriented

industries which are not manufactured locally should be zero rated.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that the government (Federal and Provincial) needs to publicly announce the approval for exporters, ensuring all Govt functionaries i.e administration and law enforcers respect that approval. This announcement will also help to deal with the media who do not understand that the Govt has given exporters permission to complete their pending export orders. LCCI President said that various essential food items in Pakistan are imported from Australia, Canada and Myanmar. There is a chance that these countries might stop their exports of essential food items. The government should have a backup plan of finding substitute markets for importing essential food items on emergency basis.

He said that export the industries across all sectors which have confirmed export orders, should be allowed to operate in the lockdown period. A special mechanism should be devised by the government in this regard.

He said that the workers are only in the factories for 8 hours and for the remaining 16 hours they are on their own. Companies cannot be held responsible for workers conduct outside the premises and could expose them to coronavirus. He said that premises should not be either raided or sealed in case of possible cases.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that due to closure of airspace, the courier companies like DHL and FEDEX are not operating in Pakistan. As a result the documents of importers are stuck in China while their consignments have arrived at Karachi Port. The Government should give a special provision to facilitate importers for releasing import consignments against copied documents with the payment of shipping guarantee which is equal to 100 percent of margin value.

LCCI appeals to wave-off three months electricity and gas bills

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry has appealed to the government to wave-off electricity and gas bills of the consumers for at least three months as they are passing through a critical time of the history.

In a statement, the LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar also appeal to the property owners to wave-off rents for at least two months.

They said that as social distancing

and appeals to stay inside homes have brought businesses and employees to a halt.

“People are restricted to their homes and businesses have been shut down; it is, therefore, the only way relief can be provided to the citizens” as the country deals with the health crisis, they added.

The LCCI office-bearers said that how small businesses, employees, and daily-wagers are facing challenges in terms of livelihoods as many of them either did not

have work opportunities anymore or were staying home owing to the government’s orders.

The LCCI office-bearers also suggested to the government that marriage halls may be used as quarantine centers by the government due to shortage of hospitals. In return, government should give 3-year tax holiday to the owners of marriage halls.

They also hoped that deadline for the renewal of LCCI membership would also be extended.



LCCI welcomes cut in petroleum products prices, rates

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry has welcomed cut in petroleum products prices and mark up rates saying that government and State Bank of Pakistan have taken steps in right direct at a difficult time.

In a statement, the LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry was calling since long for cut in petroleum products prices and markup. He said that government

has taken a good decision that would give a bigger relief to the industrialists, traders and masses.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that coronavirus has halted the economic activities across the country. He said that business community and government need cooperation of each other at this critical time of the history to cope the severe challenges.

The LCCI President said that business community is in a deep

trouble. He said that besides cancellation of exports orders, provision of employment is one of the top priorities of the business community. Cut in POL prices and mark up rate would be definitely a big support to the business doing people.

Meanwhile, the LCCI office-bearers urged the masses to cooperate with the government and the law enforcement agencies and adopt the advises issued for their safety.

Ready to take up idea of model police stations near industrial estates: CCPO



Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Zulfiqar Hameed has said that E-Police system screening of vehicles and an Application for registration of private house workers would be introduced soon.

He was addressing a meeting at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh presided-over the meeting while Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar, Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad, Convener of Standing Committee on Law and Order Nasrullah Mughal and Convener Standing Committee on Citizen Police Liaison Tahir Manzoor Ch also spoke on the occasion.

SP Civil Line Dost Mohammad, LCCI former Senior Vice President Amjad Ali Jawa, Executive Committee Members Haris Attique, Sheikh Sajjad

“Police Department has a strong interaction with LCCI and honors its suggestion for the improvement of law and order situation.far better expertise.

CCPO Zulfiqar Hameed

Afzal, Zeeshan Sohail Malik, Fiaz Haider, Atif Ikram, Wasif Yousaf, Yasir Khursheed, Shehryar Ali, Malik M. Khalid,

Haji Asif Sehar and Shfiq Butt and representatives of trade and industry were present on the occasion.

The CCPO said that Police Department has a strong interaction with the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry and honors its suggestion for the improvement of law and order situation.

He said that the City Police is ready to take up the idea of model police stations near industrial estates. LCCI should identify the areas and forward the suggestion to the police department for further action. He also appreciated the idea of parking plazas in the city and agreed to forward it to the Chief Minister Punjab.

The CCPO said that according

“ Sacrifices made by policemen and other law enforcement agencies should be acknowledged as they had protected several lives by taking timely action and foiling the evil designs of the country’s enemies.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh LCCI President

to an international survey about victimization crimes in cities the Lahore is safer than London, New York, Chicago and New Delhi.

About PSL event, he said that it was a heavy responsibility but Lahore Police doing well. He said that most of the PSL matches are to be held in Lahore while foreigner players also prefer to stay in Lahore which is an acknowledgment of the better Law and order situation in the city. He said that local and foreign delegations have

visited the control room of Safe City Project and appreciate the state of the art set up. He said that facilitation center at the LCCI would be established soon. LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh in his address said that Lahore Chamber and Police Department have close working relations and extending cooperation to each other in every possible way.

He said that sacrifices made by policemen and other law enforcement agencies should be acknowledged as they had protected several lives by taking timely action and foiling the evil designs of the country’s enemies.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh appreciated the support of Race course Police Station’s staff for ensuring a peaceful atmosphere during the LCCI elections 2019. The LCCI President said that the security conditions in Lahore have been improved due to Safe City Project. He said that the formation of Dolphin Force is also a great step and it has lessened the street crime

rate. He said that the patrolling of the Dolphin Force should be enhanced.

He said that LCCI has already suggested up-gradation of the police stations adjacent to the industrial estates and major markets, into model Police stations. This will help enhance the efficiency of the Police Staff in facilitating the business community.

He said that encroachments and professional beggars are hampering the smooth flow of traffic. CCPO should take notice of the situation as Traffic Police is also working under his jurisdiction. He said that Electronic Traffic Violation Control System has reduced traffic violation. At some places, some technical errors have seen in this system that should be rectified.

He informed the CCPO two standing committees with the name of Law and Order and Citizen Police Liaison Committee CPLC are established at the LCCI.



Pakistani businessmen urged to explore opportunities for trade with Germany

Germany has multiple significances for Pakistan as it is the biggest economy in European Union and shares borders with important countries like Netherlands, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland and Denmark. Private sector of Pakistan should find out ways to explore more

relations and these ties are well reflected in two way trade. Germany comes at 11th place among the top importing countries and at 5th place among the top exporting countries for Pakistan. The LCCI Senior Vice President said that level of two-way trade is increasing year by year. It was 2.4 billion dollars in 2017 and went up to 2.6 billion dollars in

as its quality vehicles could find a good market in Pakistan. In order to take advantage of existing trade and investment opportunities, we have to keep regular follow up with each other through your good offices. “Market Intelligence Reports serve as a good tool to know about the potential areas of a country. Commercial section should be



opportunities to further increase the present level of trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

These views were expressed by the LCCI Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar while talking to Ambassador-designate to Germany Dr. Mohammad Faisal at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry. LCCI Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad, former LCCI President Farooq Iftikhar, EC members Haji Asif Sehar and Mian Sheheryar Ali were also present on the occasion. Ali Hussam Asghar said that EU has extended the GSP plus Status for Pakistan till 2022. It offers a tremendous opportunity to Pakistan and Germany to further expand bilateral trade relations. He said that both Germany and Pakistan have good diplomatic

2018. The balance of trade of trade is slightly in favour of Pakistan as our exports to Germany are 1.31 billion dollars while our imports from Germany are 1.29 billion dollars. The exports to Germany are however heavily concentrated in Textiles, Surgical Instruments and leather products.

He said that Pakistan has a lot to offer to German Investors, particularly in the areas of mega infrastructure and renewable energy projects especially solar energy solutions. Pakistan has a very vibrant and growing Information Technology sector which offers a tremendous room for Joint Ventures between two countries Ali Hussam Asghar said that there is also immense potential for German Auto companies to set up manufacturing plants in Pakistan

given task to prepare some reports to be shared with private sector representatives. These reports would apprise them about the potential products and the potential trade partners in German market”, he added. LCCI Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad said that the exchange of Trade Delegations and Single Country Exhibitions can prove to be critical in enhancing the trade volume. The Ambassador said that strong liaison between Chambers of Commerce & Industry and business institutions of the two countries would definitely enhance the mutual trade volume. He said that Pakistani business community would have to adopt a strong strategy as customers in European Union are not only quality conscious but also very selective in making deals with other countries.

Thailand-Pakistan have potential to do more trade, says Thai CG



Consul General of Thailand Thatree Chauvachata has said that Pakistan is one of the important trade partners of Thailand and both countries have ability to further strengthen mutual trade and economic ties.

He was addressing a meeting at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry. LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar, Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad also spoke on the occasion while Executive Committee Members Sheikh Muhammad Ibrahim, Haris Attiq, Zeshan Sohail Malik and Haji Asif Sehar were also present on the occasion. The Consul General said that in 2019, the bilateral trade between two countries jumped to over \$ 1.46 billion. He said that Thailand exported goods and services worth 1174.25 million dollar to Pakistan.

Similarly Pakistani export to Thailand recorded an increase of 41.45 percent in 2019”, he said and added that among these export items includes fresh aquatic animals, garments and textile, etc.

The Thai Consul General informed the house that very recently Pakistan’s Electro-Polymers Private Limited and Thai Stanley

Electric Public Company Limited have inked a historic partnership by signing international Tri-party Joint Venture with Japan, Thailand and Pakistan.

LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that Pakistan and Thailand enjoy strong diplomatic relations, which are based on mutual trust. He said that traditionally, Thailand and Pakistan have been enjoying steady trade relations. Thailand comes at 9th place among the top importing countries and at 24th place among the top exporting countries for Pakistan. “In recent years, the trade between the two countries has shown tremendous improvement. In 2016, the volume of two way trade was around 1 billion dollars that surged to 1.7 billion dollars in 2018. From 2016 to 2018, Pakistan’s exports to Thailand increased from 110 million dollars to 225 million dollars whereas Pakistan’s imports from Thailand went up from 920 million dollars to 1.4 Billion dollars”, the LCCI President added. He said that Pakistan’s exports to Thailand consist of frozen fish, wheat, mineral fuels and cotton etc., whereas we are importing automotive parts, rubber tires, chemicals, polymers, artificial staple fibres and machinery

parts etc., from Thailand. The Government of both countries should take the necessary steps in this regard. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that Thailand has made substantial progress in Halal Food Exports in last few years. LCCI has also identified Halal Food as one of our priorities sectors where we can enhance our exports. “We would certainly like to learn from your experience and also enter into Joint Ventures with your private sector companies in Halal Food sector”, he added.

LCCI Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar said that Pakistan has a very vibrant and growing Information Technology sector which offers a tremendous room for Joint Ventures between the two countries. The LCCI office-bearers invited the Thai businessmen to arrange sector-specific delegations to visit Pakistan to have first hand knowledge about the opportunities of trade and investment in Pakistan. They said that Active engagement of the business community and diplomatic missions of the two countries, exhibitions of products and socio-cultural programs in each other’s country can prove handy in further improving people to people contacts.

LCCI demands relaxation for small traders, shopkeepers

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry has appealed for relaxations for small traders and shopkeepers and suggested the government to allow the business in the markets for a restricted time and with full precautions and SOPs as described by the concerned authorities.

While talking to different delegations of traders, the LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar and Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad said that the government has taken an appreciable step by

allowing operations to the export-oriented industries but relief should also be given to the small traders and shopkeepers who are in deep trouble and facing severe financial crunch.

“These people are backbone of the economy and playing a great role in providing employment and revenue”, The LCCI office bearers said and added that allowing working for prescribed time enables them to face the challenges posed in the context of coronavirus. The LCCI office bearers said that if small traders and shopkeepers are allowed to open their businesses, they will be able to stand

on their feet for a long time. They informed the delegations that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry has already raised the issue at a high level and hope that soon the traders and vendors will get their businesses open with SOPs.

Earlier, the delegations lauded the role of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry for advocating the small traders and shopkeepers. They said that the economic downturn is increasing due to prolonged lockdown and now they should be allowed to open their businesses for limited time as per decided mutually.



LCCI for two-year exemption for investment source

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry has urged the government not to ask the source of investment from the investors for at least two years.

In a statement, the LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that the exemption is direly needed for the revival of industries and to bring money in circulation. He said that lockdown because of coronavirus has

created a serious economic situation which has particularly upset the business community.

The LCCI President said that hopefully lockdown will end soon but after that cash flow would become a major issue. He said that in order to overcome this problem, the government should announce immediately that investors will not be asked about their sources

of investment. He said that this important step would bring capital to the market, expand industries, help them to recover and flourish, generate employment opportunities and would enhance the government’s revenue.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that investment to GDP ratio is very important to achieve the economic goals and for the purpose, government would have to take extra ordinary measures.

LCCI President for exchange of trade delegations to boost Pak-Romania trade

Pakistan can earn huge foreign exchange by exporting skilled labour force to Romania as that country is experiencing shortage of trained human resources.

This was stated by Pakistan Ambassador designate to Romania Dr. Zafar Iqbal while talking to the LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry. LCCI Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad also spoke on the occasion while Executive Committee Members Malik Muhammad Khalid, Fiaz Haider and Sheheryar Ali were present on the occasion.

The Ambassador said that hardworking and skilled labour force of Pakistan can play a vital role in economic stability of Pakistan by their remittances.

He said that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry should play a proactive role in this regard.

He said that Romania has transformed itself into a developed economy in a short span of time. He said that value-addition marketing and branding can help Pakistan win Romanian market in a winsome manner.

Private sector should focus on market research, identification of products for trade with Romania and should establish warehouses abroad.

The Ambassador said that all possible support would be provided to the sector-specific delegation to Romania arranged by the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry. LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that Pakistan is a resourceful country and has the ability to cater to the needs of any country.

He said that although Pakistan and Romania enjoy cordial diplomatic and political relation, the economic relations have yet to reach their true potential.

He said that Romania is one of the major markets in EU. Since the EU has granted the GSP plus Status to Pakistan, it offers a good opportunity to Pakistan and Romania to improve their bilateral trade relations.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that the total trade volume between Pakistan and Romania was merely 73 million dollars in 2018 although it increased from 64 million dollars in 2017. Both countries have the potential of taking the trade volume

to 500 million dollars. The balance of trade has traditionally been in favour of Romania. In 2018, the trade deficit was around 20 million dollars.

He said that the potential areas where Pakistan and Romania can enhance economic cooperation and trade ties are Value Added Textiles, Surgical Instruments, Tractor Parts, Pharmaceuticals, Information Technology, Energy, Food Processing and Tourism etc. In order to take advantage of existing trade and investment opportunities, we have to keep regular follow up with each other through your good offices.

The LCCI President said that Market Intelligence Reports serve as a good tool to know about the potential areas of a country.

He suggested that commercial section should prepare some reports to be shared with private sector representatives. These reports would apprise them about the potential products and the potential trade partners in Romanian market. He said that the exchange of Trade Delegations and Single Country Exhibitions can prove to be critical in enhancing the trade volume.



اشیائے ضرورت، ادویات کی نقل و حرکت آسان بنائی جائے۔ لاہور چیمبر

لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے صدر عرفان اقبال شیخ، سینئر نائب صدر علی حسام اصغر اور نائب صدر میاں زاہد جاوید احمد نے حکومت اور قانون نافذ کرنے والے اداروں سے اپیل کی ہے کہ اشیائے ضرورت، خورد و نوش اور ادویات وغیرہ کی نقل و حمل کو آسان بنائیں تاکہ کسی بھی صورت ان اشیاء کی قلت پیدا نہ ہونے پائے۔ ایک بیان میں لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے عہدیداروں نے کہا کہ یہ اطلاعات موصول ہو رہی ہیں کہ عوام کی بے جان نقل و حرکت کو روکنے کے لیے قائم کیے گئے ناکوں پر اشیائے خورد و نوش اور ادویات وغیرہ لانے لے جانے والی گاڑیوں کو بھی مشکلات پیش آرہی ہیں۔

انہوں نے کہا کہ چیکنگ اور ضروری کارروائی کرنا یقیناً ضروری ہے لیکن یہ بات بھی یقینی بنائی جائے کہ ان کے لیے بلاوجہ مشکلات پیدا نہ ہوں پائیں اور تاجروں کی ان کوششوں کو دھچکا نہ لگے جو وہ سپلائی چین برقرار رکھنے کے لیے کر رہی ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ کرونا وائرس سے تحفظ کے تناظر میں ایک مشکل صورتحال پیدا ہوئی ہے جس سے نمٹنے کے لیے انفرادی اور اجتماعی دونوں طرح کے کردار ادا کرنا ہونگے۔ لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے عہدیداروں نے کہا کہ یہ مشکل وقت بحیثیت قوم ابھرنے اور ایک دوسرے کی مشکلات حل کرنے کا تقاضا کرتا ہے۔

انہوں نے توقع ظاہر کی کہ کرونا کی وبا جلد ہی دم توڑ جائے گی اور ملک میں تمام سرگرمیاں معمول پر آجائیں گی، انہوں نے بتایا کہ لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری موجودہ صورتحال میں بھی پوری طرح فعال ہے، اپنے ممبران کی سہولت کے لیے ممبر شپ کی تجدید کے لیے ایک ماہ کی توسیع حاصل کی گئی ہے جبکہ حکومت سے مطالبہ کیا ہے کہ تین سو پونٹ تک کے صارفین کے بجلی کے بل اور صنعتکاروں کے لیے تین ماہ کا مارک اپ معاف کرے۔

صارفین کو کم از کم تین ماہ کے بجلی و گیس کے بل معاف کیے جائیں: لاہور چیمبر

لاہور چیمبر کے صدر عرفان اقبال شیخ، سینئر نائب صدر علی حسام اصغر اور نائب صدر میاں زاہد جاوید احمد نے حکومت سے اپیل کی ہے کہ کم از کم تین ماہ کے لیے صارفین کے بجلی اور گیس کے بلز معاف کرے جبکہ پراپرٹی مالکان سے بھی اپیل کی ہے کہ وہ موجودہ حالات کے پیش نظر اپنے کرایہ داروں کو دو ماہ کے لیے کرایہ کی چھوٹ دے دیں۔

ایک بیان میں لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے عہدیداروں نے کہا کہ کرونا وائرس کی وجہ سے ملک بھر میں غیر معمولی تجارتی و معاشی صورتحال پیدا ہوئی ہے، کاروباری سرگرمیاں نہ ہونے کے برابر ہیں، ایکسپورٹ آرڈرز کینسل ہو رہے ہیں جبکہ مارکیٹوں میں گاہک نہیں ہے، ایسے میں اگر حکومت انہیں ٹویلیٹی بلز میں تین ماہ کی چھوٹ دے دیتی ہے تو یہ بہت بڑا ریلیف ہوگا، انہوں نے توقع کی کہ پراپرٹی مالکان بھی جذبہ خدمت کا اظہار کرتے ہوئے اپنے کرایہ داروں کو کرایہ میں دو ماہ کی چھوٹ دیں گے۔

انہوں نے مزید کہا کہ حکومت میرج ہالوں کو وقتی طور پر قریطینہ میں تبدیل کر دے اور بدلے میں انہیں دو سال کے لیے ٹیکسوں کی چھوٹ دے دے، اس طرح اجتماعی کوششیں کر کے اس مشکل وقت کو ٹالا جاسکتا ہے۔ لاہور چیمبر کے عہدیداروں نے یہ توقع بھی ظاہر کی کہ حالات کے پیش نظر لاہور چیمبر کے ممبران کو تجدید رکنیت کے لیے اضافی وقت دے دیا جائے گا۔

عوامی مفاد سے وابستہ تجارتی اداروں سے نرمی برتی جائے: صدر لاہور چیمبر

لاہور چیمبر کے صدر عرفان اقبال شیخ، سینئر نائب صدر علی حسام اصغر اور نائب صدر میاں زاہد جاوید احمد نے پنجاب حکومت پر زور دیا ہے کہ عوامی مفادات سے وابستہ تجارتی اداروں سے نرمی برتی جائے کیونکہ وہ سخت مشکل حالات میں بھی کام کر کے قومی خدمت سرانجام دے رہے ہیں۔ ایک بیان میں لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے عہدیداروں نے کہا کہ تاجر برادری ڈیپارٹمنٹل سٹورز کے ذریعے عوام کو اشیائے ضروریات و خوردنوش کی مسلسل فراہمی یقینی بن رہی ہے تاکہ کوئی بحرانی کیفیت پیدا نہ ہونے پائے جبکہ افرادی قوت کو روزگار کی مسلسل فراہمی بھی اس کے بنیادی مقاصد میں شامل ہے۔

انہوں نے کہا کہ اس وقت تاجر برادری کی اولین ترجیح حکومت کی ان کوششوں کو آگے بڑھانا ہے جو وہ کرونا وائرس کی وجہ سے پیدا ہونے والی صورتحال سے نمٹنے اور عوام کو ریلیف مہیا کرنے کے لیے کر رہی ہے، اس کے لیے ضروری ہے کہ حکومتی ادارے بھی تاجر برادری کے ساتھ دوستانہ رویے کا مظاہرہ کریں جو حکومت کی ہدایات پر عمل کرنے کی بھرپور کوشش کر رہی ہے۔ لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے عہدیداروں نے مزید کہا کہ اشیائے خوردنوش اور ادویات لانے لے جانے والی گاڑیوں کی نقل و حمل میں بھی بلاوجہ رکاوٹیں نہ ڈالی جائیں تاکہ سپلائی مسلسل برقرار رہے۔ انہوں نے توقع کا اظہار کیا کہ کرونا وائرس کی وجہ سے پیدا ہونے والی صورتحال جلد ہی ختم ہو جائے گی اور ملک میں تجارتی و معاشی سرگرمیوں پر رے جوش و خروش سے بحال ہو جائیں گی۔

سرمایہ کاروں سے دو سال تک سرمایہ کا ذریعہ نہ پوچھا جائے

لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے صدر عرفان اقبال شیخ نے حکومت پر زور دیا ہے کہ حکومت سرمایہ کاروں سے کم از کم دو سال تک سرمایہ کا ذریعہ نہ پوچھے تاکہ صنعتوں کی بحالی اور روپے کو زیر گردش لانے میں مدد مل سکے۔ ایک بیان میں لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے صدر نے کہا کہ کرونا لاک ڈاؤن کے سبب سنگین معاشی صورتحال پیدا ہوئی ہے جس نے بالخصوص کاروباری برادری کو پریشان کر کے رکھ دیا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا امید ہے کہ لاک ڈاؤن جلد ہی ختم ہو جائے گا مگر اس کے بعد کیش فلو ایک بڑا مسئلہ بن کر ابھرے گا۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ اس مسئلہ پر قابو پانے کے لیے حکومت فوری طور پر اعلان کر دے کہ سرمایہ کاری کرنے والوں سے سرمایہ کاری کا ذریعہ نہیں پوچھا جائے گا۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ یہ اہم قدم اٹھانے سے مارکیٹ میں سرمایہ آئے گا، صنعتوں کو وسعت حاصل ہوگی، ان کی بحالی میں مدد ملے گی اور روزگار کے نئے مواقع پیدا ہونے کے ساتھ حکومت کے محاصل بھی بڑھیں گے۔ لاہور چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے صدر نے کہا کہ معاشی اہداف کرنے کے لیے جی ڈی پی میں سرمایہ کاری کی شرح بڑھانا بہت ضروری ہے، اس کے لیے حکومت کو غیر معمولی اقدامات اٹھانا ہوں گے۔

منزل سے آگے بڑھ کر منزل تلاش کر



پاکستان میں کرونا وائرس نمودار ہونے کے بعد جب حکومت نے لاک ڈاؤن کر دیا تو میرے سامنے ایک بہت آسان راستہ تھا کہ میں بھی کچھ عرصہ کے لیے پس پردہ چلا جاؤں، اہل خانہ کے ساتھ چھٹیاں آرام سے گزاروں اور کرونا کی وبا، لاک ڈاؤن کے خاتمے کا انتظار کروں اور پھر معمول کے مطابق زندگی گزارنا شروع کر دوں۔ دوسرا راستہ تھا کہ اپنے ان لاکھوں تاجر بھائیوں کے لیے میدان عمل میں نکل آؤں جو لاک ڈاؤن کی وجہ سے پیدا ہونے والے سنگین معاشی حالات کا براہ راست نشانہ بن رہے تھے۔ الحمد للہ، میں نے اپنے ضمیر کی آواز پر کھٹن راستہ اپنایا اور روز اول سے آج تک کوئی ایسا دن نہیں گیا کہ میں نے آرام کو ترجیح دی ہو۔ اگرچہ لاہور چیئرمین لاک ڈاؤن کی وجہ سے بند کر دیا گیا لیکن میں اپنے چند اہم سٹاف ممبرز کے ساتھ روزانہ وہاں موجود رہا۔ باقاعدگی سے وزیراعظم کے مشیر برائے کامرس و ٹیکسٹائل عبدالرزاق داؤد سے وڈیو کانفرنس کے ذریعے تبادلہ خیال ہوتا رہا اور کرونا کی وجہ سے پیدا ہونے والی صورتحال کے تناظر میں، میں نے انہیں بہت سی تجاویز دیں جن میں سے اکثر آج حکومت کی پالیسی کا حصہ بن چکی ہیں۔ ہماری ان ہی کوششوں کا نتیجہ تھا کہ ایکسپورٹ سے وابستہ صنعتوں کو مرحلہ وار کھولنے کا فیصلہ کیا گیا۔ وزیراعظم، گورنر سٹیٹ بینک کو لکھے گئے خطوط کی بدولت ہی مارک اپ میں دو مرتبہ نمایاں کمی کر کے سنگل ڈمبجٹ پر لایا گیا، ہی تاجر برادری کو یوٹیلیٹی بلز میں ریلیف دیا گیا، مارکیٹوں کو مرحلہ وار کھولا جا رہا ہے، ہر دوسرے روز پولیس کے اعلیٰ حکام سمیت دیگر اہم افراد سے ملاقاتیں کر کے تاجر برادری کے لیے ریلیف حاصل کیا گیا، چھوٹے تاجروں کے لیے پانچ لاکھ روپے اور درمیانے درجے کے تاجروں کے لیے دس لاکھ روپے تک کے طویل المدت اور بلا سود قرضوں کا مطالبہ کیا گیا، اپنے ممبران کی مشکلات کو مد نظر رکھتے ہوئے تجدید رکنیت کے لیے توسیع کرائی۔ جن تاجر بھائیوں نے فون کر کے ملنے کی خواہش کا اظہار کیا، میں نے فوراً بلا لیا، نہ صرف ان کی بات توجہ سے سنی بلکہ حکام بالالتک پہنچا کر حتی الامکان حد تک ریلیف حاصل کرنے کی کوشش کی، حکومت سے مطالبہ کیا کہ وہ صنعتکار و تاجر برادری کے لیے انرجی، پٹرولیم مصنوعات کی قیمتوں میں فوری طور پر کمی کرے۔ دل بہت مطمئن ہے کہ میں نے اس کڑے وقت میں اپنے تاجر بھائیوں کے لیے وہ سب کیا جو میں کر سکتا تھا۔ وقت مشکل ضرور ہے مگر میرا دل گواہی دیتا ہے کہ انشاء اللہ تعالیٰ جلد ہی گزر جائے گا اور سب کے لیے ترقی و خوشحالی کا ایک نیا سورج طلوع ہوگا۔

عرفان اقبال شیخ

صدر

لاہور چیئرمین آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری