

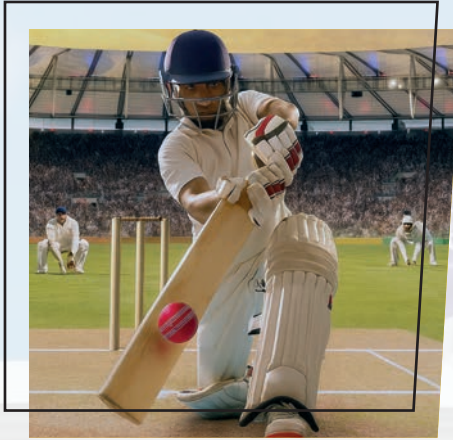


THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF  
COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

**43**  
YEARS  
of Excellence

## ANNUAL REPORT | 2024-25

THE GUARDIAN OF **EXPORTS**



**SIALKOT**

*the City of  
Opportunities & Entrepreneurs*



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اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ  
وَصَحْبِهِ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ

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ایوان صنعت و تجارت سیالکوٹ

## Our Purpose

We at Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry are Committed to fulfill our member's requirements and strengthen our position as a quality managed organization.

## Our Ambition

Our pledge is to provide best quality services through a member-driven, service oriented and dynamic management team. To meet this obligation, the chamber will continue updating the employee's skill by training, acquisition of new technology and regular re-evaluation of its services. The Chamber will continue to be the Advocacy & Lobbying body for its members getting relief and benefit by resolving issues relating to trade & industry.

# Annual GENERAL MEETING 2024





## MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2024-25



Mr. Ikram Ul Haq



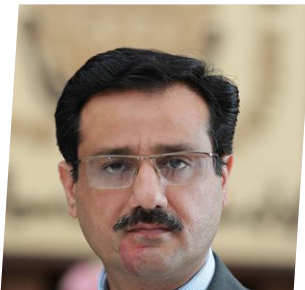
Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi



Mr. Omer Khalid



Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Malik



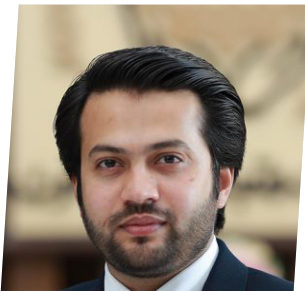
Mr. Adnan Safdar



Mr. Arshad Jamil Chaudhry



Ch. Bilal Ahmed Khan



Mr. Hassan Akbar



Mr. Jawad Khalid



Mr. Khurram Javaid Sethi



Mr. Mehtab Maqsood

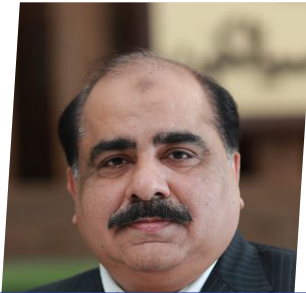


Mr. Salman Sheikh

# MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE **2024-25**



Sheikh Atique-Ur-Rahman



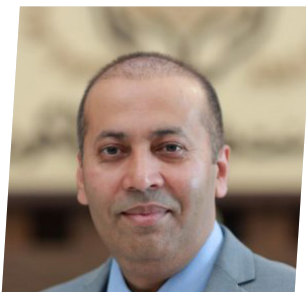
Mr. Aamer Mahmood



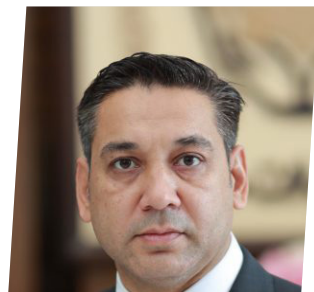
Mr. Haseeb Tahir



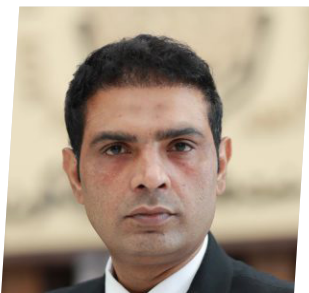
Mr. Mohammad Iqbal Asad



Mr. Muhammad Abid



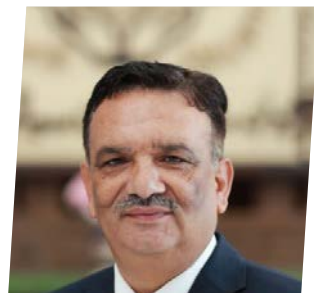
Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad



Sh. Muhammad Shahid Inam



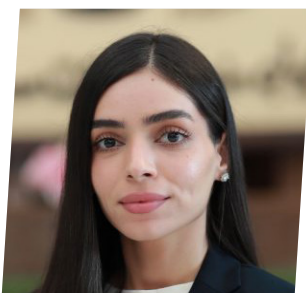
Mr. Sohail Masood



Syed Ahtesham Mazhar



Syeda Ayesha Wadood



Ms. Kinza Ijaz



Tariq Mahmood Malik





**IKRAM UL HAQ**  
PRESIDENT





# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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## Dear Members,

I am pleased to present the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry's annual report for 2024–25, which encapsulates a year of active engagement, institutional commitment, and strategic leadership in service of our members and the national economy.

As I assumed charge of the Presidency on October 1, 2024, entrusted with the responsibility to lead this august institution, I felt not just the weight of office but the hopes and silent struggles of an entire business community that has always carried more than its fair share. In the face of mounting economic pressures, shifting policies, and rising uncertainty, I knew that this year would not be ordinary. And it wasn't. It was a year of sleepless nights and determined mornings, of endless advocacy and quiet victories, of setbacks that stung and breakthroughs that stirred hope.

In those moments, I often turned to the wisdom of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, whose words anchored me throughout this journey: "With faith, discipline, and selfless devotion to duty, there is nothing worthwhile that you cannot achieve." These were not just ideals; they became a compass. They reminded me that true leadership is not about titles or visibility; it is about standing firm when it is easier to stay silent, about protecting others even when you are under pressure, and about pushing forward even when the odds are stacked against you.

I was deeply conscious of the formidable challenges facing our business community. The macroeconomic environment remained volatile, and the last year's Finance Act, 2024, had brought seismic policy shifts, most notably, the withdrawal of the Final Tax Regime (FTR). This was followed by this year's Federal Budget 2024–25, which imposed further fiscal burdens on exporters already grappling with rising costs, logistical hurdles, and limited policy clarity.

The year unfolded amidst a combination of internal and external challenges that placed immense pressure on Pakistan's export sector. Domestically, the withdrawal of core benefits under the Export Facilitation Scheme, complications arising from Sections 37A and 37B of

the Sales Tax Act, and broader fiscal and regulatory unpredictability severely impacted the export ecosystem. Externally, exporters were hit by a confluence of global factors: the imposition of tariffs by the United States on select Pakistani products, persistent supply chain strains from the Russia-Ukraine war, escalating shipping costs, and supply chain disruptions due to the Red Sea crisis. For Sialkot's export sector, long regarded as the heartbeat of Pakistan's economy, these overlapping pressures created a uniquely difficult environment requiring both resilience and urgent institutional advocacy.

In parallel, structural challenges persisted as critical projects such as the University of Applied Engineering and Emerging Technologies awaited federal funding, and vital infrastructure schemes like the Sialkot Industrial Zone, Sialkot Ring Road, Sewerage System, and Export Processing Zone continued to demand institutional backing and administrative willpower.

Yet among these economic trials, a broader reflection emerged, one that shaped much of my focus this year. As the country stood united in the wake of Operation Bunyan al-Marsous, a resolute and historic military initiative aimed at protecting Pakistan's national sovereignty, it became evident that our political leadership, along with the business community, must mirror the same spirit of vigilance, strength, and independence. If national sovereignty is guarded by our armed forces at the frontiers, then economic sovereignty must be defended with equal fervor by the stewards of industry and trade.

I firmly believed that the preservation of our economic sovereignty, our right to policy space, competitiveness, and the independence to shape trade regimes suited to Pakistan's realities was non-negotiable. The Sialkot Chamber, therefore, took it upon itself not only to resist policy issues but also to articulate viable, workable solutions that preserve the autonomy of our exporters and the stability of our economic base.

Amidst this turbulent climate, the role of the Sialkot Chamber was not one of mere observation; it was one of assertive leadership across Pakistan, strategic advocacy,

and unflinching representation of all exporter sectors. From the corridors of the Prime Minister's Office to the boardrooms of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), and from policy deliberations with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Industries & Production, and Federal Board of Revenue to active engagement with the Board of Investment, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry, and relevant federal and provincial authorities, Sialkot Chamber made its voice heard. Not to complain, but to present solutions; not to politicize, but to protect; not to obstruct, but to offer reform pathways rooted in data, logic, and the ground realities of our exporters.

It has been my firm belief that in times of great policy uncertainty, trade bodies must elevate themselves from being facilitation desks to becoming policy architects. That is the ethos that guided our actions this year. The Sialkot Chamber took the lead in uniting the business voice by bringing together trade bodies from across Pakistan onto a single platform. We organized multiple nationwide press conferences, recorded peaceful protests, and mobilized the business community in a coordinated and responsible manner. This collective momentum not only amplified our message but also elevated the standing of the Sialkot Chamber as a harbinger of unified, data-driven, and solution-oriented economic advocacy in Pakistan.

Together, we advocated tirelessly for the restoration of business-enabling frameworks be it through stressing the revival of Final Tax Regime, the Restoration of the Export Facilitation Scheme, pushing for rationalization in Section 21(s), withdrawal of Section 37A, and 37B of Sales Tax Act, or demanding regionally competitive energy tariffs to prevent our industries from being priced out of global markets. These were not abstract battles; they were deeply personal, affecting jobs, export orders, factory floors, and household incomes across Sialkot.

The Chamber also made significant headway in supporting institutional and industrial growth. We pressed for the release of pending funds for the University of Applied Engineering & Emerging Technologies, revived progress on the long-stalled Sialkot Industrial Zone project, and broke bottlenecks to ensure the completion of the Sialkot Tannery Zone, a landmark achievement for this year. Likewise, we fought for the preservation of member interests in the Export Processing Zone, securing a stay against the auction of plots, and advocated for infrastructure expansion through initiatives such as the Expo Centre Sialkot, the Ring Road, and the approval of the project of Materials Testing Laboratory, in collaboration with UNIDO and Urban Unit Punjab.

Yet, one of the most meaningful milestones this year was the inauguration of the SCCI Med Pharmacy, a revolutionary Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative aimed at providing subsidized, quality medicines to the people of Sialkot. This project is not just a service facility; it is a continuation of the Sialkot Chamber's longstanding legacy of social welfare and giving back to

society. For me, it stands close to the heart as a reminder that our duty extends beyond policy advocacy to also include the well-being of the very people who form the soul of this institution.

But leadership is not only defined by reacting to crises; it is also measured by how one prepares for the future. This year, we focused on strengthening the institutional foundations of the Sialkot Chamber, ensuring that it evolves in line with the changing needs of its members and the global business environment. We invested in systems, processes, and capacity that would make the Chamber more agile, transparent, and responsive. As a result, Sialkot Chamber continues to set benchmarks in service delivery, innovation, and member engagement, reaffirming its position as one of the most progressive and forward-looking business institutions in the country.

With over 23,752 active members, the Sialkot Chamber today stands as a formidable force, a united and resilient body that reflects the entrepreneurial spirit, innovation, and global ambition of our city's business community. This year alone, we have had the privilege of welcoming over 7,691 new members into our fold, further strengthening our collective voice and expanding the reach of our institutional impact.

We remained committed to addressing long-standing member demands for direct facilitation. Whether the concern was related to banking, taxation, customs, regulatory bottlenecks, or institutional access, the Chamber actively pursued resolution through constant engagement, timely representation, and structured follow-up with relevant federal and provincial authorities. Strategic partnerships and MOUs were signed with a range of institutions to expand facilitation and support services for our members. Throughout the year, my team and I made it a point to remain just a call away, accessible, responsive, and ready to assist whenever our members needed us.

We placed strong emphasis on building the capacity of our members, both existing and new, especially in critical areas such as compliance, e-commerce, sustainability, language skills, trade documentation, export certifications, international marketing, digital transformation, intellectual property rights, and supply chain management. This year, we witnessed a remarkable surge in new memberships, with an average of over 800 new members joining the Chamber every month, many of them dynamic young entrepreneurs and graduates from private sector universities. It was my utmost priority to give this emerging segment a sense of direction, guidance, and a line of sight to a prosperous future. I also raised this evolving trend at various forums and with the Government, urging the need for targeted policies and effective national strategies to harness and mobilize the entrepreneurial energy of our youth for sustainable economic growth.

Throughout this year, I remained steadfast in maintaining an open-door policy. Whether the concern was policy, operational, or personal, every member who walked

through those doors was heard, respected, and served with integrity.

Indeed, while we could not achieve resolution on every front, we did what this Chamber has always stood for: we acted without fear, we lobbied with facts, and we represented with dignity. We carried forward the Sialkot tradition of not waiting for change but of initiating it, and we stamped our presence on the National level.

With this report, I present not only a brief record of the year gone by but a testament to the resilience, advocacy, and purpose that defined our collective journey in 2024–25.

The key highlights and major achievements are depicted as follows:

## **1. ESTABLISHMENT OF MATERIAL TESTING LABORATORY – FROM ADVOCACY TO EXECUTION**

One of the most significant industrial development milestones of my tenure was the formal approval and execution launch of the long-awaited Material Testing Laboratory in Sialkot. I am proud to report that this landmark project, originally conceptualized in 2006, finally entered its implementation phase after years of dormancy thanks to the persistent advocacy, technical facilitation, and collaborative leadership of the Sialkot Chamber.

After years of procedural delays, the Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) approved the PC-1 of the Material Testing Laboratory on March 19, 2025. The Communication & Works Department vetted the project's cost, which stands at PKR 1.731 billion for Sialkot and Gujranwala combined. This breakthrough marks not just a policy win but the beginning of a transformative industrial support facility for the exporters of this region.

The approved plan envisions a phased rollout, with the first phase focusing on the Surgical Instruments sector, especially to support compliance with the European Union's Medical Device Regulation (MDR). In subsequent phases, the lab will expand to serve other major sectors of Sialkot, providing vital testing and certification services to exporters.

To catalyze this effort, the Sialkot Chamber worked in close partnership with Urban Unit Punjab, UNIDO, and the Industries, Commerce & Investment Department of the Government of Punjab. From day one of my tenure, I made this project a personal priority, holding numerous strategy meetings, identifying the right technical experts, and pushing forward documentation and institutional coordination. The Chamber facilitated the provision of technical data, aligned testing requirements across key industrial sectors, and engaged a specialist consultant to guide the facility's framework in line with international norms.

A major milestone was reached on June 4, 2025, when a kick-off meeting formally launched the implementation phase of the "Establishment of Material Testing

Laboratories" project in Sialkot. I had the honor of meeting with key international and national stakeholders, including Mr. Nima Bahramalian, Industrial Development Expert from the Department of Digitalization, Technology and Innovation, UNIDO (Vienna); Mr. Badar ul Islam, National Program Coordinator, UNIDO Pakistan; and Mr. Qasar Wasique Ahmed, Enterprise Development Expert for the lab project. These meetings reinforced the commitment of all parties involved to ensure swift and quality execution.

The lab is being established in Sambrial and will initially focus on providing internationally accredited testing services for surgical instruments. In its phased expansion, the facility will cater to other industrial sectors, further integrating Sialkot and Gujranwala's SMEs into high-value global supply chains. It is envisioned to significantly lower the cost of compliance, enhance product credibility, and support certification needs that have traditionally been fulfilled through expensive overseas labs.

The strategic value of this project cannot be overstated. It involves the collective efforts of critical stakeholders, including the Planning & Development Board (Punjab), the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives (Federal), UNIDO, and the Industries Department, Government of Punjab. This level of cross-institutional coordination reflects the scale and ambition of the facility, a true center of excellence for quality compliance and competitiveness.

As President, I consider this project to be a legacy initiative. It is not merely about infrastructure; it is about unlocking future value for our industries. The lab will play a pivotal role in meeting international compliance requirements, reducing reliance on third-party testing abroad, and opening doors to new export markets, particularly in the EU under the Medical Device Regulation (MDR).

We are also working with UNIDO on finalizing the Trust Fund Agreement (TFA) to ensure continued technical assistance and monitoring support, with a signing expected by September 2025. I am confident that the momentum built around this project will carry through to its operationalization in the coming year.

This achievement is not only a testament to the Chamber's vision and perseverance but also an example of what can be accomplished when institutions align for the greater good. The Material Testing Laboratory is poised to be a game-changer for Sialkot's industrial ecosystem, and it brings me great satisfaction to have played a central role in its revival and realization.

## **2. SIALKOT TANNERY ZONE NEARS FULL OPERATIONALIZATION: A LANDMARK IN SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIAL TRANSFORMATION**

Taking over this project after assuming charge as the President, I was fully aware that I was stepping into a



battlefield, not a boardroom. The Sialkot Tannery Zone (STZ) project, which should have been a source of national pride, had become entangled in a web of controversies, frozen investments, stakeholder disputes, and worst of all, a full-blown investigation by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). Despite its monumental importance for environmental compliance, sustainable leather production, and global competitiveness, STZ had lost its momentum.

The NAB inquiry – perhaps the most paralyzing obstacle in the Zone's journey – had cast a long shadow over the project. Triggered by unverified complaints from a self-styled group called the Mutasreen, the inquiry brought development to a grinding halt. These individuals, who had refused to purchase plots in 2009, deliberately tried to derail the project to avoid relocating their tanneries from residential areas. Their campaign succeeded in creating legal uncertainty, media noise, and mistrust – not only among local stakeholders but also among international donor agencies like UNIDO and GEF, which had committed vital funding to the project.

As President, I took this crisis head-on. Guided by Ittehad Group Leader Mr. Riaz ud Din Sheikh (SI) and supported by Federal Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, I launched a proactive, strategic, and fully transparent engagement process. My first mission: to clear the name of STAGL and restore institutional credibility. I appeared before NAB and the Anti-Corruption Establishment, offering comprehensive documentary evidence and governance disclosures. I clarified that STAGL is a Guarantee Limited organization audited annually and regulated by the SECP. All Export Development Fund (EDF) releases were monitored by TDAP, with payments cleared only upon certification by third-party consultants. I emphasized that not a single rupee from UNIDO or GEF ever passed through STAGL or SCCI, as all procurement and payments were handled by donor-appointed staff at the site and approved by the UNIDO head office in Vienna.

I also clarified the role of PSIC and the District Government, which had directly disbursed all funds for grid stations and land acquisition without involving STAGL. This exhaustive clarification was not just about clearing our record; it was about restoring national and international confidence in the project. I consider this successful resolution of the NAB and donor agency disputes one of the most significant institutional clean-ups in the Chamber's recent history – and certainly one of the toughest battles I have fought.

With credibility re-established, I focused on healing the fractured stakeholder landscape. I initiated dialogue with the Mutasreen group, STAGL management, PSIC, and the District Government. A key breakthrough came when I convinced the Commissioner of Gujranwala to lift the ban on STAGL's sale of additional plots. A joint verification survey was carried out with STAGL to identify genuine operators among old and new applicants. This led to the formulation of an Exit Policy for inactive plot holders and two transparent rounds of balloting at the SCCI (March 21

and April 29, 2025), through which 80 legitimate tanners were allotted plots.

As of August 2025, I am proud to report that 10 tanneries are fully operational, construction is underway on 200 plots, and boundary walls have been built on over 300. More than 200 tanneries have begun relocating. All of this is being facilitated directly by the Sialkot Chamber to ensure maximum ease and transparency.

Another key challenge was the long-delayed 21 MW grid station. Initially budgeted at PKR 376 million, post-COVID inflation pushed GEPCO's demand to PKR 852 million. After multiple rounds of tough negotiations, I was able to secure a revised financing model worth PKR 661.22 million, including a PKR 340 million grant and PKR 321 million soft loan from PSIC, signed on June 19, 2025. The remaining PKR 50 million is being shared by stakeholders. With this, GEPCO's commitment to complete the grid station has been contractually secured.

Environmental infrastructure has progressed simultaneously. The Chrome Recovery Plant building is complete, equipment procurement is in motion, and energization is expected by November 2025. The Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP), a centerpiece supported by UNIDO, is now in trial runs and will be energized by December 2025. Importantly, I was able to secure an additional Rs. 711 million from EDF during its 87th BOA meeting on March 26, 2025. This includes Rs. 250 million for a 1MW solar power system to lower CETP operating costs and Rs. 461 million to cover project escalations.

In addition, we took up the long-standing financial burden that had weighed heavily on the Zone since its inception. To ensure sustainability and provide much-needed relief to the tanners, I formally requested the Deputy Commissioner of Sialkot to intervene in this matter. Acting on Sialkot Chamber's appeal, the Deputy Commissioner has now forwarded a summary to the Chief Minister's Secretariat, recommending the conversion of the PKR 288.04 million loan extended by the Government of Punjab in 2009 for land acquisition into a grant. This conversion, once approved, will not only free STAGL from a critical liability but will also restore financial breathing space, allowing resources to be directed toward infrastructure development, environmental compliance, and the facilitation of tanners relocating into the Zone.

With the confidence of our donor agencies, government departments, and, most importantly, the business community of Sialkot, we are finally bringing the Sialkot Tannery Zone to life. What was once a symbol of stagnation is now a flagship for sustainable development, global certification, and industrial compliance. I say this with immense humility: the successful clearing of the NAB inquiry, rebuilding of institutional trust, and revival of this zone is not just a feather in my cap – it is a collective victory for the industry, for Sialkot, and Pakistan.

I would be remiss not to acknowledge the pivotal role



played by Mr. Sarfraz Bhatti, Chairman of STAGL, whose perseverance and cooperation throughout this process have been truly commendable. Likewise, I extend my sincere appreciation to Mr. Ahmed Zulfiqar Hayat, CEO of Sialkot Tannery Zone, for his tireless commitment and operational leadership that helped turn vision into reality. Their unwavering dedication was instrumental in moving this mammoth project closer to full operationalization.

Let this achievement be remembered not only as a turning point for leather manufacturing but as proof that with courage, transparency, and vision, even the deepest institutional crises can be resolved and turned into opportunity.

### **3. RESOLUTION OF SALES TAX REFLECTION ON COURIER INVOICES – A PROVINCE-WIDE RELIEF FOR EXPORTERS**

One of the key achievements during this year was the successful resolution of a persistent and frustrating issue related to the non-reflection of sales tax on courier invoices in the Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) system. Exporters across Punjab, particularly those relying on services from international courier companies such as DHL, FedEx, and UPS, have long been facing discrepancies and the absence of input tax in the PRA system. This problem directly affected refund claims and created unnecessary financial bottlenecks. Recognizing the severity of this issue, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry took swift and structured action. Through consistent engagement with the leadership of Punjab Revenue Authority, particularly Chairman Mr. Nouman Yousuf and Member IT Ms. Attiya Ali Khan, we were able to initiate a collaborative dialogue that brought the matter into active resolution.

With valuable support from our Departmental Committee on Income Tax / FTR, led by Mr. Imran Ali Rana, the Chamber engaged directly with courier service providers, starting with DHL and expanding to include FedEx and UPS. I am pleased to report that as a result of these combined efforts, courier invoices from August 2024 onward are now successfully appearing in the PRA system, with many exporters already receiving long-delayed refunds. This success story is not just a win for Sialkot but a relief for exporters across Punjab. It exemplifies what can be achieved through determined advocacy, strategic engagement, and tireless follow-up. I extend my sincere appreciation to all involved, especially Mr. Imran Ali Rana, Chairman Income Tax/FTR Committee, and reiterate our commitment to resolving such operational challenges for our members in the future.

### **4. BREAKTHROUGH RELIEF ON WITHHOLDING SALES TAX UNDER 11TH SCHEDULE**

One of the most significant breakthroughs during the last year was the resolution of a longstanding and burdensome issue related to the deduction of 5% Withholding Sales

Tax under the 11th Schedule to the Sales Tax Act, 1990. Export companies had, for years, faced undue hardship as departmental notices irrationally assumed 75% of their total export turnover to have been sourced from unregistered suppliers.

This approach was not only flawed but also completely disconnected from the operational realities of different export sectors, and it had placed considerable financial strain on our members.

Through a series of intensive meetings and technical consultations, we succeeded in reaching an unprecedented understanding with the Department, one that allowed for sector-wise determination of purchases from unregistered suppliers, calculated as a percentage of export turnover.

As per the final agreement, the benchmark was fixed at 18.5% for the Surgical and Cutlery industry, 30% for Leather Garments and Gloves, 30% for Sports Goods, and 28% for Apparel, Hosiery, and Garments, retrospectively applicable from July 2019 onwards.

To operationalize this understanding, a clear working mechanism was defined that exporters could use to calculate their liability on an annual basis. Exporters were allowed to deduct registered and imported purchases (including temporary imports) from the agreed sectoral benchmark to arrive at the balance unregistered value, against which the 5% tax would be applied. Even where the total registered purchases exceeded the benchmark, a minimum liability structure was agreed upon to cap the tax burden fairly and predictably. Furthermore, the understanding allowed exporters to submit the required documentation and tax payment receipts without incurring any penalties.

It is worth noting that this landmark achievement was finalized just one day before I assumed the office of President, and I had the honor of being actively involved in the final stages of the process. I express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Former President of SCCI, whose tireless efforts, negotiation skills, and commitment to the cause ensured the materialization of this much-needed relief for exporters.

This was a landmark achievement not only for the Sialkot Chamber but also for exporters across Pakistan. Despite being a major cause of concern for our members, the issue had remained unresolved for years. I consider the successful resolution of this matter to be a clear example of what can be achieved through persistent advocacy, deep technical understanding, and institutional leadership.

### **5. BREAKTHROUGH IN MOFA COMMERCIAL DOCUMENT ATTESTATION – A LONG-STANDING ISSUE FINALLY RESOLVED**

One of the most appreciated achievements of the year has been the successful resolution of a persistent logistical

challenge faced by exporters—the attestation of commercial documents by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). For years, exporters from Sialkot had to travel to Lahore or Islamabad for this purpose, leading to delays, additional costs, and immense inconvenience. I am pleased to report that this long-standing issue finally found resolution in 2025.

On March 5, 2025, a pivotal meeting took place at the Lahore office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), where our Vice President, Mr. Omer Khalid, effectively conveyed the persistent difficulties faced by our members in getting commercial documents attested. Through strong representation and consistent follow-up, the Ministry agreed to a major facilitation measure: a dedicated MoFA officer would now be deputed at the Gujrat office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on designated days, enabling exporters from Sialkot to process their commercial document attestations much more conveniently without the need to travel to Lahore.

This practical relief was a direct result of our persistent institutional engagement, made possible by the interest and cooperation of the Additional Secretary MoFA, and supported by our counterparts in the Gujrat Chamber.

The attestation facility formally began operations on March 5, 2025, and allows exporters to submit up to 50 documents for attestation per visit. Exporters are now guided through a streamlined process by our Chamber Secretariat, with document details submitted in advance and coordination facilitated. This has significantly reduced wait times and improved efficiency in documentation, a critical requirement for exporters dealing with international clients and government clearances.

While this is a welcome development, our efforts have not stopped here. We are now actively pursuing the establishment of a permanent MoFA attestation counter in Sialkot, hosted within the Chamber's premises. The goal is to transition from a periodic facility to a dedicated, full-time attestation desk, thereby institutionalizing this service and making it a regular part of Sialkot's export support infrastructure.

This achievement is not only a reflection of the Chamber's responsiveness to the needs of its members but also its continued commitment to facilitating trade documentation, reducing administrative burdens, and creating a more export-friendly ecosystem in Sialkot.

## 6. REFORMING PORT OPERATIONS AND REDUCING CFS BURDEN

During the year under review, one of the key logistical and cost-related challenges raised by our member exporters pertained to the restrictive and expensive reliance on Container Freight Stations (CFS). High CFS charges, limited space availability, and the unregistered status of these facilities were not only creating unnecessary financial stress for our exporters but also contributing to a decline in overall export efficiency.

Recognizing the urgency of the matter, I raised this issue

across multiple forums on behalf of the Chamber—both at government platforms and through the national media—so that the concerns of Sialkot's exporters could be brought to the attention of federal authorities. Our persistent advocacy bore fruit when the Honourable Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Mr. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, convened an emergency meeting of all relevant stakeholders. In that meeting, assurances were given to reduce the CFS charges and streamline port operations.

I am pleased to report that as a result of our consistent engagement and follow-up, exporters from Sialkot were provided a facilitation that will help reduce operational costs, improve turnaround time, and offer greater logistical flexibility to our business community.

I would also like to place on record my sincere gratitude to Mr. Tariq Hussain, Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Shipping/Dry Port, for his dedicated efforts, valuable insights, and unwavering support in pursuing this matter to its current stage of resolution.

Let me assure all members that the Sialkot Chamber remains fully committed to actively addressing all shipping, port, and dry port-related issues on an emergency basis. We will continue to advocate for the creation of a logistics environment that is competitive, cost-effective, and aligned with the needs of a growing export-driven economy.

## 7. FEDERAL BUDGET 2025 – A TURNING POINT

The Federal Budget 2025 proved to be the most disruptive policy event of the year, triggering alarm and widespread unrest across the country's business community. As President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), I immediately recognized the threat posed by several fiscal measures that jeopardized Pakistan's export-led economy and placed undue burdens on documented businesses.

Understanding the gravity of the situation, Sialkot Chamber organized a landmark press conference of all trade bodies of Pakistan on June 13, 2025, drawing national media attention to the looming threats and urging urgent corrective measures.

SCCI also became the first Chamber to stage a peaceful protest on July 11, 2025, in collaboration with all major trade bodies of Sialkot. Exporters, SMEs, and industry leaders raised their unified voice against measures such as the withdrawal of the Final Tax Regime (FTR), disruption of the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), the imposition of 5% sales tax on unregistered purchases, and the introduction of draconian enforcement powers under Sections 37A and 37B of the Sales Tax Act. Our demands also included the restoration of Regionally Competitive Energy Tariffs (RCET) and reversal of the sales tax on solar panels, among other critical reforms.

This proactive media outreach, coupled with our protest, inspired trade bodies across Pakistan to announce a



nationwide protest on July 19, 2025, following the lead set by Sialkot.

The consistent pressure forced the government to take notice. On July 15, 2025, in a bid to prevent countrywide disruptions, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb constituted a high-level committee under Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production. Mr. Haroon Akhtar's tireless efforts deserve special recognition for ensuring that the voices of the business community were heard at the highest levels.

I had the honor of representing the Sialkot Chamber in this committee, which convened for multiple in-depth consultations with policymakers and technical teams. We discussed a broad array of issues, including:

- Sections 37A & 37B of the Sales Tax Act
- Section 40B and Section 175C
- FTR and EFS
- Section 21(s) of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001
- E-Invoicing (Rule Q) of the Sales Tax Rules, 2006
- Input Tax Adjustment (Section 8B)

This movement—initiated by the Sialkot Chamber—blossomed into a remarkable display of national unity, with exporters from all sectors standing together to protect the economic future of Pakistan. Our voice reached the highest levels of leadership. On July 21, 2025, I had the privilege of joining a delegation of business leaders for a meeting with Field Marshal General Asim Munir, who expressed his full support and emphasized the need for sustainable, consultative policymaking.

A follow-up meeting was held on July 23, 2025, under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), led by Lt. Gen. Sarfraz Ahmad (National Coordinator SIFC) and attended by the Chairman of FBR. All outstanding issues were deliberated in detail, and it was assured that concrete resolutions for FTR and EFS would be finalized in the coming weeks.

As a direct result of these interventions, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has already issued explanatory circulars addressing and correcting several of the most contentious provisions. These include Sections 37A, 37B, 40B, and others that had caused widespread confusion and panic. This progress demonstrates that our efforts have not only been acknowledged but also acted upon. Moreover, the issue of EFS was also partially resolved through the issuance of a new SRO.

As I write this message, the follow-up meeting to finalize solutions for FTR is being coordinated with SIFC and Chairman FBR, and I remain hopeful that these critical issues will also be resolved in the days ahead.

It is important to emphasize that a solution to the Final Tax

Regime issue is very much on the table. The consultative process remains active, and I am confident that practical and mutually acceptable solutions are being developed. The issuance of clarifications on other issues was a crucial first step, and the momentum continues.

Sialkot Chamber remains fully engaged in follow-up consultations, ensuring that exporters are never left without a voice in the policy corridors. This chapter is a testament to what unity, clarity of purpose, and relentless advocacy can achieve, and I remain optimistic that our persistence will soon bear full fruit.

## 8. REVIVAL OF FINAL / FIXED TAX REGIME FOR EXPORTERS

Since assuming office in October 2024, reviving the Final/Fixed Tax Regime (FTR) for exporters has remained my foremost priority as President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). I firmly believe that the withdrawal of FTR was a regressive policy decision that severely impacted Pakistan's SME-led export economy. Over the past year, I have left no stone unturned in advocating for its restoration. I have been constantly on the road, travelling back and forth to Islamabad, holding scores of meetings with key government figures to ensure that Sialkot's voice was heard at the highest levels.

Our advocacy began with a meeting with the Federal Tax Ombudsman on October 15, 2024, followed by a formal written submission on October 18. On October 23, I chaired a joint session of all Sialkot Trade Bodies, where we analyzed the impact of FTR withdrawal and developed workable, data-backed proposals based on real-time export data and tax projections. These were formally presented to the Chairman of FBR during our October 28, 2024, meeting.

A major milestone occurred when three Federal Ministers, Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb (Finance & Revenue), Mr. Jam Kamal Khan (Commerce), and Khawaja Muhammad Asif (Defence), visited the Sialkot Chamber on December 19, 2024. I briefed them in detail on the FTR issue and emphasized the urgency of its restoration for the survival of small and medium exporters.

On December 31, 2024, I also raised the matter again with the Finance Minister on the sidelines of the URAAN Pakistan launch ceremony, ensuring the issue remained on the agenda.

SCCI amplified its message through print media, publishing a full-page appeal in the Business Recorder on March 5, 2025, directly addressed to the Prime Minister. A week later, I had the honor of meeting H.E. Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on March 12, where I reiterated the urgency of restoring FTR.

The following day, March 13, I met Lt. Gen. Sarfraz Ahmad, National Coordinator of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), in Islamabad to present SCCI's

comprehensive case for FTR. As a result of that meeting, SIFC officially recommended restoration of FTR to the Chairman of FBR in writing on March 27, 2025, a major breakthrough.

Further developments followed. On April 12, 2025, I attended the Pre-Budget Meeting at LCCI with the Finance Minister and again pushed for FTR's restoration. Then, on April 28, Mr. Asif Rasool, Chief (Income Tax Policy), was appointed Focal Person for the FTR issue by the Finance Minister, a formal institutional step that followed months of pressure and engagement from SCCI.

On April 30, I presented the exporters' case before the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, outlining the devastating consequences of FTR's withdrawal on cash flows and global competitiveness.

Despite this, FTR was not included in the Federal Budget 2025-26, a decision that sent shockwaves across the export sector. In response, SCCI took the lead once again. On June 11, we issued another public appeal through the Business Recorder, and on July 11, 2025, I led a massive peaceful protest outside the Sialkot Chamber, joined by all major trade bodies of the city. This triggered nationwide momentum.

To contain the unrest, the Finance Minister formed a high-level consultative committee on July 15, under the leadership of SAPM Haroon Akhtar Khan. I am proud to share that SCCI was part and parcel of that committee and contributed meaningfully to the discussions. A dedicated meeting on the FTR issue was held between myself and Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan on July 21, 2025, to explore a feasible roadmap.

That same day, I had the honor of meeting Field Marshal General Asim Munir, where I voiced exporters' concerns directly. He extended his full support for the resolution of the issue and emphasized the importance of sustained dialogue.

A follow-up meeting was held under SIFC on July 23, 2025, chaired by Lt. Gen. Sarfraz Ahmad and the Chairman of FBR, where I once again presented our case, and it was assured that workable solutions on FTR would be finalized within two weeks.

Though the formal revival of the Final Tax Regime has not yet materialized, I can confidently say that the issue is far from shelved. The recent issuance of explanatory circulars on other policy matters is a step in the right direction, and FTR remains an active item on our agenda. Our continuous pressure has institutionalized the discussion and engagement at the highest level, showing promising signs.

Throughout this campaign, I have made it a point that our proposals remain solution-oriented, data-backed, and reflective of exporters' ground realities. I assure our members that we will not relent. Our collective effort has brought us this far, and with unity and perseverance, I

remain hopeful that FTR will soon be reinstated.

We at SCCI are not merely observers; we are drivers of change. And until the Final Tax Regime is restored, we will not rest.

## 9. RESTORATION OF EXPORT FACILITATION SCHEME (EFS) – A RELENTLESS STRUGGLE FOR FAIRNESS

Since the abrupt issuance of the revised SRO 204 by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on February 25, 2025, I, as President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry, have led a relentless campaign to reverse its unfair and unconsulted amendments, which threatened to paralyze the very foundation of our SME export sector.

On March 1, 2025, I officially rejected the proposed amendments by writing to the Chairman of FBR, clearly expressing the concerns of our business community. Recognizing the urgency and seriousness of the matter, we published a powerful public appeal on March 5, 2025, on the front page of Business Recorder, demanding the immediate restoration of EFS to its original structure.

This wave of pressure from Sialkot soon gained national momentum, prompting the Prime Minister of Pakistan to form a special committee under the Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, to address the exporters' concerns. However, surprisingly and regrettably, on the same day the committee was set to meet, March 7, 2025, FBR notified the draft SRO 204(I)/2025 as SRO 301(I)/2025. This move ran contrary to the spirit of dialogue initiated by the Prime Minister himself.

Despite this setback, I participated in the March 7 meeting chaired by Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, where I thoroughly briefed the participants on the damaging impacts of SRO 301 on Sialkot's export-oriented sectors. The Minister rightly criticized the premature notification by FBR and instructed the suspension of SRO 301, requesting proposals from all Chambers.

FBR, however, did not comply. The premature enforcement of SRO 301 through the Pakistan Single Window (PSW) created immediate procedural and logistical challenges for exporters, affecting even those import consignments that predated the SRO's issuance.

On March 11, 2025, I submitted detailed proposals to Federal Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, highlighting critical concerns with SRO 301, particularly its adverse impact on SME exporters. Key recommendations included extending the impractical 9-month utilization period to 3 years, retaining EDB's role in issuing analysis cards, replacing the burdensome bank guarantee requirement with post-dated cheques, extending the subcontracting timeline from 60 to 120 days, limiting frequent stock inspections by Customs to annual or bi-annual with prior notice, and allowing a 7-day window for data entry of removed goods instead of same-day reporting.

I also attended a high-level meeting at the Prime Minister's House on March 12, 2025, where I personally briefed the Prime Minister, the Federal Minister for Finance, and the Cabinet on the ground realities. They extended assurances for resolving the issue. The very next day, on March 13, 2025, I, along with Mr. Imran Ali Rana, Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Income Tax/FTR, met Lt. Gen. Sarfraz, National Coordinator of SIFC, and presented our case. The team from SIFC was extremely understanding and supportive.

After weeks of detailed consultation, our final proposals were submitted to Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Chairman of FBR, and SIFC. On March 27, 2025, SIFC officially endorsed SCCI's recommendations and forwarded them to FBR for necessary incorporation.

I once again advocated the restoration of the EFS during the Pre-Budget Meeting at Lahore Chamber on April 12, 2025, in the presence of the Finance Minister. Later, on April 30, 2025, I reiterated the exporters' position before the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue.

Another public appeal was issued on June 11, 2025, in Business Recorder, and on July 11, 2025, I led a historic protest outside the Sialkot Chamber, joined by all major trade associations. The protest sparked a nationwide movement.

On July 15, 2025, I had a key meeting with Mr. Wajid Ali, Member Customs (Policy), FBR, where I secured a critical breakthrough as he assured that SRO 301 would not apply retrospectively to shipments made prior to March 7. Moreover, he acknowledged our remaining concerns and expressed his serious commitment to giving due consideration to our proposals during the new SRO drafting process.

To contain growing unrest, the Finance Minister established a high-level consultative committee under SAPM Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan on July 15. I am proud to report that SCCI was an active member of this committee. On July 21, 2025, I had a dedicated one-on-one meeting with Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan on EFS, and later that day, I had the honor of meeting Field Marshal General Asim Munir, where I voiced exporters' frustrations. He assured us of his full support and encouraged sustained, structured dialogue.

- On July 29, 2025, FBR issued Draft SRO 1359(I)/2025, which, although still far from perfect, included some revisions:
- The utilization period remained 9 months, but a 9-month extension facility was introduced, subject to approval by a committee.
- Insurance Guarantees were allowed as an alternate to Bank Guarantees.
- Subcontracting timeline was increased to 90 days.

While these do not fully align with our original proposals,

they represent an incremental step forward. Accordingly, on July 30, 2025, SCCI submitted its official feedback to FBR, strongly urging:

- A minimum 3-year utilization period,
- Restoration of Post-Dated Cheques, and
- Reintegration of EDB for analysis card issuance in the surgical sector.

All this time, I remained in continuous contact with the Collector of Customs Sialkot, Ms. Saira Agha, and I must acknowledge the close coordination and professional synergy maintained with her. Her responsiveness and commitment helped us navigate several issues lawfully and with due urgency.

As I write this message, our struggle continues. But so does our resolve. The Sialkot Chamber remains unwavering in its commitment to secure a fair, facilitative, and sustainable EFS framework, one that empowers exporters rather than obstructing them.

## 10. RESOLUTION EFFORTS FOR RESTORATION OF CANCELLED PLOTS IN SIALKOT EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE

The Sialkot Export Processing Zone (SE郑Z) remained a complex issue during my tenure due to overlapping jurisdictions between the Federal and Provincial Governments. While the Chamber actively pursued facilitation in customs and taxation matters at the federal level, a major concern emerged with the Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) regarding land management.

On December 24, 2024, PSIC's Board of Management, in its 129th meeting, decided to cancel all plots and imposed harsh restoration conditions, including penalties of PKR 300,000 per kanal, restoration charges at 6% of DC rate, and non-completion charges. This decision contradicted a prior telephonic understanding reached with the Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce, Investment & Skills Development Department, Chaudhary Shafay Hussain, on December 23, 2024, wherein we had mutually agreed that all such penalties and charges would be waived to encourage industrial revival in the zone.

To seek relief for our members, Mr. Asghar Ali Rana, an esteemed member of the Chamber, was tasked to hold negotiations with PSIC. However, with PSIC unwilling to offer any relaxation, the Chamber facilitated legal recourse. A writ petition was filed in the Lahore High Court through Mr. Muhammad Zikria Sheikh, Advocate Supreme Court and former Deputy Attorney General. I am pleased to report that the Honourable Court granted a stay against PSIC's decision, providing much-needed relief to the affected industrialists.

While legal proceedings remain underway, the Chamber continues its advocacy efforts to secure a long-term



resolution. We remain firm in our stance that SEPZ should serve as a hub of opportunity, not a web of punitive policies, and we will continue pushing for clarity, fairness, and industrial facilitation across all levels of Government.

## 11. SCCI MED PHARMACY – A REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE

I had expressed, at the very beginning of my tenure, that one of my priorities was to launch a high-impact community healthcare initiative that would reflect the values of dignity, self-reliance, and inclusivity that define the business community of Sialkot. I am pleased to report that this vision was realized through the establishment of the SCCI Med Pharmacy, inaugurated on March 29, 2025, corresponding to 29th Ramadan, 1446 Hijri, on the DC Road side of the Chamber's building.

It had been my firm belief that a sustainable model—not based on Zakat or charity—was urgently needed to ease the financial burden on families affected by the rising cost of medications. In light of this, I had committed during the Annual General Meeting to creating a pharmacy that would serve the entire population of Sialkot with access to quality medicines at discounted prices. By the grace of the Almighty, and with generous support from our members, we were able to raise over PKR 14.425 million voluntarily and bring this project to life.

Since its launch, the pharmacy has extended discounts of over PKR 3.94 million, and served more than 21000 individuals, offering a 14% flat discount on all medicines—an unmatched feat in the region. I had emphasized that this pharmacy was not just a CSR project but a symbol of Sialkot's business community coming together to serve society beyond commerce. The guiding principle was to keep it independent of any religious donation structures and make it a proud contribution of Sialkot's traders and exporters to public welfare.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the members whose contributions made this possible. I am of firm conviction that the model would be sustained through business community ownership, and its values would not be compromised. I also take this opportunity to commend Mr. Mian Muhammad Khalil, Chairman of the SCCI Med Pharmacy, Mr. Imran Ali Rana, Legal Advisor for the Project, Mr. Asad Naseer Malik, Accounts Secretary, and Mr. Abdul Rauf, Deputy Secretary (Publ.), for their tireless efforts and commitment. Their oversight has ensured that this facility operates efficiently and transparently.

The SCCI Med Pharmacy, to me, is more than a pharmacy; it is a statement of intent. It reflects the growing realization that Chambers of Commerce must take an active role in solving social challenges. I sincerely hope that this initiative becomes a model for other Chambers across Pakistan and inspires them to launch similar community-focused projects. The success of this initiative stands as a testament to the fact that when the business community

unites around a shared purpose, meaningful and lasting impact is not only possible—it is inevitable.

## 12. SIALKOT RING ROAD – A GAME-CHANGER FOR URBAN MOBILITY & INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

The Sialkot Ring Road Project is a landmark initiative that we have been actively pursuing to transform our city's transportation network, ease congestion, and strengthen industrial connectivity. Conceived as a high-capacity bypass for traffic, it will link key economic hubs, including the Sialkot International Airport and Dryport, while diverting heavy traffic away from the city center. After extensive evaluations by a high-level committee—comprising the Minister for Communication & Works, Punjab Ring Road Authority, Sialkot Chamber, and NESPAK—Option 1-B, a 49.5 km modified outer loop with eight interchanges, was selected as the optimal alignment. This route minimizes land acquisition costs, preserves agricultural land, and aligns with the Sialkot Master Plan (2023–2043). With an estimated cost of PKR 63.3 billion, a BCR of 2.42, and an EIRR of 25.73%, the project's financial viability is highly encouraging. NESPAK has been tasked with conducting a detailed drone survey, particularly of the adjusted section from Wazirabad Road to Sialkot-Gondal Road, to refine terrain assessments and reduce community displacement.

I am pleased to share that land acquisition is close to completion, and the proposal now awaits the Punjab Cabinet's final approval. Once approved, tendering and construction will follow, with work expected to commence in early 2026 and phased completion by 2029. The Ring Road is designed to integrate with other major projects we are driving forward, such as the 1,400-acre Sialkot Industrial Zone near the Lahore–Sialkot Motorway and the University of Applied Engineering & Emerging Technologies (UAEET). When operational, it will cut travel time by 30–40%, improve freight efficiency, and stimulate economic growth by linking industrial clusters directly to national highways. Funding options, including public-private partnerships, are being reviewed to ensure timely execution. This project will stand as a benchmark for sustainable, smart urban mobility in Pakistan.

## 13. ESTABLISHMENT OF EXPO CENTRE SIALKOT

One of the most critical and long-standing demands of the Sialkot business community has been the establishment of a dedicated Exhibition & Expo Centre in our city. I am pleased to share that, during his visit to the Sialkot Chamber on December 19, 2024, the Honorable Minister of Commerce, Mr. Jam Kamal Khan, officially announced the Government's intent to develop an Expo Centre in Sialkot and formally requested a feasibility study to initiate the process. This announcement marked a key breakthrough in our efforts to position Sialkot as a regional hub for trade promotion, industry linkages, and global outreach.



In response to this opportunity, we at the Sialkot Chamber moved swiftly and proposed up to 100 acres of land adjacent to the upcoming Sialkot Industrial Zone as a potential site for the project. This strategic location offers accessibility, infrastructure readiness, and alignment with future industrial growth. Our proposal not only aims to accommodate large-scale exhibitions but also anticipates the creation of an integrated complex that could host conferences, B2B engagements, and public showcases of Sialkot's core industries.

To further the initiative, we have already received expressions of interest from six reputable consultancy firms for preparing the feasibility study. Parallel discussions are underway with concerned authorities for securing Export Development Fund (EDF) support both for the feasibility study and, subsequently, for funding of the construction phase.

I remain fully committed to seeing this project through. The establishment of a state-of-the-art Expo Centre in Sialkot is not just a matter of infrastructure; it is about creating a platform that matches the global stature of Sialkot's exports. It will enable our entrepreneurs, artisans, and SMEs to exhibit their innovations and craftsmanship on their home turf while attracting international buyers, trade delegations, and foreign investment to our city.

#### **14. DRIVING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTIVITY**

Throughout the year, we remained steadfast in our mission to digitally transform the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry, ensuring that our members are equipped with faster, smarter, and more accessible services. A series of forward-looking initiatives was introduced to elevate the Chamber's operational efficiency and modernize its engagement with stakeholders.

One of the most significant undertakings was the initiation of a holistic, state-of-the-art Management Information System (MIS). This integrated platform is being developed to bring together all internal operations and member services under a single digital umbrella—ranging from application processing, certification workflows, and compliance tracking to real-time service analytics. The MIS is expected to serve as the digital backbone of the Chamber, enhancing transparency, streamlining documentation, and enabling data-driven governance. Once operational, this system will redefine how the Chamber functions—ushering in a new era of efficiency and responsiveness.

Parallel to this, we launched the SCCI Live Mobile App, a dedicated digital interface designed to empower members with 24/7 access to Chamber services. Members can now submit requests, track progress, receive real-time updates, and stay informed about policy developments—all through their smartphones. This has made member interaction with the Chamber more seamless than ever before.

In our ongoing drive to enhance member convenience, we also digitized the Free Sale Certificate issuance system, transforming a previously time-consuming process into a fully online and efficient mechanism. Similarly, a new Visa Recommendation Letter portal was rolled out, enabling members to generate, verify, and submit their applications without needing to visit the Chamber physically.

I wish to place on record my sincere appreciation for Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President of the Sialkot Chamber, whose consistent oversight, valuable input, and executorial support were instrumental in taking these initiatives from concept to implementation. His keen understanding of digital solutions and unwavering commitment to member facilitation proved invaluable throughout our digital transformation journey.

As we look to the future, I remain confident that these innovations will position the Sialkot Chamber as a fully responsive, tech-enabled institution—equipped to meet the evolving needs of its dynamic business community. The work undertaken in this term lays a solid foundation for even greater digital strides in the years ahead.

#### **15. RESTRUCTURING TRADE DELEGATIONS & EXPANDING GLOBAL OUTREACH**

During my tenure, I undertook a critical review of the Chamber's longstanding approach to foreign trade delegations. For many years, Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) collaborated with TDAP to send export-focused delegations abroad, often on a self-financed basis. However, growing dissatisfaction among our members, particularly concerning the non-performance of Trade & Investment Officers at Pakistani Missions, prompted a necessary course correction. After careful deliberation, we decided to discontinue this practice and shift our focus toward participation in international trade fairs and exhibitions, where results are more measurable, access is broader, and engagement is industry-driven.

We also embraced the suggestions of our members who emphasized the value of import and R&D-led delegations, not for direct export promotion, but for exposure to modern manufacturing techniques, sourcing innovations, and product development trends. This new direction is in line with the evolving needs of our industries and our broader vision of facilitating transformation and global competitiveness for our business community.

One of the major highlights this year was the successful execution of the Jeddah Single Country Exhibition, held in collaboration with TDAP and the Ministry of Commerce. I am pleased to report that, after rigorous follow-up and assertive advocacy by the Chamber, all applicants from SCCI were approved by the Ministry—an outcome that reflects our strong institutional credibility. We also facilitated the visa process, arranged discounted airline tickets through AirSial, and provided support in addressing

customs clearance issues at Jeddah, particularly concerning the release of blocked product samples. This enabled several first-time exhibitors to access the Saudi market without disruption.

Looking forward, SCCI has initiated preparations for two self-financed international exhibitions: the Mega Show Part 2 Asian Sporting & Outdoor Products Show (October 2025) and the Africa Sports Show in Morocco (December 2025). These are part of our export diversification strategy as we look to tap into emerging markets in the Central Asia and African region, which offer significant potential beyond the traditional EU and US markets. The application and consent process for Africa Sports Show has already begun, and we will continue to update and guide our members in real time. Apart from this, Sialkot Chamber is in the process of sending a high-powered trade delegation to Nepal.

I would especially like to acknowledge the efforts of Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, our Senior Vice President and Chairman of the Fair & Exhibitions/Delegations Committee, whose consistent follow-up, member engagement, and leadership were central to the success of this year's trade promotion initiatives. His work ensured that SCCI remained agile, well-coordinated, and highly responsive in all matters related to international outreach.

## **16. PARTICIPATION IN 137TH CANTON FAIR – STRATEGIC INSIGHTS FOR SIALKOT'S INDUSTRIAL GROWTH**

From May 3–5, 2025, I had the opportunity to represent the Sialkot Chamber at the 137th Canton Fair (Phase 3) in Guangzhou, China, along with Mr. Ammar Ahmed Khan, Assistant Secretary (R&D). The visit aimed to explore sourcing opportunities, identify new product lines, and evaluate potential areas for industrial collaboration relevant to Sialkot's evolving manufacturing ecosystem.

The fair featured a diverse range of sectors, including sports goods, medical devices, textiles, fashion accessories, pet products, and healthcare supplies – several of which present strong prospects for import substitution or local production through joint ventures. I observed that China's unmatched supply chain integration, competitive pricing, and buyer-centric infrastructure continue to make it a critical trade partner for Pakistan.

In light of the insights gained, the Sialkot Chamber prepared and circulated a detailed study report to inform and guide our members regarding actionable opportunities, sourcing trends, and strategic product categories. I strongly encourage exporters and manufacturers to consider structured engagements with international suppliers and explore innovation-led diversification to strengthen Sialkot's global trade footprint.

## **17. FACILITATING MARKET ACCESS TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA FOR SURGICAL & MEDICAL DEVICE MANUFACTURERS**

In line with our ongoing commitment to diversifying export destinations and exploring new market opportunities for Sialkot's industrial base, I am pleased to report that this year, the Sialkot Chamber established active engagement with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to facilitate exports of surgical instruments and medical devices to the Saudi market.

Following a formal communication from the Embassy, the Chamber was requested to compile a list of credible manufacturers from Sialkot who are actively engaged in the production of surgical instruments and medical devices and who wish to export to Saudi Arabia. We immediately initiated a member-wide notification campaign and began compiling expressions of interest from qualified exporters.

It is important to highlight for our members that to export to the KSA, it is mandatory for manufacturers to acquire certification from the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA). However, for companies that already hold certification from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the approval process with SFDA is significantly streamlined—an encouraging incentive for our globally certified exporters.

To further support our members and remove ambiguity surrounding the regulatory framework of KSA, we are in the process of organizing a dedicated webinar in collaboration with the relevant authorities, which will provide detailed guidance on the certification process, documentation requirements, and other market-entry protocols.

I am confident that this initiative will not only enable our surgical exporters to tap into the promising Saudi market but also mark another step forward in expanding Sialkot's global commercial footprint. The Chamber remains fully committed to creating enabling pathways for market diversification and international compliance support.

## **18. DISPLAY CENTERS AT PAKISTANI EMBASSIES ABROAD**

This year, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry launched a strategic initiative to establish Display Centers at Pakistani Foreign Missions around the world, transforming these foreign missions into active promotional platforms for "Made in Sialkot" products. This effort aims to enhance the global visibility of Pakistani goods among diplomats, business leaders, and international visitors, while showcasing the country's industrial excellence, craftsmanship, and competitive potential. By curating export-quality products for display within embassy premises, we are ensuring that



Pakistan's strengths are effectively represented in high-profile international settings.

As part of the first phase, representative product samples from Sialkot's renowned industries have been dispatched to the Embassies of Pakistan in Kuwait and Senegal. Preparations are now underway to expand this initiative to other key locations, including Tokyo, Brussels, Nepal, New York, Houston, and Frankfurt, thereby strengthening Pakistan's footprint in diverse global markets. Through this sustained effort, the Chamber seeks to reinforce the country's reputation as a reliable source of premium products and foster enduring commercial partnerships that will drive the growth and diversification of national exports.

## **19. SCCI DIARIES & "MADE IN SIALKOT" PRODUCTS CATALOGUE – PROMOTING SIALKOT'S INDUSTRY**

As part of our branding and promotional initiatives, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry successfully printed and distributed SCCI Diaries featuring advertisements from our valued members, serving as a functional yet impactful branding tool.

In parallel, work is actively underway on the "Made in Sialkot" Products Catalogue Book, envisioned as a signature representation of Sialkot's industrial strength and craftsmanship. This professionally curated publication will showcase export-quality products from sectors including sports goods, surgical instruments, leather products, apparel, and more. Designed for distribution to ministries, foreign embassies, trade missions, and key public/private institutions both in Pakistan and abroad, the catalogue will celebrate Sialkot's remarkable industrial contributions while promoting its products on national and international platforms with consistency and pride.

## **20. SECURITY COMPLIANCE FOR FOREIGN WORKERS: COORDINATION ON CHARACTER VERIFICATION**

During the year under review, the Sialkot Chamber remained fully committed to supporting government directives aimed at ensuring national security and regulatory compliance. One such important development was the introduction of mandatory Character Verification protocols for all foreign workers employed in industrial and commercial enterprises within the Sialkot district.

This requirement was communicated by the District Police Officer (DPO) Sialkot on February 19, 2025. In light of increased security concerns surrounding the employment of foreign nationals in Pakistan, particularly in sensitive technical and production roles, local law enforcement emphasized the need for proper verification procedures.

The Chamber took immediate action by disseminating the relevant instructions to its members and guiding them on

the formal process of obtaining police verification for their foreign employees. Members were urged to cooperate with the local police to ensure the timely completion of the verification process, thereby fulfilling both legal obligations and contributing to broader national security objectives.

This intervention reflects the Chamber's proactive role not only in safeguarding business interests but also in aligning member operations with the evolving security framework of the country.

## **21. FACILITATING DISBURSEMENT OF WORKERS' WELFARE GRANTS – CHAMPIONING WORKER RIGHTS**

During the year under review, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry continued to serve as a bridge not only for the business community but also for the welfare of industrial workers, a key segment of our city's economic engine. A significant step in this regard was the facilitation of the distribution of Workers Welfare Grants Cheques issued by the Punjab Workers Welfare Fund, Directorate of Finance, Lahore. This initiative brought timely financial support to deserving industrial workers and reaffirmed our institutional commitment to equitable progress and inclusive development.

On January 29, 2025, the Chamber hosted the formal cheque distribution ceremony at its premises, ensuring transparency, dignity, and ease of access for all beneficiaries. Eligible workers were invited to the Chamber for cheque collection upon presentation of original identification documents. This smooth and coordinated effort was made possible through the dedication of our Labour Laws Committee, under the proactive leadership of Mr. Asad Bajwa, Chairman, whose close liaison with the relevant authorities ensured the timely release and disbursement of grants.

## **22. FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSES FOR EXPORT READINESS**

In a significant step toward enhancing export readiness and global business integration, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry, in collaboration with the National University of Modern Languages (NUML), launched foreign language courses tailored for our members and aspiring exporters.

Recognizing that communication is central to international trade, this initiative offers evening language programs in Arabic, French, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, and German—designed to help exporters connect more effectively with overseas clients. Offered strictly on a cost-only basis, the program reflects our commitment to building capacity, not generating revenue.

I am pleased to report that 108 students have already benefited from these courses. The training is being conducted through live, interactive online sessions

by experienced NUML faculty, with plans for further expansion based on member demand.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Brig. Shehzad Munir, Director General NUML, for his generous support and instrumental role in coordinating this landmark initiative. Through programs like these, the Sialkot Chamber continues to invest in the future of our exporters and their success in global markets.

### **23. SIALKOT MEDICAL CITY LIMITED AND METAS QATAR JOIN HANDS FOR LANDMARK MEDICAL INVESTMENT**

On June 2, 2025, a new chapter was written in Sialkot's development journey as Sialkot Medical City Limited (SMCL) signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with METAS QATAR TRADING for the establishment of a state-of-the-art healthcare facility in the city. This initiative, backed by an investment commitment of USD 250 million, marks the first-ever foreign direct investment (FDI) in the private sector of Sialkot, a long-standing aspiration of our business community and a milestone achieved during my tenure as President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

It is important to highlight that the Sialkot Medical City project had been facing significant delays, primarily due to the absence of a committed execution partner capable of matching the scale and ambition of the project. Recognizing the urgency and the transformative potential of this initiative for our region, I took it upon myself to personally leverage the good offices of the Chamber to identify and engage with the most suitable international partners. Through sustained outreach and high-level engagements, METAS QATAR TRADING came on board, bringing with them not only the necessary capital but also a reputation for delivering global-standard healthcare solutions.

The MoU was signed by myself, on behalf of SCCI, and Mr. Khawaja Masood Akhtar (SI) (HI), Chairman of SMCL. This healthcare facility, when operational, will provide comprehensive and specialized services equipped with advanced diagnostics and international medical standards. Its benefits will extend beyond Sialkot to the adjoining districts of Gujranwala and Gujrat, collectively referred to as the Golden Triangle, ushering in a new era of accessible, high-quality healthcare for the region.

This partnership has not only revived a long-stalled mega project but has also firmly positioned Sialkot as a destination capable of attracting and sustaining foreign investment in critical development sectors. I extend my deepest appreciation to the Board of Directors of Sialkot Medical City Limited for their perseverance and visionary leadership, and I am confident that this landmark venture will set the tone for many more impactful collaborations in the years ahead.

### **24. RELIEF IN ELECTRICITY TARIFFS FOR INDUSTRY AND CONSUMERS**

I am pleased to report that one of the most significant developments during the year was the long-awaited relief in electricity tariffs for both industrial and domestic consumers. As President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, and his entire team, whose special efforts led to a reduction of Rs. 7.59 per unit for the industrial sector and Rs. 7.41 per unit for domestic users. This relief came at a crucial time when the cost of doing business had become unsustainable for many in the export sector.

Throughout the year, the Sialkot Chamber remained actively engaged with the Government on the issue of high energy costs, particularly advocating for the restoration of the Regionally Competitive Energy Tariff (RCET). While our efforts for a comprehensive revival of RCET are ongoing, this interim relief announced by the Government represents an encouraging step in the right direction.

### **25. RELIEF FOR VICTIMS OF SUZUKI SIALKOT MOTORS FROM NATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY BUREAU**

One of the key issues I took up during my tenure was the longstanding case of the affectees of Suzuki Sialkot Motors. On April 24, 2025, I had the opportunity to represent the victims in a high-level meeting at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry with the Honorable Chairman NAB, Lieutenant General Nazir Ahmed (Retd), and his team. I firmly appealed for justice and emphasized the urgent need for the early disbursement of the already approved claims.

I am pleased to share that Chairman NAB responded positively and assured that the matter would be prioritized. He also committed that the disputed property would be sold to facilitate the prompt settlement of the victims' dues.

Following sustained follow-up and persistent engagement, we have received firm assurance that the process of disbursement is now underway and that a substantial portion of the approved claims will be released in due course of time. The Chamber has also facilitated the timely submission of the required documentation from the victims to ensure a smooth transfer of funds.

This long-awaited development marks a major success for our collective efforts. I reaffirm the Sialkot Chamber's commitment to standing by the affectedees until full restitution is achieved and justice is delivered in its entirety.

### **26. ADVOCACY ON SALES TAX REFUNDS AND RETURN FILING ISSUES**

I am pleased to share that the Sialkot Chamber made significant headway on long-pending matters related

to Sales Tax refunds and return filing during a detailed engagement with senior officials of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on April 30, 2025. In my meetings with Mr. Muhammad Imtiaz, Chief (Refunds), and Dr. Ali Adnan Zaidi, Chief (Sales Tax – Operations), I strongly advocated for the immediate disbursement of delayed Sales Tax refunds and the resolution of technical issues being faced by the business community.

Following our discussions, the FBR assured us that a major disbursement of Rs. 36 billion in Sales Tax refunds would take place on May 2, 2025, for all sectors whose claims were approved before April 30. Additionally, the FBR clarified that Annexure J of the Sales Tax Return is currently not integrated with the return itself, and that businesses may continue filing returns using zero values in Annexure J where applicable.

I also proposed that practical reforms be introduced in Annexure J and Annexure H1 to eliminate confusion, particularly for traders and commercial importers. The FBR welcomed our recommendations and requested formal submissions for further consideration. The Sialkot Chamber will continue to monitor these issues closely and ensure that the concerns of our members are addressed through constructive dialogue and policy input.

## **27. SWIFT ACTION ON PROPOSED PUNJAB LABOUR CODE 2025 – SAFEGUARDING INDUSTRY INTERESTS**

During the year, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry responded promptly to the proposed Punjab Labour Code 2025, which contained a number of stringent provisions that were impractical for the export sector and threatened to impose undue compliance and penalty burdens on businesses, particularly SMEs. Understanding the potential impact of these changes, the Chamber moved swiftly to take up the matter with the Provincial Government, engaging with all relevant stakeholders to safeguard the interests of our members. We held detailed discussions with the Secretary of Labour, actively participated in the Standing Committee's proceedings, and formally submitted comprehensive recommendations to ensure the proposed law reflected ground realities.

I extend my sincere appreciation to MPA Mansha Ullah Butt for his strong support in advocating our stance at the provincial level, and to Mr. Asad Bajwa, Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Labour Laws, for his tireless efforts in coordinating the Chamber's response and leading the consultations. Through this timely action, we successfully secured a 90-day timeline for developing a consensus draft between employers and employees before the law could proceed. The Sialkot Chamber remains firm in its position that this legislation will not be allowed to move forward unless all controversial amendments are eliminated, ensuring that any reform protects both workers' rights and the competitiveness of our export-oriented industries.

## **28. INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CESS (IDC)**

When I took charge, I knew that the Sindh Infrastructure Development Cess was already a major concern for our exporters. Unfortunately, the situation worsened when the Provincial Governments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Balochistan imposed IDC on both import and export shipments. We immediately took up the matter with the Prime Minister, the Commerce Minister, the Governors, and the Chief Ministers of all provinces.

A major breakthrough came when the Balochistan Government promptly withdrew IDC on export shipments following our representations. We have also made significant headway with the Sindh Government in this regard, and I am confident the industry will soon hear good news. The Sialkot Chamber continues to actively pursue the complete waiver of IDC in Sindh and KPK for the export sector, both on import of raw materials and export consignments, so that our exporters can compete effectively in the global market.

## **29. FOREIGN LETTER MAIL (FGN) RATES – SUBSTANTIAL RELIEF EXPECTED**

Upon assuming office, I immediately took notice of the extraordinary increase of over 110% in Pakistan Post's Foreign Letter Mail (FGN) rates—a move that disproportionately impacted small exporters of Sialkot who rely heavily on this cost-effective service for international shipments. Recognizing the severe implications for our export sector, the Sialkot Chamber engaged in persistent advocacy through multiple representations to the Ministry of Communications and Pakistan Post, highlighting how the steep hike far exceeded the claimed 25–35% rise in operational costs and risked driving business away from the national postal service.

Our efforts have now yielded encouraging results. Pakistan Post has constituted a special committee to review the matter and has formally assured us of a substantial reduction in FGN rates to restore affordability for exporters. I would especially like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Mr. Ahmed Imtiaz Khan, Chairman of SCCI's Post Office/Telecommunications Committee, whose active follow-up and dedicated efforts have been instrumental in keeping this issue on the agenda and pushing it toward resolution.

We are confident that this forthcoming decision will provide much-needed relief to the business community while safeguarding Pakistan Post's competitiveness in the logistics sector.

## **30. COMMEMORATIVE POSTAGE STAMP ISSUED IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S CHAMBER SIALKOT**

The Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry Sialkot (WCCIS) has made remarkable strides in a short span of time, emerging as a strong platform for empowering



women entrepreneurs and advancing gender inclusion in the regional economy. Their consistent efforts and growing impact are a testament to the evolving role of women-led enterprises in shaping Sialkot's economic landscape. In recognition of their tireless contributions, I assigned the Departmental Committee on Post Office/Telecommunication the task of facilitating the issuance of a commemorative postage stamp by Pakistan Post, as a symbolic tribute to their achievements.

It gives me great pride to report that, in recognition of WCCIS's growing impact, a commemorative postage stamp was officially issued by Pakistan Post, a landmark achievement not only for WCCIS but for the entire Sialkot business community. This symbolic milestone represents national recognition of the pivotal role women play in shaping the future of commerce and industry. I would especially like to acknowledge Mr. Ahmed Imtiaz Khan, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, whose efforts were instrumental in turning this vision into reality.

### 31. FACILITATING MEMBERS IN BANKING & FINANCE

At the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), we have always remained steadfast in our commitment to providing timely solutions to the challenges faced by our members across various domains. Whether the matter pertains to trade facilitation, compliance, or procedural bottlenecks, SCCI continues to act as a proactive and solution-oriented platform to ensure the smooth functioning of our members' business operations.

In the domain of Banking & Finance, I am pleased to report that, in continuation of our longstanding legacy, we have resolved a number of member cases related to banking disputes, export/import transactions, and Pakistan Single Window (PSW)-linked issues. One of the key achievements in this area was the successful resolution of a pressing concern raised by our members regarding the mandatory average deposit requirement for processing export payments.

Following the Chamber's recent engagement with Habib Metro Bank Ltd. (HMBL), I am pleased to inform you that the requirement to maintain an average deposit of PKR 5 million has officially been withdrawn. HMBL is now processing export payments without this condition, which is a major relief for many small and medium-sized exporters in our community.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Chairman Banking & Finance Committee, Mr. Akmal Javed, for his active follow-up and valuable contributions that made the smooth functioning of the committee possible.

### 32. LAUNCH OF ECM ITALY IN SIALKOT – A LEAP TOWARD INTERNATIONAL COMPLIANCE

In line with our vision to equip Sialkot's export sector with world-class compliance support, April 24, 2025, marked a

defining moment in the Chamber's service to the surgical instruments industry. The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) proudly hosted the launching ceremony of ECM (Ente Certificazione Macchine), a globally recognized Notified Body from Italy, dedicated to supporting medical device manufacturers in achieving MDR (Medical Device Regulation) certification for the European Union.

This initiative represents a strategic breakthrough in our persistent efforts to remove barriers to international market access. Sialkot Chamber formalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ECM to offer cost-effective, locally accessible, and credible MDR certification services to our members, particularly those in the surgical instruments sector. We are also proud to share that ECM has now established its local office in Sialkot, with Mr. Waqar Butt appointed as the Resident Representative, a direct result of our sustained facilitation.

The presence of ECM's Sales Manager, Mr. Ing. Diego Stevanella from Italy, at the launch reaffirmed the strength of this collaboration. Both ECM Italy and ECM Pakistan reiterated their commitment to offering practical, affordable, and SME-friendly pathways to regulatory compliance, while addressing industry-specific concerns raised by SCCI, including cost and procedural clarity.

This successful launch not only enhances certification capacity for our exporters but also reflects SCCI's continued focus on enabling sustainable and compliant export growth. We remain committed to attracting more Notified Bodies to Sialkot in the coming year, expanding access and reducing costs for our members.

### 33. SIALKOT INDUSTRIAL ZONE

The execution of the Sialkot Industrial Zone project remained one of the foremost priorities of my tenure. On the very first day in office, I convened a high-level meeting with Chairman PIEDMC, who reaffirmed his commitment to fast-tracking the project. From thereon, I undertook a sustained and strategic campaign involving top-tier stakeholders at both the Federal and Provincial levels. Representations were made to the Chief Minister of Punjab, Ms. Maryam Nawaz, on multiple occasions to seek her kind patronage and ensure the project's inclusion in the Government's economic priorities.

The Sialkot Chamber fully understands that this project is not just another industrial development scheme—it is the future of Sialkot's industry. It holds the potential to address the long-standing infrastructural and spatial constraints faced by our exporters and SMEs, thereby unlocking a new era of industrial expansion, employment, and global competitiveness.

To build institutional momentum, I engaged directly with PIEDMC, PBIT, the Chief Secretary of Punjab, the

Chairman P&D Board, the Secretary of Industries, and senior Government officials. A major milestone in this advocacy was achieved on March 27, 2025, when SIFC wrote a formal letter (F.No.01/110-SIFC/SCCI) to the Chief Secretary Punjab, recommending expedited execution of the project and calling for the formation of a dedicated Working Group with representation from key Ministries and the Sialkot Chamber to address operational challenges.

Throughout the year, I also sought support from the Prime Minister, Defence Minister, SAPM Haroon Akhtar Khan, and Quaid PML(N), Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. These combined efforts led to PIEDMC submitting the summary for Section V of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, to the CM's Secretariat on May 13, 2025 — a critical procedural requirement for moving the project forward.

As I write this message, follow-ups are actively underway. While the Government has cited fiscal constraints, I remain hopeful that our consistent engagements will soon bear fruit. The Sialkot Industrial Zone remains a transformational initiative, and the Sialkot Chamber is fully committed to ensuring its successful execution for the long-term benefit of our industry and future generations.

#### **34. UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED ENGINEERING & EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES (UAEET), SIALKOT**

The University of Applied Engineering & Emerging Technologies (UAEET), currently under construction at Sambrial, Sialkot, is a flagship initiative aimed at transforming the region's industrial and educational landscape. Designed to provide hands-on expertise in high-demand sectors such as Mechatronics, Information Technology, Industrial Biotechnology, and Advanced Manufacturing, the project directly aligns with the needs of Sialkot's globally competitive export industries, including surgical instruments, sports goods, textiles, and leather. Once operational, the UAEET will serve as a critical driver for innovation, skill development, and technological advancement in Pakistan.

The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry has been actively pursuing the timely execution of this nationally significant project. We have taken up the matter of the outstanding Federal Government funding share with the Honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Planning, Development & Reforms, and Lt. Gen. Sarfaraz Ahmad HI(M), National Coordinator SIFC.

The project's PC-I for civil works was approved at a total cost of PKR 5,710.974 million, with equal contributions from the Government of Punjab and the Federal Government. While Punjab has already released PKR 3,168.953 million, the Federal share of PKR 2,542.021 million remains pending, posing a risk of delays. The Chamber is working tirelessly to ensure the inclusion of these funds in the upcoming PSDP for FY 2025–26, thereby securing uninterrupted progress on-site. We remain committed to making every possible effort for the

timely release of funds and the successful completion of this strategically important institution for Sialkot and Pakistan's future industrial growth.

#### **35. SIALKOT COMPREHENSIVE SEWERAGE & WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

Sialkot's sewerage crisis is more than an infrastructure gap—it's a direct threat to public health, industrial compliance, and our city's economic future. With contaminated groundwater linked to alarming cancer rates and international buyers tightening environmental standards, urgent action was essential.

Building on the PKR 17.85 billion ADB-funded PICIIP work in Zone 3, we uncovered a critical shortfall: Zones 1 and 2—home to 68% of our manufacturing units—lacked proper effluent disposal. It was identified that PKR 40 billion would be required with advanced treatment plants, segregated wastewater systems, and smart compliance monitoring, alongside road and utility upgrades.

The breakthrough came when SIFC National Coordinator Lieutenant General Sarfaraz Ahmed HI(M) endorsed our proposal on March 27, 2025, triggering immediate action and the formation of a high-powered working group of federal, provincial, and industry leaders.

This project will protect 2.3 million residents from waterborne disease, safeguard \$3 billion in annual exports, and make Sialkot a model for balancing growth with sustainability. The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry remains firmly committed to working tirelessly until the project's completion, ensuring its full promise is realized for future generations.

#### **36. AIRSIAL – SOARING TOWARDS GLOBAL HORIZONS**

AirSial continues its ascent as a dynamic force in Pakistan's aviation landscape, guided by a vision of operational excellence, fleet expansion, and market diversification. Since commencing operations in December 2020, the airline has achieved remarkable growth, connecting millions of passengers while laying the foundation for a strong global presence.

During the reporting period, AirSial successfully operated 21,511 commercial flights — 13,658 on domestic routes and 7,853 on international sectors. These flights carried a total of 3,652,043 passengers, comprising 2,332,247 domestic travelers and 1,319,796 international travelers, maintaining an impressive overall average seat factor of 94% (95% domestic, 93% international).

AirSial has proudly facilitated sacred journeys with the highest standards of planning, safety, and care. Between 2020 and 2025, the airline operated 86 dedicated Hajj flights, transporting a total of 16,057 pilgrims — 6,919 under the Government of Pakistan's quota and 9,138 through private arrangements.

The airline's cargo division has also played a significant role in supporting trade and logistics. From inception to July 2025, AirSial transported over 10.3 million kilograms of cargo, including 9,835,123 kg domestically and 471,270 kg internationally.

In Q2 2025, AirSial strengthened its operational capacity by inducting two additional dry-lease aircraft, with three more scheduled for delivery in Q4 2025. This expansion will enable broader route coverage and increased flight frequencies. By the end of 2026, the fleet is expected to grow to 15 aircraft, including three wide-body Airbus A330s, enabling long-haul operations.

In June 2025, AirSial commenced its UAE operations on the Islamabad–Lahore–Sialkot–Dubai route, marking a significant step in its international expansion. Building on this momentum, the airline plans to launch additional Dubai routes from Karachi and Multan in Q4 2025, along with new services to Kuwait and Salalah, and the commencement of operations to Abu Dhabi and Medina in December 2025. Looking ahead to 2026, AirSial aims to further strengthen its domestic footprint by expanding to Skardu, Quetta, Peshawar, Faisalabad, Multan, and Sukkur, while also pursuing ambitious international growth with planned routes to the United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Thailand, China (Guangzhou, Urumqi, and Kashgar), and Malaysia by 2028.

But beyond commercial avenues, AirSial's humanitarian service of transporting deceased bodies free of charge has also gathered nationwide acclaim. To date, AirSial has carried 2,191 deceased individuals along with the same number of coffin attendants, all free of cost.

AirSial's trajectory is firmly rooted in its commitment to safety, service, and strategic growth. From transporting millions of passengers to enabling sacred pilgrimages, and from connecting domestic hubs to bridging continents, AirSial, truly the pride of Pakistan, is well on its way to becoming a leading regional and international carrier.

### 37. CHILD AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

One of the most defining legacies of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry is its flagship initiative – the Child and Social Development Organization (CSDO) – a project born out of a global partnership in 1997 at Atlanta, Georgia, between SCCI, UNICEF, and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Its founding objective was clear and historic: to eliminate child labour from the soccer ball industry of Sialkot.

Since its inception, CSDO has continued to serve as a model of responsible industrial development. With the support of the Sialkot Chamber, CSDO currently operates 7 schools in remote areas of the district, providing free education to over 1,150 children from marginalized communities – ensuring they receive not only learning but protection and dignity.

I am pleased to report that the Child Labour Elimination Programme (CLEP) has continued its operations with sustained support from the Federal Government via the Export Development Fund (EDF) and generous contributions from CLEP member companies. EDF has released Rs. 10 million out of the approved Rs. 17 million for FY 2024–25, and Rs. 11.7 million has already been reimbursed against actual expenses using available account balances. The remaining EDF funds have been formally requested, alongside an additional Rs. 2.98 million from TDAP. Meanwhile, Rs. 3.74 million has been contributed directly by CLEP members. These combined efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to upholding ethical labour practices and ensuring a brighter future for our children.

### 38. SPORTS INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (SIDC) – A STRATEGIC INDUSTRIAL FACILITY FOR SIALKOT'S SPORTS SECTOR

The Sports Industries Development Centre (SIDC), established by the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA) under the Ministry of Industries and Production, has continued to serve as a vital support facility for the sports goods industry of Sialkot. As a certified ISO 9001:2015 center, SIDC has been offering production support, technical advisory, and skill development since 2017, with a strong focus on inflatable and thermo-mechanical balls.

I am pleased to report that SIDC has manufactured over 12.2 million sports balls and related components up to June 2025, including 12 million bladders, 130,000 thermo balls, and 115,000 basketballs. This production has directly supported SME exporters, contributing nearly USD 81 million (PKR 23.25 billion) to national exports while saving an estimated USD 29 million in imports through local substitution. The Centre has also played a transformative role in skill development, having directly trained 650 individuals and impacted over 2,000 workers across the industry. Furthermore, over 15 companies have benefited from SIDC's technical support in setting up their units – many through reverse engineering.

To enhance its capabilities, I am pleased to share that this year, EDF has approved Rs. 93.586 million for the upgradation of SIDC. With these funds, the Centre has successfully installed tennis, squash, paddle, and cricket ball production machinery, meeting the standards of relevant international sports federations. Additional bladder machinery is also being procured to increase production capacity. We acknowledge SIDC's continuing contributions as a national asset and reaffirm SCCI's full support for its further development in service of Pakistan's export-led industrial growth.

### 39. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT CENTER (PDC) FOR COMPOSITES-BASED SPORTS GOODS – SIALKOT

I am pleased to share significant progress on the Product



Development Center (PDC) for Composites-Based Sports Goods, a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Industries & Production being executed by SMEDA. This project is designed to serve as a Common Facility Center, offering technical consultancy, prototype development, product testing, and skill development services for the production of composite sports goods such as hockey sticks, cricket and baseball bats, billiard cues, rackets, golf sticks, and more.

The primary goal of this Centre is to enhance the productivity and export potential of our sports goods sector by offering access to advanced technologies, skilled manpower, and essential testing facilities—thereby reducing reliance on imported machinery and materials.

I am pleased to report that civil works and procurement of machinery have been completed, and the installation and commissioning of imported equipment is about to commence. All required furniture, IT equipment, and project staff are in place. With overall project progress at 82%, we are optimistic that this Centre will soon become a strategic facility for the composite sports goods sector of Sialkot, helping us remain competitive in global markets.

#### 40. KHUD KIFALAT ROZGAR TRUST (KKRT)

Khud Kifalat Rozgar Trust (KKRT) continues to shine as a symbol of hope and economic empowerment, earning deep respect and admiration from all segments of society. This impactful initiative has transformed lives by offering interest-free loans to aspiring entrepreneurs, enabling them to establish sustainable livelihoods and attain financial self-reliance.

Over the past year, KKRT has continued to expand its outreach and deepen its impact. The growing trust of the community in this platform is a testament to its integrity, transparency, and life-changing outcomes.

##### Key Highlights:

- Total Disbursement till Date: **PKR 107,228,800**
- Total Number of Beneficiary Families: **1,688**
- Disbursement during Current Year: **PKR 6,756,000**

The Sialkot Chamber remains committed to expanding this noble cause further, fostering inclusive growth, and empowering even more families through dignified economic opportunities.

#### 41. VISA FACILITATION TO MEMBERS

The Sialkot Chamber remained steadfast in facilitating its members' international mobility by providing timely visa assistance, a key enabler of global trade engagement. During the year, we issued 3,083 Visa Recommendation Letters to support members' travel for business development and international exhibitions. In addition, 325 Chinese Visa Guarantee Letters were issued under

our specialized facilitation scheme, further easing access to the Chinese market. These efforts have significantly contributed to strengthening our members' global outreach and export potential.

#### 42. CSR ACTIVITIES

Staying true to our commitment to social responsibility, the Sialkot Chamber continued to invest in community welfare and youth empowerment. This year, we contributed PKR 4.9 million to various charitable causes and extended our support to education by awarding scholarships worth PKR 3.6 million to 134 deserving students across Sialkot. These efforts reflect our enduring belief in collective upliftment and the transformative power of opportunity.

In view of the flash floods in KPK, Sialkot Chamber arranged a fundraising campaign that reflected the continued spirit of philanthropy among Sialkot's business community, generating a total of PKR 28,050,000 through immediate donations and pledges.

#### 43. AL SUFFA FREE TUITION PROGRAM

The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), driven by its unwavering commitment to the promotion of education, continued to expand the scope and impact of its flagship Al Suffa Free Tuition Program. Designed to support academically struggling 9th and 10th-grade students from underprivileged backgrounds in government schools, this initiative ensures equal access to quality education, regardless of economic standing. The program was launched in January 2024 through a strategic partnership with GC Women University, Al Khidmat Foundation, the Sialkot Welfare Council, and the District Education Department, with a focus on both academic improvement and moral development of students.

Building on the success of its first phase, the program saw significant expansion in 2025, now operational across 21 centers spanning Sialkot, Sambrial, and Pasrur tehsils. With the support of 95 teachers (including 78 government teachers and 17 volunteers), the initiative has impacted 2,285 students to date. A specialized moral education curriculum is currently under development by a committee of ten PhD education experts led by Dr. Muhammad Nawaz, Principal of Murray College. The program also plans to introduce virtual learning in rural areas through recorded lectures and the provision of LCD screens, laptops, and UPS units to bridge the digital divide and ensure uninterrupted learning.

This remarkable initiative continues to run on a fully donation-based model, reflecting the generosity and social responsibility of Sialkot's business community. The estimated monthly budget has now risen to PKR 2.5 million, with total expected expenses of PKR 25 million for the 2025–26 academic session. The Chamber extends its gratitude to major supporters, including Anwar Khawaja Industries,

Sialkot International Airport, Sialkot Welfare Council, Air SIAL, and the countless members whose contributions have made this educational revolution possible.

#### 44. SCCI Flood Relief Efforts 2025

The recent floods in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have caused devastation on a scale that has shaken our nation. Families have lost loved ones, homes have been destroyed, and entire communities have been displaced. In these difficult times, it is our duty to stand with our people and extend every possible support. The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in partnership with organizations like Al-Khidmat Foundation, Helping Hands, and the Pakistan Army, has worked to provide immediate relief. Through the generous contributions of our members and business leaders, we were able to generate PKR 28.16 million for the Flood Relief Fund, which became the cornerstone of our assistance to the affected families.

Our efforts went beyond fundraising. We arranged ration distributions in collaboration with the Pakistan Army's 15 Division and organized Medical Relief Camps with the help of 15 Division, 08 Division, and 101 Brigade in Chaprar, Zafarwal, and Sambrial. These initiatives ensured that food, water, medicines, and medical treatment reached the people when they needed it most. I want to thank every member of the business community, our partners, and our volunteers who came forward in this time of national crisis. Together, we have shown that Sialkot's strength lies not only in industry and trade but also in compassion, unity, and service to humanity.

#### 45. Driving Simulator Initiative

This year, Sialkot Chamber fulfilled its commitment to support road safety and traffic management in the district by introducing a Driving Simulator for the city. On behalf of the Sialkot Chamber, I handed over a cheque of Rs. 630,000 to the City Traffic Police for its installation at the Police Lines Sialkot Driving Licensing Centre. This initiative, carried out under our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, reflects our belief that institutional responsibility goes beyond commerce to the well-being of the community at large. I take pride in the fact that this project not only strengthens Sialkot's infrastructure but also contributes to safer roads and a more efficient licensing system for our citizens.

#### 46. SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING(S) WITH DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS

Continuing our commitment to creating value-driven partnerships for the benefit of our members, this year the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) signed

several impactful Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and agreements. Each collaboration has been pursued with a strategic vision to enhance opportunities, services, and global outreach for our business community:

- **MOU with Gwadar Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed on May 26, 2025**
- **MOU with ECM-Pakistan signed on April 24, 2025**
- **Extension of MOU with Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) on November 14, 2024**
- **MOU with Wah Nobel Group signed on May 22, 2025.**
- **MOU with Mövenpick Hotel Centaurus Islamabad signed on May 22, 2025.**
- **MOU with Evercare Hospital Lahore signed on July 24, 2025**
- **Contract Agreement for Africa Sports Show with Tradelinks signed on July 16, 2025**

In a world where the pace of change continues to accelerate, the future belongs not to the biggest or strongest but to the most adaptable, those willing to evolve with resilience, foresight, and unity. As I pen these closing remarks for the year 2024-25, I do so with a deep sense of fulfillment, but also a renewed resolve for the road that lies ahead.

This year, as the President of the Sialkot Chamber, I have learned that no challenge is insurmountable when a trade body leads with purpose, when its members stand united, and when its vision is rooted in collective good. This Chamber — 'Your Chamber' — has not only responded to issues but anticipated them; not only endured pressure but turned it into purpose. And now, with the same clarity and commitment, we must turn our gaze toward the future.

We are entering an era where economic complexity, export policy changes, geopolitical shifts, digital disruptions, and climate adaptation will redefine global trade. In such times, the role of Chambers like Sialkot's will evolve from being advocacy platforms to becoming enablers of transition. Our exporters must prepare for the integration of future trends in global trade, carbon border adjustment mechanisms, evolving labor laws, and heightened compliance regimes. And the Sialkot Chamber will stand with its members as their guide, their partner, and their shield.

It is my vision that the Sialkot Chamber shall continue to lead the national conversation on trade reforms, fiscal justice, industrial transformation, and youth entrepreneurship. Our voice must not only echo within Government quarters, but it must also influence policymaking, redefine economic priorities, and reposition Pakistan as a globally competitive economy.

Our legacy of projects, from the Sialkot Tannery Zone, the long-awaited Industrial Zone, Materials Testing Laboratory, and the University of Applied Engineering & Emerging Technologies, are not ends in themselves;

they are beginnings. They lay the foundation of a future-ready Sialkot, where industrial progress aligns with social responsibility, where exports are not only about numbers but about values, and where our entrepreneurial spirit is matched by institutional strength.

Whatever we have been able to achieve and work on throughout this year could not have been made possible in isolation. I owe my gratitude to the Ittehad Founders Group, whose faith in my leadership never wavered. I am particularly grateful to our esteemed Group Leader, Mr. Riaz ud Din Sheikh (SI), whose wisdom and quiet strength remained a constant source of encouragement throughout the year. Here, I would also extend my heartfelt appreciation to my dedicated office bearers, Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President, and Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President, along with every member of the Executive Committee, whose belief in teamwork and service made the most complex of challenges achievable.

I also extend my sincere appreciation to all trade bodies across Pakistan, and especially those from Sialkot, for standing in complete solidarity with the Sialkot Chamber. Their united front and unwavering support strengthened our voice and reinforced our collective resolve in the face of challenges.

A President's journey is never easy. It demands sacrifice, patience, and the ability to carry burdens silently. But it also brings moments of great joy, especially when you see your efforts translate into real impact. To my friends and family, thank you for being my anchor. Your unwavering support made it possible for me to serve this institution with full commitment and an undivided heart.

And to the members of the Chamber, you are the reason behind every initiative, every letter written, every meeting fought for, every sleepless night spent planning and reviewing. Your faith in this institution and my leadership gave me the strength to rise above pressure and keep moving forward. I never took your expectations lightly. I only ask that you continue to believe in the mission of this Chamber, support those who will follow, and keep raising your voice for a better Pakistan.

The professionalism and tireless efforts of our secretariat staff, under the leadership of Mr. Tariq Mahmood Malik, Secretary General, were instrumental in carrying forward our vision and maintaining the standards of excellence that define this institution. My deepest thanks go to each one of them.

I would also like to place on record my heartfelt gratitude to the entire local government setup whose support has been pivotal to key initiatives of the Chamber. In particular, I extend my sincere thanks to Syed Naveed Haider Sherazi, Commissioner Gujranwala, Ms. Saba Asghar Ali, Deputy Commissioner Sialkot, Mr. Faisal Shahzad, District Police Officer, Ms. Saira Agha, Collector Customs Sialkot, Ms. Syeda Noureen Zahra, Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue, and Ms. Fouzia Aslam, Chief Manager, State

Bank of Pakistan Sialkot. Their unwavering cooperation, proactive engagement, and facilitative approach have been instrumental in resolving longstanding issues and enabling an environment of progress and compliance. I also extend my appreciation to all members of the print and electronic media, whose responsible coverage, consistent presence, and constructive reporting have kept the public informed and supported the broader advocacy efforts of the Chamber.

As we step into 2025–26, we must be prepared for new realities, a potential shift in government policy, global trade realignments, and continued domestic fiscal pressure. But I remain hopeful, because I know that Sialkot does not wait for favorable winds; it builds its sails. The path forward will require innovation, patience, bold ideas, and shared responsibility. But I believe, as I always have, that our city, our people, and our Chamber are more than capable of turning every challenge into a stepping stone.

I must emphasize that this year was not about maintaining the status quo; it was about challenging it. It was about elevating our voice when it mattered the most. It was about taking ownership of our future, knowing that history favors those who lead from the front.

Let this next chapter be written with even more conviction, compassion, and courage. May the Sialkot Chamber continue to thrive, inspire, and lead not only as the voice of a city, but as the heartbeat of a nation.

With the blessings of the Almighty, the strength of our members, and the commitment of my team, I stand proud not because every battle has been won, but because we refused to retreat from any, and our resilience pushes us to continue striving.

May the spirit of Sialkot — unyielding, inventive, and united — continue to shape the future of Pakistan's economy.

**Ikram Ul Haq**  
President

## FORMER PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



A.D Bhutta  
1982-1983/1986



M. Anwar Khawaja  
1984-1985



Nadeem Iqbal Sh.  
1987



Mian M. Shafi  
1988



M. Yunus Ratara  
1989



Kh. Zaka-ud-Din  
1990-1991



M. Anwer Qureshi  
1991-1992



Sh. Altan Azmat  
1992-1993



Ghazanfar Ali Shabbir  
1993-1994



Syed Mukhtar Bokhari  
1994-1995



M. Akhtar Qaisar  
1995-1996



M. Hanif Khan  
1996-1997



## FORMER PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**Dr. M. Aslam Darr**  
1997-1998



**Mian M. Riaz**  
1998-1999



**Khawar A. Khawaja**  
1999-2000



**Mian Naeem Javed**  
2000-2001



**Daud Ahmad Chattha**  
2001-2002



**Baber Iqbal**  
2002-2003



**Sh. Tahir M. Kapur**  
2003-2004



**Qaisar S. Shabbir**  
2004-2005



**Dr. Nouman Idris Butt**  
2005-2006

## FORMER PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**Sh. Abdul Waheed Sandal**  
2006-2007



**Dr. Khurram A. Khawaja**  
2007-2008



**Hassan Ali Bhatti**  
2008-2009



**Muhammad Ishaq Butt**  
2009-2010



**Ghulam Mustafa Ch.**  
2010-2011



**Naeem Anwar Qureshi**  
2011-2012



**Sheikh Abdul Majeed**  
2012-2013



**Dr. Sarfraz Bashir**  
2013-2014



**Fazal Jilani**  
2014-2015

## FORMER PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**Maj. (R) Mansoor Ahmed**  
2015-2016



**Majid Raza Bhutta**  
2016-2017



**Zahid Latif Malik**  
2017-2018



**Kh. Masud Akhtar (SI) (HI)**  
2018-2019



**Muhammad Ashraf Malik**  
2019-2020



**Qaisar Iqbal Baryar**  
2020-2021



**Mian Imran Akbar**  
2021-2022



**Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Malik**  
2022-2024





**WASEEM SHAHBAZ LODHI**  
Senior Vice President



# SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the business community of Sialkot for trusting my abilities to serve Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry, a prestigious trade organization.

I am pleased to mention that as part of the 2024-2026 Office Bearers and Executive Committee, I tried my best to keep the office dignity intact and kept myself available for all the honorable members of this Chamber at all times for their business needs.

I was given the responsibilities of handling Visa Recommendation Letters (VRLs), International trade disputes and was heading the departmental committee for Trade Fairs & delegations, besides regular day-to-day official matters.

Additionally, I was looking after the matters related to the establishment of the proposed Sialkot Expo Centre along with my President.

Approving Visa Recommendation Letters for our members, I made it sure that we accommodate members to the maximum, yet at the same time, keeping the fact in mind that final authority is the respective embassy hence, VRLs issued by SCCI must meet standard SOPs and are on pure merit. However, I was flexible with new start-ups of Sialkot as we have to create space for budding entrepreneurs who are actively progressing but currently have low business volumes. I was strict with applications of new "manager" from members, while regular "manager" applications were approved without much scrutiny.

Working as Chairman Exhibitions and Delegations committee, after consultation with our member firms and committee members, we took the principal decision of restricting trade delegations from SCCI's platform for some time due to very poor response during the past several decades. This was informed to TDAP and the Ministry of Commerce, and as a result, the Ministry of Commerce & TDAP cut 50% of their annual delegations, agreeing with SCCI's stance. Instead, we focused on targeting new exhibitions and organised the Jeddah Single Country Exhibition during February 2025 in collaboration with TDAP, Astana- Kazakhstan expo during June 2025, while two more exhibitions, Mega Show in Hong Kong during October 2025 and Morocco Sports Show in Morocco during December 2025, have been announced by SCCI and are in process as we conclude this report. Hence, a healthy progress of organising four exhibitions during a single year for our members is a positive performance by the Exhibitions committee.

Establishment of Expo Centre for the export city of Sialkot and to accommodate the growing number of new start-ups, it is the need of the time that we put focus on speedy approval of the project. Realising the need, we held several meetings with the director of TDAP after the Minister of Commerce announced the

Expo Centre for Sialkot during his visit to the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce. As a result, feasibility bids were invited, and a company to make a feasibility study was shortlisted. As we conclude this report, working on Expo Centre feasibility is in process and we hope to have it completed soon for the EDF board meeting presentation in 2025.

Towards the end of my note, I would like to thank my Office Bearers, the respected President, and the Vice President, who supported me and gave me free hand in all decisions. I am grateful to my colleagues of the vibrant Executive Committee of 2024-2026, who remained available all the time whenever we needed them.

Finally, I pray that this prestigious organization, The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, may stand tall as a role model for trade bodies of the world under its visionary leadership and its ever-progressing members continue the legacy of growth and self-reliance, playing their effective role in strengthening Pakistan and its economy.

**Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi**  
Senior Vice President

## FORMER SENIOR VICE PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**Mian M. Riaz**  
1991-1992



**Ehsan A. Karim**  
1992-1993



**Ejaz Ul Haq Mirza**  
1993-1994



**Ijaz Ahmad Dar**  
1994-1995



**M. Hanif Khan**  
1995-1996



**Ch. Ghulam Mustafa**  
1996-1998



**Khawaja Zafar Hashmat**  
1998-1999



**Maqbool Ahmad Janjua**  
1999-2000



**M. Zubair Agha**  
2000-2001



**Naveed Iqbal Sheikh**  
2001-2002



**M. Sadiq Goraya**  
2002-2003



**Zahid Latif Malik**  
2003-2004



**Ahsan Naeem**  
2004-2005



**Faisal Mahmood**  
2005-2006



**Dr. Sarfraz Bashir**  
2006-2007/2009-2010



**Zia Ullah Mirza**  
2007-2008

## FORMER SENIOR VICE PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**Adnan Sarwar Kapur**  
2010-2011



**Zafar Iqbal Geoffery**  
2011-2012



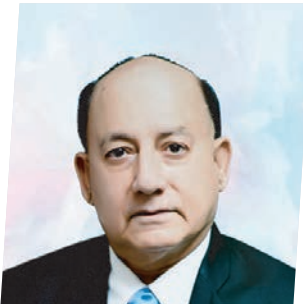
**Ikram-ul-Haq**  
2012-2013



**Mian Muhammad Anwar**  
2013-2014



**Mir Alamgir Mayer**  
2014-2015



**Muhammad Sarfraz Butt**  
2015-2016



**Adnan Arshad Sethi**  
2016-2017



**Abdul Waheed**  
2017-2018



**Waqas Akram Awan**  
2018-2019



**Khurram Azim Khan**  
2019-2020



**Khuram Aslam**  
2020-2021



**Sheikh Zohaib Refique Sethi**  
2021-2022



**Wahub Jahangir**  
2022-2024





**OMER KHALID**  
Vice President

# VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Serving as Vice President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) has been a meaningful opportunity to contribute to an institution that continues to evolve with foresight, resilience, and member-oriented purpose. Over the years, SCCI has transformed into a dynamic and responsive organization by a clear vision to enhance member facilitation and institutional efficiency. Each passing year has brought new developments, enabling the Chamber to modernize its processes, broaden its impact, and strengthen its role as a catalyst for economic growth. I am proud to have contributed to this journey during a term defined by digital transformation and organizational progress.

SCCI has taken significant steps this year to advance its digital transformation agenda, with the primary objective of creating a paperless and transparent secretariat environment. We have successfully digitized essential member services such as the Free Sales Certificate, Visa Recommendation Letters, and Certificate of Origin. This shift has streamlined operations, minimized manual processing, and ensured faster, more accountable service delivery for our members. This also helps streamline members' data for daily circulars and updates from the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

To bring services even closer to the fingertips of our stakeholders, we have launched the SCCI Live mobile application, along with the Members' Management Portal. We have also initiated the digitalization of the Chamber through ERP systems, starting with the Membership Department.

To enhance productivity and provide real-time facilitation, we have revamped several internal processes to handle a larger volume of service requests with greater efficiency. These improvements have enabled us to cater to more members in significantly less time, reducing waiting periods and increasing overall satisfaction. The re-engineering of workflows reflects our commitment to continuous institutional improvement.

Each year, we have pursued new avenues to address member concerns proactively. One such milestone this year has been the allocation of dedicated time for SCCI members at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Liaison Office in Gujrat and the Executive Passport Office, Sialkot from the Ministry of Interior, for attestation services. This development has eliminated unnecessary delays and ensured direct facilitation for our members engaged in international trade.

As a representative of the Surgical Instruments Industry, I have remained committed to enabling industry-specific advancement.

I am pleased to have introduced Ente Certificazione Macchine (ECM), a Notified Body from Italy, to support local exporters with CE certifications and European market access. Furthermore, we have enhanced our institutional relationship with ITC UK, unlocking new potential for capacity building and trade facilitation through international cooperation.

We have also paid close attention to improving the working environment of the Chamber itself. This year, significant renovation and space optimization work has been carried out at the Chamber building. These upgrades have not only increased functional capacity but have also added to the overall beauty and professional atmosphere of the institution creating a space that truly reflects SCCI's stature.

All these achievements are part of a larger vision one that sees the Chamber not as a static institution, but as a continually progressing organization committed to serving its members better with every passing year. I am confident that the groundwork we have laid will continue to serve as a foundation for future progress. The Sialkot Chamber remains dedicated to facilitating its members with efficiency, integrity, and innovation, ensuring that we continue to rise together as one business community.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the President and Senior Vice President for their unwavering support and collaborative spirit throughout this term. The prayers of my parents have always supported me in my work. Moreover, I am thankful to my leadership for entrusting me with the responsibility of this prestigious Chamber, and I have done my best to fulfill my duties.

I am grateful to Allah SWT for all the blessings and the work I have done.

**Omer Khalid**  
Vice President

## FORMER VICE PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**M. Amjad Khawaja**  
1982-1985



**M. Aslam Darr**  
1985-1986



**M. Ayoub Khan**  
1986-1990



**Daud Ahmad Chattha**  
1990-1992



**Khawar A. Khawaja**  
1992-1993



**Ch. Nazir Hussain**  
1993-1994



**Waheed Akhtar**  
1994-1995



**M. Ashraf Khokhar**  
1995-1996



**Khawaja Masud Akhtar**  
1997-1998



## FORMER VICE PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**M. Yahya Bhatti**  
1998-1999



**Sh. Muhammad Yaqub**  
1999-2000



**Arshad Javed Sandal**  
2000-2001



**Raja M. Ather Dar**  
2001-2002



**M. Ashraf Malik**  
2002-2003



**Maj. (R) Mansoor Ahmed**  
2003-2004



**Shafiq-ur-Rehman**  
2004-2005



**Sheikh Ejaz Ahmed Soni**  
2005-2006



**Ch. Raza Munir**  
2006-2007

## FORMER VICE PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**Fazal Jilani**  
2007-2008



**Mir Farooq Meyer**  
2008-2009



**Pervaiz Ahmed Khan**  
2009-2010



**Qaisar Baig**  
2010-2011



**Rahat Chand**  
2011-2012



**M. Kashif Almas**  
2012-2013



**Khawar Hussain Spall**  
2013-2014



**Malik Naseer Ahmed**  
2014-2015



**Syed Ahtesham Mazher**  
2015-2016

## FORMER VICE PRESIDENTS

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



**Mian Imran Akbar**  
2016-2017



**Abid A. Khawaja**  
2017-2018



**Amer Hamid Bhatti**  
2018-2019



**Ch. M. Jalil Aslam**  
2019-2020



**Ansar Aziz Puri**  
2020-2021



**Qasim Malik**  
2021-2022



**Amer Majeed Sheikh**  
2022-2024



## Visit of **MAJ (R) JAVED IQBAL** Chairman PIEDMC to SCCI



On October 01, 2024, Maj (R) Javed Iqbal, Chairman of the Punjab Industrial Estates Development & Management Company (PIEDMC), paid an official visit to the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) to deliberate on the current progress and the future scope of the Sialkot Industrial Zone project. The meeting underscored the strategic significance of the project in advancing industrial development in Sialkot and in augmenting its export potential. During the session, the President of SCCI, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, conveyed the substantial interest demonstrated by local exporters and entrepreneurs in establishing their industrial units within the proposed zone. He emphasized that the project was envisioned to assist local industries in aligning with international compliance standards and in overcoming enduring challenges such as land constraints, environmental regulations, and limitations to industrial expansion.

It was further shared that the Sialkot Chamber had actively collaborated with PIEDMC and NESPAK in the planning and design of the proposed industrial estate, which spans approximately 1,406 acres near Sambrial. The estate was strategically conceptualized to cater not only to regional industrial requirements but also to serve broader national export objectives. The industrial zone was recognized as a much-needed response to the scarcity of designated industrial land, the rising costs of property, and the increasing demand for globally certified industrial infrastructure. The project is also projected to create substantial employment opportunities and significantly enhance Sialkot's standing as a prominent industrial hub within Pakistan.

Maj (R) Javed Iqbal informed the participants that PIEDMC had completed critical geotechnical investigations and feasibility assessments, and that the process of land acquisition was underway under the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894. A meeting of the District Price Assessment Committee (DPAC) had been scheduled to facilitate land valuation, a key step towards initiating the physical development of the zone. He assured the Chamber of his full commitment to prioritizing the

project, and announced that the proposal for invoking Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act would be presented in the upcoming Board of Directors meeting of PIEDMC. In support of the project, the Sialkot Chamber pledged to provide a list of 100 industrialists who had expressed their willingness to purchase plots in advance, thus demonstrating the readiness of the business community to contribute financially and strategically to the initiative.

In addition to this, the Chamber committed to engaging with senior government officials and submitting a formal request to the Chief Minister of Punjab to seek prompt approval for the execution of Section 5. It was agreed that the matter would be taken up at the next PIEDMC Board meeting for formal endorsement, and that a joint session between SCCI and PIEDMC would be convened to review and revise the Land Use Master Plan to ensure alignment with emerging industrial dynamics. The meeting concluded with mutual affirmation from both PIEDMC and SCCI to move forward collaboratively and to ensure that the Sialkot Industrial Zone project meets global benchmarks, supports sustainable industrial growth, and strengthens Pakistan's export landscape.



## Visit of **KHAWAJA MUHAMMAD ASIF (NI)** Federal Minister for Defence to SCCI



On October 12, 2024, the Honourable Federal Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif (NI), visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). He was warmly received by the President, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, who expressed gratitude for the Minister's longstanding support of the Chamber's industrial and civic initiatives. The President acknowledged the Minister's valuable role in facilitating communication between the Chamber and senior government authorities, and requested his continued support in championing ongoing and future initiatives.

During the meeting, the Minister inquired about the presence of IT-based enterprises among the Chamber's membership. Mr. Ikram ul Haq confirmed the registration of several IT companies and highlighted the sector's growing relevance in Pakistan's economy. He praised local educational institutions for offering relevant degrees and diplomas, which contribute to developing a skilled digital workforce. Khawaja Muhammad Asif (NI), commended the Chamber's focus on promoting Information Technology and E-Commerce, stating that skilled IT professionals could significantly enhance foreign remittances and digital exports. He also discussed recent government-led developments in Sialkot, including the rehabilitation of Kashmir Park by the Army, which now includes the construction of cricket pitches and children's recreational facilities.

Further updates were shared by the Minister, including the reopening of CMH Road, the relocation of bus stops and Cantonment Board

offices to reduce congestion, and the approval of an overhead bridge beginning at Gulistan Cinema. He also announced a project to acquire 350 acres of land for relocating government departments out of the city centre. The Minister stated that the long-stalled ring road project had entered the planning phase and would be constructed on elevated pillars to conserve land. He noted progress on the reconstruction of Khawaja Safdar Road and the accelerated development of Aimanabad Road, alongside broader municipal reforms aimed at enhancing urban governance.

The President raised several key issues, including the need for urgent resolution of the FTR matter, and requested the Minister's support in addressing a 2% cess imposed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government on import/export goods. He also highlighted the Chamber's concern over the Sialkot Business and Commerce Centre (SBCC), whose management had been handed over to SMEDA contrary to the original agreement. The President requested assistance in restoring legal control of the SBCC to SCCI. Additional matters discussed included the establishment of a Ministry of Foreign Affairs attestation desk at the Business Facilitation Center, extension of SCCI's term on the Export Development Fund (EDF) Board, and the renewal of the lease for Sialkot Public School.

The President also shared that the Sialkot Industrial Zone project had reached its execution phase and sought the Minister's intervention with the Chief Secretary Punjab to expedite the approval of Section





5 of the project. In response, the Minister assured full cooperation and promised to raise the issues with the concerned ministries. He committed to arranging a meeting with the Chairman FBR to discuss the FTR and expressed willingness to invite the Federal Minister for Commerce to Sialkot for direct engagement. He also pledged to advocate for a resolution of the SBCC issue with the Ministry of Industries and Production.

Concerns were also voiced regarding the delays in the Sialkot Tannery Zone project. The Minister expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of progress, despite previous support. The President

requested a six-month extension and offered to personally oversee the completion of the 100 tanneries. He also requested EDF's support for the project's final approval. The session concluded with expressions of gratitude and a reaffirmation of the importance of close collaboration between government and industry for inclusive economic growth.





Meeting with

**DR. ASIF MAHMOOD JAH**

Federal Tax Ombudsman



On October 15, 2024, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, the Federal Tax Ombudsman, along with representatives from the Sialkot Tax Bar Association. Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President of SCCI, welcomed the guests and expressed appreciation to the Federal Tax Ombudsman for visiting the Chamber to engage in dialogue on tax-related matters of mutual interest.

Mr. Lodhi emphasized that Sialkot is a city recognized for its strong export orientation and highlighted the business community's consistent adherence to its tax responsibilities. He provided an overview of the local industrial landscape, mentioning the diverse range of products manufactured in Sialkot, and acknowledged the significant social contributions made by local entrepreneurs through their corporate responsibility initiatives. He then outlined key issues concerning the business community, including the need for reinstating the Fixed/Final Tax Regime (FTR) for exporters, resolution of appeal effect and deferred cases, proper classification of returned goods under Section 22 of the Customs Act 1969, expedited clearance of duty drawback claims under the One-Customs system, abolition of the Sindh Infrastructure Development Cess, and permission to file joint complaints on common taxpayer issues.

In his remarks, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah expressed his gratitude to the Chamber and acknowledged the crucial role played by the business community of Sialkot in supporting Pakistan's economy. He affirmed his commitment to strengthening the Office of the Federal Tax Ombudsman and stated that he would rely on his 30 years of experience in tax administration to improve services. He elaborated on the concepts of good

administration and maladministration, and assured the participants that his office aimed to resolve complaints swiftly. He also announced the implementation of an online case referral system to streamline communication with relevant tax departments.

Dr. Jah clarified that matters such as duty drawbacks, appeal effect, and deferred payments were within the FTO's jurisdiction and would be addressed without unnecessary delay. However, he noted that policy matters—such as the revival of the FTR—would be referred to the appropriate authorities for further consideration. He added that issues like the Sindh Infrastructure Development Cess would be taken up with the provincial government. He also mentioned that insurance-related complaints, as raised during the meeting, would be followed up in coordination with the Insurance Ombudsman. Furthermore, he informed participants that an advisor had been appointed at Aiwan-e-Saddar to facilitate representation scheduling for tax professionals.

Mr. Almas Ali Jovindah, Executive Secretary and Advisor Legal, elaborated on the historical background and function of the Ombudsman's Office. He stated that the institution was established in 1983, with the Federal Tax Ombudsman office being founded in 2000, and reiterated that its mandate was to ensure accessible and affordable remedies against administrative failures in tax enforcement. During the question-and-answer session, Dr. Jah responded to concerns regarding arbitrary proceedings by tax authorities, affirming that complaints based on maladministration could be submitted to his office. He advised stakeholders to submit a formal written representation on the FTR so that the matter could be raised with the relevant authorities.

## Visit of **CIVIL OFFICERS** of the 41st Mid-Career Management Course, Lahore



On the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted a delegation from the 41st Mid-Career Management Course of the National Institute of Management (NIM), Lahore. The delegation was received by the President of SCCI, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, who welcomed the officers and acknowledged their potential to contribute effectively to public service delivery across the country. He expressed appreciation for the government's initiatives such as the establishment of Business Facilitation Centers in Punjab's major industrial cities and the creation of the Special Investment Facilitation Council aimed at attracting foreign direct investment.

Mr. Ikram ul Haq provided a detailed briefing on the city of Sialkot and its business community. He highlighted the numerous pioneering initiatives undertaken by the Chamber and the private sector, such as the development of the Sialkot International Airport, the Dry Port Trust, Sialkot City Development Program, Export Processing Zone, Business & Commerce Centre, Tannery Zone, and AirSial. These projects, he noted, exemplified the city's spirit of self-reliance and public-private collaboration in socio-economic development.

Ms. Hina Khalid, Directing Staff at NIM, expressed her gratitude for the warm reception and praised the efforts of the Chamber in creating a business environment that serves as a national model. She applauded the city's global reputation for quality

manufacturing and emphasized the significant contribution of its export figures to national economic performance. She also expressed a commitment to future collaboration aimed at resolving obstacles and ensuring operational efficiency to further strengthen the export sector.

The discussion included important policy topics such as sustaining national industrial growth, timely completion of government projects, the Chamber's role in IT sector development, introduction of advanced training programs to upskill the local workforce, improving the effectiveness of overseas consulates, and advancing the Sialkot Industrial Zone and Business Facilitation Center. The delegation also addressed the issue of global standards compliance to support export competitiveness and discussed strategies to overcome the skilled labor shortage facing Sialkot.

The visit concluded with a note of appreciation from Ms. Hina Khalid, who thanked the President of SCCI for the valuable insights and reaffirmed the delegation's admiration for the Chamber's accomplishments and visionary leadership.



Meeting with

## **MR. RASHID MAHMOOD LANGRIAL,** Chairman FBR at FBR Headquarters, Islamabad



On October 28, 2024, a high-level delegation from the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), led by its President Mr. Iqram ul Haq, met with Mr. Rashid Mahmood Langrial, Chairman of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), at the FBR Headquarters in Islamabad. The meeting was convened to discuss the potential revival of the Fixed Tax/Final Tax Regime (FTR) for the export sector of Sialkot. Also present were Mr. Imran Ali Rana, Chairman of SCCI's Departmental Committee on Income Tax/FTR, Mr. Hamid Ateeq Sarwar, Member IR Policy, FBR, and Mr. Arshad Nawaz Cheena, Chief of Income Tax Policy at FBR.

The President of SCCI began by highlighting the success of the FTR since its implementation in 1991, noting that it had contributed to a 149% increase in government revenue. He voiced concern about the detrimental effects of the transition to the Normal Tax Regime (NTR), warning that Sialkot's exports could decline below USD 2 billion if the FTR was not reinstated. Mr. Imran Ali Rana pointed out that many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Sialkot were unfamiliar with complex accounting procedures due to long-standing reliance on the FTR and proposed a transitional period of three to five years to allow businesses to adapt.

Chairman FBR, Mr. Rashid Mahmood Langrial, acknowledged the city's contributions to the national economy but cited pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the reason for transitioning to the NTR. He recommended that exporters adopt proper bookkeeping

practices and suggested the possibility of revising the Rs. 300 million audit threshold. Mr. Hamid Ateeq Sarwar proposed simplified tax return forms and temporary audit exemptions for exporters. He also suggested relaxing certain withholding tax provisions and recommended audit services be provided through SMEDA to assist SMEs during the transition.

Despite these proposals, SCCI representatives maintained that only the complete restoration of the FTR would be acceptable. Mr. Rana stressed the need for a permanent solution and requested exemption from all withholding tax provisions. Mr. Iqram ul Haq expressed that exporters would be willing to accept a tax discharge liability of 1.25% of their export turnover, or potentially 1.50% through consultation. However, Mr. Langrial countered with the possibility of a higher discharge rate of 3.00%, prompting further discussion on its feasibility.

The meeting concluded with Mr. Iqram ul Haq reaffirming SCCI's commitment to consult with its members to explore acceptable options. He thanked all participants for their engagement and pledged continued collaboration to ensure a resolution that supports the sustainability of Sialkot's export-driven economy.



## Visit of **RANA UMAR FAROOQ** District Police Officer Sialkot



On November 2, 2024, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), extended a warm welcome to District Police Officer Rana Umar Farooq and other attendees. In his remarks, the President emphasized the importance of mutual cooperation between the Chamber and the Police Department to maintain and enhance law and order in Sialkot. He announced the nomination of Mr. Amer Majeed Sheikh as the focal person for coordinating with the DPO office to address police-related matters, and introduced Mr. Zafar Iqbal as the focal person representing the Small Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Mr. Ikram ul Haq proposed a mechanism whereby business-related disputes and complaints could be addressed through the Chamber before proceeding with formal FIRs, aiming to promote harmony between the business community and the police. He acknowledged the recent accomplishments of the police, including the recovery of Rs. 7.5 million from a dacoity case and the rapid rescue of a kidnapped Chamber member. He also suggested launching joint initiatives with the Police Department to improve traffic management and enhance the law and order situation in Sialkot.

In response, DPO Rana Umar Farooq expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and briefed the participants on his priorities for improving security in Sialkot. He credited the successful resolution of recent dacoity and kidnapping cases to the efficiency of the Sialkot Safe City camera system. The DPO emphasized the need for ongoing collaboration with civil society and business leaders to further develop the local

policing system. He appealed for financial assistance from the business community for the installation of traffic signals on Khawaja Safdar Road and the construction of a new police station building. Additionally, he requested support for the provision of a bulletproof vehicle to facilitate the safe transportation of visiting Chinese nationals engaged in business with local firms.

He noted that the Sialkot Safe City project was now fully operational and extended an invitation to the Chamber's leadership for an on-site visit to inspect the system firsthand.

Prominent businessman Mr. Riaz Uddin Sheikh also welcomed the DPO, commending his proactive leadership, which he likened to that of the late (Retd.) Captain Amin Vance. Mr. Sheikh reaffirmed the longstanding support of the business community for the Police Department and proposed that feasibility studies be prepared for the construction of the Kotwali Police Station and the installation of additional traffic signals. He assured that the business community would provide the necessary financial backing for these projects and called upon SIAL and other local organizations to extend their support to the DPO office.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair, with both the SCCI and the District Police reaffirming their commitment to sustained cooperation for enhancing public safety and civic infrastructure, thereby benefiting both the local business ecosystem and the broader citizenry of Sialkot.

Visit of

**DR. AZAM CHAUDHRY**

Dean of Faculty of Economics, Lahore School of Economics (LSE)



On November 4, 2024, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) organized a seminar on "Industrial Innovation & Export Opportunities in Sialkot," which was chaired by Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI. The session commenced with the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, followed by opening remarks from the President.

President SCCI warmly welcomed the participants and acknowledged their commitment to promoting industrial development in Sialkot. He emphasized that the city, long recognized for its manufacturing excellence, must now innovate to remain globally competitive. Referring to the initiative launched by the Lahore School of Economics (LSE), he highlighted the growing global demand for advanced surgical instruments and urged Sialkot-based manufacturers to proactively prepare lists of dental instruments suitable for international export. He underscored the need to embrace modernization and align with global standards to meet the evolving needs of international markets.

Dr. Azam Chaudhry of LSE introduced the institution's Football Project, focusing on innovation and quality enhancement in football manufacturing. He showcased the "Shamyla Die," an innovative tool that increases cutting efficiency by enabling the production of 10–12 additional pentagons per rexine sheet, thereby reducing production costs by approximately 1%. He also discussed customized staff training modules and a subsidy program encouraging the use of premium-quality rexine to elevate the overall quality of footballs produced in Sialkot.

Additionally, Dr. Chaudhry launched the "Expanding Horizons: Dental Export Opportunities" initiative, which aims to support Pakistani companies in exporting newly identified dental products to the United States. He announced cash grants of PKR 2.5 million for the first two companies that successfully export pre-selected

dental products while meeting stringent audit and compliance requirements.

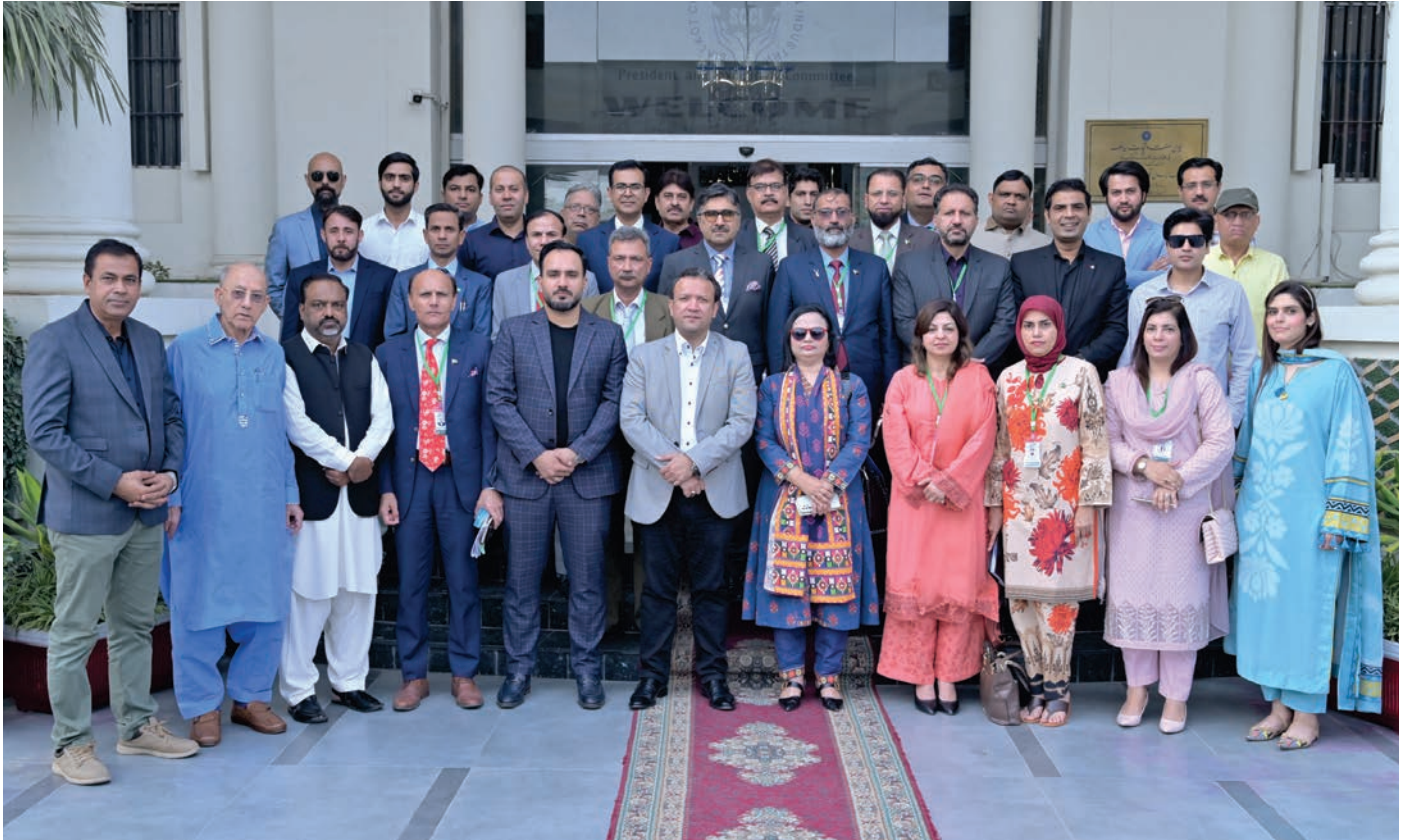
Mr. Fahad Irfan provided an in-depth overview of the three-stage audit process essential for firms participating in the export initiative. This includes an initial inspection of materials, mid-production assessment, and final pre-dispatch verification. He outlined the required documentation, including machinery details, process flow charts, steel traceability, and a complete Device History Record (DHR). Export validation would require shipping documents and invoices totaling at least USD 10,000.

Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President SCCI, proposed that LSE provide technology acquisition grants to the local industry, particularly for 3D scanners and printers, to facilitate technological upgradation. The seminar concluded with an affirmation of the importance of industry-academia collaboration and a shared commitment to fostering innovation and export growth in Sialkot.





## Visit of the 36<sup>TH</sup> SENIOR MANAGEMENT COURSE from NIM Islamabad



On November 6, 2024, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted the participants of the 36th Senior Management Course from the National Institute of Management (NIM), Islamabad. Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of SCCI, welcomed the delegation and expressed his appreciation to NIM for its continued efforts in equipping government officials with modern administrative and managerial skills. He stressed the importance of fostering a business-friendly environment and briefed the participants on SCCI's various initiatives, including the development of infrastructure projects and the establishment of an Islamic Commercial Bank.

Ms. Samreen Zahara, Head of Delegation, acknowledged the Sialkot Chamber's role in driving socio-economic development and promoting trade across the region. She commended the Chamber's collaborative approach and informed the audience that NIM had recently reverted to its original name, NIPA (National Institute of Public Administration).

The President of SCCI highlighted the business community's role in strengthening the national economy, particularly in relation to the export sector. He voiced concern over the discontinuation of the Final Tax Regime (FTR) for exporters and requested the visiting officers to advocate for its revival in relevant forums. He also raised the issue of insufficient support from trade missions abroad in facilitating business-to-business (B2B) engagements for exporters.

Responding to a delegate's inquiry about the participation of women in Sialkot's industrial sector, Mr. Ikram ul Haq shared that over 368 women exporters were currently registered with the Chamber. He highlighted the establishment of the Women's Chamber of Commerce in 2021, a dedicated platform to support and promote women entrepreneurs.

Another delegate, Mr. Shahzad, expressed concerns regarding the city's infrastructure and town planning. In response, the President assured the delegation that the Chamber was actively lobbying for comprehensive urban development initiatives, including the Sialkot Ring Road, motorway connectivity, a proposed cargo train service, and the establishment of an engineering university in the city.

Mr. Ikram ul Haq further emphasized the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions from businesses and proposed the implementation of an emergency logistics system to ensure uninterrupted export consignments, drawing inspiration from a successful model implemented in Bangladesh.

The visit concluded with mutual expressions of appreciation and a shared commitment to continued collaboration between the public sector and the business community to promote economic development and administrative excellence in Pakistan.



Visit of

## MR. HISHAM SARWAR CEO of Innovista (Being Guru)



On December 3, 2024, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) had the honour of hosting Mr. Hisham Sarwar, CEO of Innovista (Being Guru) and one of Pakistan's leading experts in Information Technology and E-Commerce. Mr. Sarwar visited the Chamber to deliver a thought-provoking seminar titled "How to Develop Sialkot's IT Industry for Global Exports." The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from members of the business community, university students, emerging entrepreneurs, and local freelancers, all eager to explore the potential of digital transformation in Sialkot's economic landscape.

Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of SCCI, formally welcomed Mr. Hisham Sarwar and all distinguished guests to the session. He remarked that it was a privilege to host an individual who had made substantial and transformative contributions to Pakistan's IT sector and freelancing economy. The President acknowledged Mr. Sarwar's pioneering role in developing digital platforms that empowered thousands of freelancers across the country, and appreciated his leadership in promoting digital literacy, self-employment, and entrepreneurship through innovative educational content and outreach programs. He emphasized the strategic importance of integrating information technology into Sialkot's economy, traditionally driven by manufacturing and exports. Mr. Haq stated his belief that Sialkot, with its entrepreneurial spirit and talent pool, could emerge as a hub of IT innovation and digital exports. He encouraged the youth and business community to embrace digital tools and online business models as a means of achieving sustainable growth in the global marketplace. Furthermore, the President urged freelancers and young entrepreneurs to formally register with the Chamber so that their needs could be addressed in a structured manner and they could fully benefit from the Chamber's support. He also appreciated the efforts of Mr. Fizan Akbar, Chairman of the SME/Training

Committee, for organizing a series of impactful training sessions that have contributed to the skill development and empowerment of Sialkot's SME sector and newly registered members.

Mian Muhammad Khalil, Chairman of the Event Management Committee, also welcomed the participants and extended his appreciation to President Ikram ul Haq for his dynamic leadership in addressing the evolving needs of Sialkot's industries. He observed that the integration of IT with traditional business was no longer optional but a necessity in the modern economic environment. He praised the Chamber's forward-thinking initiatives and highlighted the importance of such seminars in building awareness and capacity. Mr. Khalil also commended the commitment of Mr. Fizan Akbar for continuously organizing capacity-building activities that were effectively bridging knowledge gaps for SMEs and young professionals.

During his address, Mr. Hisham Sarwar delivered an engaging and highly informative presentation. He stated that the global economic landscape had undergone a paradigm shift, with technology becoming the core driver of growth, competitiveness, and sustainability. He remarked that countries and cities that failed to adapt to digital trends risked stagnation. Mr. Sarwar emphasized that Sialkot, as a globally recognized export city, possessed immense untapped potential in the IT and E-Commerce domains. He stated that if properly leveraged, the city's entrepreneurial culture, coupled with its skilled youth, could enable Sialkot to significantly increase its share in IT exports, particularly in software development, digital services, and online outsourcing. He urged local businesses to expand their digital footprint and adopt E-Commerce platforms to scale their operations internationally. He highlighted the importance of digital branding, online visibility, and customer engagement

in global trade and encouraged manufacturers to embrace private label models and direct-to-consumer strategies using online platforms. Mr. Sarwar offered practical advice on business model innovation, talent development, and infrastructure readiness, and encouraged the Chamber to act as an enabler for this transformation. He pledged his full cooperation in supporting the Chamber's initiatives, addressing the concerns of freelancers and entrepreneurs, and building a sustainable framework for digital business growth in Sialkot.

Mr. Fizan Akbar, Chairman of the SME/Training Committee, expressed his gratitude to Mr. Sarwar for his valuable insights and impactful session. He noted that E-Commerce and digital technology were fast becoming essential tools for exporters and manufacturers in maintaining competitiveness. He shared that while cities like Lahore, Islamabad, and Karachi had made significant strides in promoting IT and freelancing ecosystems, the Sialkot Chamber had now embarked on a mission to ensure the city keeps pace with national and global developments. He reiterated the Chamber's commitment to skill development, particularly among youth and SMEs.

A round-table discussion was also held during the session, allowing participants to engage directly with Mr. Sarwar and discuss specific challenges, ideas, and solutions relevant to digital transformation, freelancing, and business automation.

Several concrete proposals emerged from the session. It was suggested that the Sialkot Chamber consider

signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with M/s. Innovista to formalize cooperation. Mr. Sarwar proposed that SCCI establish a portal under the branding of "Made in Sialkot, Pakistan" to showcase the city's products online, with Innovista offering to manage its international digital marketing. It was also proposed that a dedicated WhatsApp channel be created to keep local entrepreneurs informed and provide a direct communication platform. M/s. Innovista offered to conduct a three-month online paid training program for SCCI members, students, and entrepreneurs, focusing on E-Commerce and IT skills—subject to approval by the Chamber's Executive Committee. Furthermore, Mr. Sarwar suggested the Chamber support the development of private label brands and proposed joint efforts to assist businesses in exploring this revenue model. He also mentioned that a follow-up visit to the University of Sialkot (USKT) could be arranged in January 2025, in coordination with SCCI. Most notably, Mr. Sarwar recommended the establishment of a dedicated E-Commerce section at the Chamber. Through this platform, SCCI could offer internships to students and young entrepreneurs, along with a nominal stipend, to better integrate them with the formal business community and foster digital inclusion.

The seminar concluded on an optimistic note, with a shared understanding that the future of Sialkot's economic growth lay in embracing technology, fostering entrepreneurship, and building strong institutional linkages to support innovation and export diversification.





Visit of

## MR. TAYYAB HAFEEZ CHEEMA

Regional Police Officer (RPO) Gujranwala



On December 7, 2024, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) had the honor of hosting Mr. Tayyab Hafeez Cheema, Regional Police Officer (RPO) Gujranwala, for a comprehensive discussion on public safety, law enforcement collaboration, and strategic interventions in traffic and crime control. Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President SCCI, formally welcomed the RPO and participating officers, acknowledging the critical role of coordinated efforts between the police force and business community in maintaining law and order in Sialkot.

President SCCI commended the recent deployment of technology-driven policing measures, particularly those initiated under the leadership of DPO Rana Umar Farooq, and expressed Chamber support in acquiring bulletproof vehicles under the Export Development Fund (EDF) to further secure the city and its key business zones.

The RPO highlighted achievements in curbing street crime, including major breakthroughs in dacoity cases and efforts to combat narcotics and kite flying, which have posed risks to public safety. He introduced the "Pink Wheels" initiative, which features 25 trained female motorcyclists promoting women's safety and community policing. Financial support was sought from SCCI to expand this important program.

Traffic congestion, exacerbated by rapid urbanization and housing projects, was a core concern. The Chamber emphasized the need

for enhanced deployment of traffic police and restoration of faulty traffic signals, to which the RPO affirmed pending deployment approval from the Punjab Government. He invited SCCI's support in funding or facilitating signal repairs.

During the interactive session, multiple Chamber members raised targeted concerns. Mr. Omar Khalid proposed establishing a dedicated women's police enclave. Mr. Syed Ahtesham Gilani recounted a theft incident at the Tannery Zone, urging increased patrols and surveillance. Ms. Kinza Ejaz suggested a digital industrial misconduct reporting system. Mr. Ajmal Iqbal recommended a structured traffic and parking plan. Mr. Shahbaz Saim raised issues regarding outdated FIR references and their consequences for youth.

In response, the RPO reiterated the department's openness to collaboration and invited SCCI to visit the Khidmat Markaz in Gujranwala to explore new service delivery models. He also requested continued Chamber assistance in acquiring bulletproof vehicles for the protection of foreign delegations, particularly Chinese investors.

President Ikram ul Haq assured the Chamber's unwavering support and confirmed SCCI's readiness to work closely with law enforcement agencies. The session concluded with a mutual resolve to enhance Sialkot's security infrastructure and build a safer environment for all citizens and investors.



Meeting with

**MR. NAVEED HAIDER SHIRAZI**

Commissioner Gujranwala – Review of Sialkot Tannery Zone Project



On December 13, 2024, a high-level delegation from the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), led by President Mr. Ikram ul Haq, met with Mr. Naveed Haider Shirazi, Commissioner Gujranwala Division, at his office to present an update on the progress of the Sialkot Tannery Zone (STZ) project. This meeting was a pivotal step in addressing administrative constraints, streamlining plot allocations, and resolving policy matters that had delayed further development of the project.

President SCCI delivered a detailed briefing on the current status of the STZ, noting that the Chamber had recently received 25 new applications accompanied by full payments from prospective investors, with additional interest expected in the near future. This demonstration of confidence from the business community was received positively by the Commissioner, who responded with the announcement that the embargo on the sale and purchase of plots in the Tannery Zone would be officially lifted, thereby unblocking a critical bottleneck in the project's advancement.

To ensure orderly and transparent allocation, Commissioner Shirazi directed the Deputy Commissioner Sialkot to prioritize the distribution of plots in the following order: first to pending applicants whose applications were in abeyance during the embargo, second to current operational tannery owners seeking relocation, and finally to financially viable enterprises with a clear intent to set up new tanneries. He emphasized that the relocation of existing tanneries to the STZ would not only enhance industrial planning but also ensure compliance with environmental regulations, thereby making Sialkot a cleaner and more sustainable industrial hub.

Commissioner Shirazi instructed the Deputy Commissioner to convene a follow-up coordination meeting at the DC Office on December 16, 2024. The purpose of this meeting would be to assess allocation progress, confirm applicant commitment, and finalize the draft exit policy being prepared by Sialkot Tannery Zone Management Company (STAGL). This policy would address concerns of existing allottees who no longer wish to retain or utilize their plots and are seeking resale options.

STAGL also shared insights during the session, reporting that several initial allottees had formally expressed interest in exiting the project. The Commissioner acknowledged this dynamic and advised that appropriate measures be adopted to facilitate plot reallocation to committed and financially capable stakeholders.

This meeting marked a breakthrough in the administrative process surrounding the STZ, reaffirming the commitment of the local government and SCCI to jointly resolve policy, infrastructure, and investment challenges. It laid the groundwork for renewed momentum in one of Sialkot's most significant industrial development projects, ensuring that future efforts align with the city's broader economic and environmental goals.

Meeting with

## MR. MUHAMMAD ZULQARNAIN

Deputy Commissioner Sialkot – Operationalization of Sialkot Tannery Zone (STZ)



On December 16, 2024, following up on the directives issued by Commissioner Gujranwala, Mr. Muhammad Zulqarnain, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sialkot, chaired a decisive meeting at his office to assess and execute next steps in the operationalization of the Sialkot Tannery Zone (STZ). The meeting was attended by President SCCI, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, and key stakeholders from the business community and concerned departments.

President SCCI provided a comprehensive briefing on the outcomes of the earlier meeting with the Commissioner, notably the lifting of the embargo on plot sales and transfers in the STZ. He emphasized the Chamber's commitment to ensuring a fair and transparent allocation process aligned with the Commissioner's prioritization strategy. In this regard, the President presented the three-tiered criteria for allocation: (1) pending applicants from earlier rounds, (2) existing operational tannery owners, and (3) credible, financially capable investors seeking to establish new facilities within the zone.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the structured approach and requested that the Chamber conduct a verification exercise to confirm that applicants, particularly those from earlier phases, are still engaged in the leather business and possess genuine intent to establish units. Furthermore, he directed the Environment Department to conduct on-site inspections to verify the operational status of tanneries and assess compliance with environmental standards.

A key highlight of the session was the formal introduction of the "Exit Strategy" by President SCCI. This strategy is intended to offer a legal and transparent mechanism for existing allottees who wish to return or resize their plots due to changed business circumstances. The DC acknowledged the proposal and assured that the draft policy would be reviewed and

finalized within two weeks, providing much-needed flexibility to the project while avoiding speculative land holding.

The participants also discussed the pricing structure of STZ plots, which was proposed by the Chamber at PKR 150,000 per marla. The Deputy Commissioner provisionally accepted this rate, subject to the submission of relevant justifications and documentation to the Commissioner's Office for approval. The pricing discussion reflected the need to balance affordability with infrastructure development requirements, ensuring the project remains viable and accessible to serious investors.

To instill a clear timeline and sense of accountability, President SCCI proposed two key deadlines: March 31, 2025, for the laying of foundations on allocated plots, and December 31, 2025, for full operational relocation. These targets aim to accelerate project delivery and encourage timely execution by all stakeholders.

Another pressing issue discussed was the delayed installation of the GEPCO grid station, which is essential for providing uninterrupted power supply to the industrial units. The DC recognized the urgency of this requirement and committed to engaging with the Planning & Development (P&D) Department and Public Works Department (PWD) to facilitate and expedite the process.

The meeting marked a strong administrative endorsement for the revival and rapid development of the Sialkot Tannery Zone. With embargoes lifted, policies streamlined, and deadlines defined, the project has now entered a critical implementation phase, underpinned by close coordination between the district administration and the SCCI.



Visit of

**MR. MAHESH MISHRA**

Group Head Trade &amp; Economy and Political Counsellor, British High Commission



On December 17, 2024, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) welcomed Mr. Mahesh Mishra, Group Head for Trade & Economy and Political Counsellor at the British High Commission in Islamabad, along with his delegation, for an important dialogue on enhancing bilateral trade, investment, and development cooperation. The meeting was hosted by President SCCI, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, and attended by executive members, exporters, and representatives of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS).

President SCCI highlighted the longstanding trade relationship between Sialkot and the United Kingdom, particularly in sectors such as sports goods, surgical instruments, leatherwear, and apparel. He emphasized that the UK remains one of the top destinations for Sialkot's exports, supported by the Pakistani diaspora and favorable bilateral ties. Key local projects were showcased, including Sialkot International Airport, AirSial, Medical City, and the Sialkot Tannery Zone—each reflecting the entrepreneurial spirit of the city.

Mr. Mahesh Mishra expressed admiration for the self-reliant and export-driven model of Sialkot's economy, acknowledging its global footprint in manufacturing. He reaffirmed the UK's commitment to private sector development in Pakistan and acknowledged the Pakistani community in the UK for strengthening ties between the two nations. Mr. Mishra noted that post-Brexit, the UK was keen on diversifying trade partnerships and Pakistan remained a strong priority. He encouraged further expansion through joint ventures, B2B meetings, and technical collaboration.

During the session, Dr. Maryam Siddiq, President WCCIS,

appreciated the British Government's support for women-led initiatives and underscored the need for continued funding under programs such as the International Trade Centre (ITC). She outlined future goals of WCCIS, including the establishment of affordable childcare centers, vocational and sector-specific training programs for women, and R&D support cells to foster innovation among SMEs.

Vice President SCCI, Mr. Omer Khalid, emphasized the need for UK-Pakistan collaboration in establishing regional training institutes and access to modern machinery for skill enhancement in export sectors. He proposed that the UK consider supporting Sialkot-based capacity-building projects, which could result in increased employment and production efficiencies.

Mr. Mishra welcomed these ideas and expressed interest in exploring workforce development opportunities and policy-level engagement to facilitate export growth. He encouraged SCCI to develop detailed project proposals and assured that the British High Commission would explore ways to support initiatives aligned with shared trade and development goals.

The meeting concluded with President SCCI reiterating the Chamber's resolve to advance inclusive economic growth through active partnerships and innovation. He thanked the British delegation for their continued engagement and extended an invitation for greater participation of British companies in Sialkot's industrial development. Both sides agreed to continue dialogue and explore new avenues for trade facilitation, investment, and technical cooperation in the near future.



Visit of

**MR. MUHAMMAD AURANGZEB** Federal Ministers of Finance  
**KHAWAJA MUHAMMAD ASIF (NI)** Federal Ministers of Defence  
**MR. JAM KAMAL KHAN** Federal Ministers of Commerce



On December 19, 2024, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted a high-level meeting with the Federal Ministers—Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb (Finance), Mr. Jam Kamal Khan (Commerce), and Khawaja Muhammad Asif (Defence)—marking a historic moment for the business community of Sialkot. The meeting commenced with the recitation from the Holy Quran, after which Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of SCCI, extended a warm welcome to the dignitaries and appreciated the government's ongoing efforts, led by Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, to steer Pakistan through economic turbulence while promoting exports and investment. He paid special tribute to Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif for his consistent support, particularly for his intervention in resolving the longstanding issues of the Sialkot Tannery Zone, which had now progressed to the final stages of completion. The President underscored the need for unity among stakeholders and emphasized that boosting exports and reducing imports was crucial to ensuring long-term economic resilience.

In his remarks, Mr. Haq raised key concerns including the need for a reduction in policy interest rates to single digits to ease financial pressure on exporters, and recommended the reintroduction of the LTLD and DDT schemes for another five years, while also urging prompt settlement of exporters' pending claims. He emphasized Sialkot's major contribution to the Export Development Fund (EDF) and proposed that SCCI be granted permanent representation on the EDF Board to ensure equitable resource allocation. He brought attention to the lack of a bulletproof vehicle for visiting foreign delegations, seeking

approval for a PKR 29 million proposal already submitted to EDF, and highlighted the necessity of a solar power system for the Combined Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) in the Tannery Zone, for which a PKR 265 million grant was requested. He reiterated the demand for the establishment of a Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) attestation desk in Sialkot, citing prior but unimplemented directives from the Prime Minister dated January 16, 2023. Mr. Haq also called for the abolition of the provincial infrastructure development cess on temporary imports—particularly in Sindh—due to its inflationary impact on production costs, and demanded the restoration of Regionally Competitive Energy Tariffs (RCET) for the export sector to offset regional disadvantages. He flagged unresolved issues in the Sialkot Export Processing Zone, delays in transfer of the Sialkot Business and Commerce Center's (SBCC) management to SCCI, and advocated for restoring the Final Tax Regime (FTR), citing that the abrupt shift to the Normal Tax Regime (NTR) was placing undue burden on exporters who lacked familiarity with new documentation, audits, and procedures.

He emphasized that Sialkot's exporters had never relied on concessions or amnesty schemes and had instead self-financed projects like the airport and Air Sial, generating substantial tax revenue and employment. He cautioned that continued policy disruptions could encourage industry migration to India or Bangladesh and proposed a fixed, mutually agreed tax rate under a phase-wise transition over five years to allow SMEs to adapt to NTR. Mr. Haq warned that the sudden switch had empowered the FBR to audit documents retroactively for five years, creating risk and confusion among small exporters who

had operated under FTR for decades. He concluded that the 24,000-strong membership of the Sialkot Chamber had shown patience and discipline, and that the decisions made in the meeting would shape the city's industrial future.

In response, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif acknowledged the concerns raised and assured that he had been working closely with SCCI for the past three years to amplify these issues at the federal level. He stated that the recent reduction of 900 basis points in the policy rate over a few months, along with other economic indicators such as stock market gains and declining inflation, reflected the government's commitment to economic recovery. He lauded the Sialkot business community's entrepreneurial initiatives,

urged all sectors to unite against it. He concluded by inviting SCCI to send a delegation to Islamabad in January 2025 for follow-up meetings on the discussed matters.

Commerce Minister Mr. Jam Kamal Khan thanked the Defence Minister for facilitating the visit and assured that the federal cabinet, including the Prime Minister and Finance Minister, was fully aligned in prioritizing export growth. He announced plans to reform the EDF framework and confirmed that the SCCI's membership proposal would soon be submitted to the Prime Minister. He revealed that a consultant had been hired to restructure the EDF for improved efficacy and supported various Sialkot-specific initiatives such as scanners at the airport, the Tannery Zone, and Business Facilitation Centers. He



including Air Sial and Sialkot International Airport, and described them as unmatched examples of collective industry-led development. He confirmed that SCCI would soon receive representation on the EDF Board and shared that efforts were underway to secure additional UAE landing slots for Pakistani airlines, including Air Sial. Acknowledging that Pakistan was emerging from economic despair, Mr. Asif cautioned that constraints still existed and that institutional corruption posed a major challenge. Drawing on his experiences in the Ports and Shipping Ministry, he highlighted inefficiencies in customs procedures and rampant bribery, emphasizing that even a 50% reduction in corruption could negate Pakistan's need for IMF assistance. He stressed that corruption was not only institutional but had deeply penetrated societal values, and he

announced the establishment of a state-of-the-art Expo Center in Sialkot and directed immediate preparation of a feasibility study and land identification in coordination with TDAP. The Minister expressed his intention to decentralize TDAP's financial operations, establish a Ministry of Commerce facilitation desk in Sialkot, and improve sectoral compliance through the National Compliance Centre. He also emphasized merit-based appointments of Trade and Investment Officers (TIOs), with KPIs monitored quarterly, and encouraged rationalization of export certification costs via national accreditation bodies. Mr. Khan invited SCCI to form a delegation for further discussions in Islamabad and affirmed that sector-specific exhibitions would be arranged in Sialkot. Responding to the Women's Chamber, he endorsed their role in enhancing women-led exports and



supported inclusion in EDF and procurement quotas.

Finance Minister Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb described Sialkot as a national role model and praised its governance and self-reliant business community. He noted that the government had achieved macroeconomic stability, which had brought down debt servicing costs and put the economy on the right trajectory. He stressed the need to increase the tax-to-GDP ratio to 13–14%, tackle losses from state-owned enterprises—estimated at PKR 6 trillion over the past decade—and reduce dependency on imports. He stated that the export sector had played a key role in creating the first current account surplus in ten years. Mr. Aurangzeb discussed structural reforms within FBR, including the separation of tax policy from administration, digitization, and integration with NADRA data to ensure audit transparency. He asked SCCI to begin preparing budget proposals for FY 2025–26 and promised to review all recommendations in advance, affirming the Ministry's commitment to SME development. On taxation, the Minister acknowledged the need to avoid harassment and manipulation in tax collection but maintained that no sector would be exempted, and all stakeholders would need to contribute fairly to national revenue. He stated that FBR would evolve into a business-friendly, data-driven institution and that policy decisions would be grounded in stakeholder input.

During the open forum, participants reiterated concerns regarding the abrupt transition to NTR, the burden of documentation, and the inefficiency of refund processes. Dr. Nouman Idris Butt criticized the Finance Act 2024 for retaining advance taxes and called for simplified systems that encouraged reinvestment. He proposed replacing the EDF surcharge with ADP funding. Rana Imran recounted a recent meeting with the FBR, highlighting IMF pressures for higher revenue and proposing that exporters pay a 1.5% flat

rate without refunds. Ahmed Zulfiqar Hayat added that FBR acknowledged SCCI's proposals but said endorsement from the Ministry of Finance was required. Majid Raza Bhutta and other participants insisted that Sialkot's exporters—being 100% export-driven—were disproportionately affected by NTR, and requested the option to choose between FTR and NTR. Women Chamber President Dr. Mariam Nouman requested larger expo spaces, research support, and policies for women-led businesses, also advocating for FTR retention in sectors such as IT. Mr. Hassan Ali Bhatti raised concerns over discriminatory taxation of Sialkot International Airport by the Punjab Revenue Authority and called for EDF funding for escalated scanner installation costs. Khawaja Asif directed a private member bill to resolve the tax issue and promised early approvals for Salam Air's additional flights from Sialkot.

Additional remarks were made by Syed Ahtesham Gillani, who called for CE certification support for motorbike apparel and Common Facility Centers under PLGMEA. Jam Kamal Khan acknowledged the proposal and recommended partnership with PNAC for expedited approval. Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi proposed EDF subsidies for private exhibitors and criticized the mismanagement of TDAP's recent Jeddah Expo. The Commerce Minister endorsed his concerns and stated that a branding company had been hired to improve TDAP's visibility and that Sialkot exhibitors would be given maximum facilitation.

The meeting concluded with remarks by Dr. Muhammad Aslam Dar, who thanked the Ministers for their candid engagement and stressed the need for a collaborative approach to enhance exports and resolve systemic challenges. He hoped for continued government support and affirmed SCCI's commitment to working in synergy with the federal ministries for national economic development.





Visit of

**MS. SAIRA AGHA**

Collector of Customs, Sialkot



On December 20, 2024, Ms. Saira Agha, Collector of Customs, visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) for a policy-focused interaction with exporters and trade representatives. The meeting, chaired by President Mr. Ikram ul Haq, aimed to strengthen cooperation between Customs and the business community, address operational bottlenecks, and discuss recent procedural concerns affecting Sialkot-based exporters.

President SCCI welcomed Ms. Agha and acknowledged the positive engagement between the Chamber and the Customs Department in recent months. He emphasized the importance of an efficient and supportive customs framework for Sialkot's export-oriented economy, which contributes significantly to Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings. However, he also raised a recent concern regarding a shipment inspection incident involving the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) that created confusion and disrupted logistics. The President requested that Customs ensure coordinated and transparent protocols in such cases to avoid unnecessary inconvenience.

In response, Ms. Agha clarified that the ANF had independently conducted the inspection and that the Customs Department had no prior notice of the incident. She assured the Chamber that steps would be taken to improve inter-agency coordination and communication, with a commitment to preventing recurrence of similar disruptions.

A key update from Ms. Agha was the successful licensing of 555 businesses from Sialkot under the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), which simplifies documentation and allows for efficient movement of goods. While acknowledging this achievement, several exporters voiced operational concerns regarding the lack of official receipts during document submission and

irregularities in WeBOC digital processing.

In response, Ms. Agha directed the Assistant Collector to ensure that physical submissions are acknowledged through stamped receipts and advised exporters to always include cover letters with submissions to streamline tracking. She also pledged to address inconsistencies in WeBOC and ensure improved responsiveness from the Customs team. The Chamber was encouraged to channel specific complaints through a designated liaison officer to ensure timely resolution.

The discussion also covered concerns regarding the implementation of SRO 30(I)/2024, particularly relating to the consolidation of Special Export Processing Zone (SEPZ) cargo in Karachi. Exporters shared that the current policy imposed delays and increased costs, affecting the competitiveness of Sialkot's export products. Ms. Agha assured the participants that the matter would be taken up at the appropriate forums and that a practical solution would be explored to facilitate smoother logistics for SEPZ-based exporters.

Ms. Agha reiterated her department's dedication to enabling trade facilitation and ensuring that Sialkot's exporters receive full institutional support. She encouraged exporters to actively participate in consultative sessions to shape future policies, and emphasized that Customs remained a key partner in Pakistan's economic growth.

President Ikram ul Haq concluded the session by appreciating Ms. Agha's responsiveness and professionalism. He assured continued cooperation from SCCI in facilitating compliance and policy advocacy. The visit concluded with a mutual understanding to strengthen institutional linkages, resolve pending issues through dialogue, and jointly promote Sialkot's export interests.

Visit of

**MR. ANWAAR UL HAQ KAKAR**

Former Prime Minister of Pakistan



On December 24, 2024, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) had the distinct honor of hosting the Former Prime Minister of Pakistan, His Excellency Anwaar ul Haq Kakar, for an in-depth dialogue with the business community. The meeting brought together senior industry leaders, exporters, and representatives of key associations to deliberate on Pakistan's economic challenges and the critical role of the private sector in national development.

President SCCI, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, warmly welcomed the former Prime Minister and shared an overview of Sialkot's impressive export performance, contributing approximately USD 2.27 billion annually. He elaborated on SCCI's roadmap to boost exports to USD 7–10 billion by facilitating industrial growth, upgrading infrastructure, and advocating pro-business policy reforms. However, he also highlighted pressing challenges impacting Sialkot's competitiveness, including high energy tariffs, the suspension of the Final Tax Regime (FTR), excessive regulatory delays, delayed refund disbursements, and the imposition of Infrastructure Development Cess (IDC) in multiple provinces.

In his remarks, the former Prime Minister commended Sialkot's business community for its resilience, innovation, and self-sufficiency, particularly in developing and managing major projects like Sialkot International Airport and AirSial. He recognized the city's export ecosystem as a national model of entrepreneurship and acknowledged the importance of removing systemic obstacles that hinder business growth. He emphasized that economic development must be driven by the private sector, supported by an efficient government framework that ensures continuity, accountability, and transparency.

Mr. Kakar addressed concerns related to the high cost of doing

business and noted that while fiscal limitations exist, strategic reforms were needed to reduce bureaucratic hurdles and promote investment. He stressed the government's commitment to skill development, industrial modernization, and infrastructure upgrades. He also indicated the need for long-term structural reforms and announced that the government would welcome input from the business community in shaping future economic policies.

Mr. S.M. Tanveer, Patron-in-Chief of the United Business Group (UBG), praised the former Prime Minister for engaging directly with stakeholders and advocated for the reintroduction of the FTR system to simplify compliance for exporters. He emphasized the urgency of restoring business confidence and called for an inclusive policy dialogue that reflects ground realities faced by SMEs and exporters.

President SCCI announced the Chamber's decision to actively contribute to the proposed "Charter of Economy" being developed under the aegis of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI). He emphasized the need for a non-partisan economic agenda that offers long-term stability and enables Pakistan to achieve sustainable export-led growth.

The meeting concluded with a note of mutual respect and understanding. Former Prime Minister Kakar appreciated SCCI's constructive feedback and pledged to relay the concerns and recommendations to relevant authorities. He reiterated that national prosperity was directly linked to the empowerment of industrial cities like Sialkot and encouraged continued collaboration between the government and the private sector.



Meeting with

**REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONAL LOGISTICS CORPORATION**

(NLC) and DP World, Dubai



On January 10, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted a high-level virtual and in-person meeting with representatives from DP World and the National Logistics Corporation (NLC). His Excellency Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World, Major General Farrukh Shahzad Rao, Director General NLC, and Mr. Fakhr Alam, Vice Chairman DP World Pakistan, participated via Zoom. The meeting aimed to explore collaborative logistics solutions to enhance Pakistan's role in regional trade and promote efficiency for Pakistani exporters.

President SCCI, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, opened the session by acknowledging DP World's global reputation and NLC's expanding footprint in trade facilitation. His Excellency Sultan Ahmed highlighted ongoing efforts to support Pakistani exports through initiatives such as "Pak Mart" in Dubai, which offers a dedicated platform for showcasing Pakistani products. He emphasized the potential of transforming Pakistan into a strategic trade hub through infrastructural modernization and regional connectivity.

A critical concern raised by President SCCI was the denial of UAE visas to businesspersons from Sialkot, which has adversely impacted participation in international trade exhibitions. He requested His Excellency Sultan Ahmed's intervention by engaging relevant UAE authorities to address

this barrier to commercial mobility.

NLC representatives presented an overview of their service portfolio, including cross-border logistics, TIR-certified services, freight trains, and dry ports aimed at improving access to Central Asia, Iran, and China. NLC also shared its support initiatives for SMEs, including specialized logistics parks and tailored transport solutions to reduce delivery times and costs.

Further discussion focused on practical logistics issues such as delivery timelines to destinations like Russia and Shanghai, challenges in shipping loose cargo, and the impact of financial sanctions on payment transactions and documentation. The business community voiced concern over inefficiencies in handling time-sensitive shipments and emphasized the importance of consistent and predictable logistics pathways.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with expressions of appreciation from all sides for the ongoing cooperation between SCCI, NLC, and DP World. President SCCI emphasized the need for sustained engagement and reiterated the Chamber's commitment to working with global logistics leaders to improve trade facilitation, reduce costs, and enhance Sialkot's competitiveness in the global market.



## BUSINESS FACILITATION CENTRE SIALKOT

One Year Anniversary Celebration Having Federal Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif (Ni) & President SCCI Mr. Ikram-ul-Haq As Chief Guests



The 1st Anniversary of the Business Facilitation Centre (BFC) Sialkot was commemorated on 15th January 2025 through a formal ceremony held at the Centre. The event was attended by Federal Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif as the Chief Guest. He was accompanied by Guest of Honour MPA Faisal Ikram, Deputy Commissioner Sialkot Mr. Muhammad Zulqarnain Langrial, Deputy Secretary Commerce Mr. Muhammad Abubakar Zubair, President SCCI Mr. Ikram-ul-Haq, and Assistant Commissioner Ms. Anam Babar.

Upon arrival, the dignitaries were warmly received by the President SCCI, Deputy Secretary Commerce, and the Deputy Commissioner. The guests were then taken on a detailed tour of the facility, during which the Centre's Manager, Mr. Syed Haider Munir, briefed them on the operations and services of the BFC. He elaborated on the citizen-centric model being employed at the Centre, particularly highlighting the initiative "Maryam Ki Dastak".

It was shared that the BFC Sialkot offers integrated access to over 168 Regulatory, Licensing, and Certification Obligations (RLCOs) from more than 30 federal and provincial departments under one roof. The purpose of this initiative was stated to be the facilitation of timely service delivery, simplification of procedures relating to business registration, taxation, commercial approvals, and labor documentation—thereby significantly minimizing bureaucratic hurdles and delays.

The formal segment of the ceremony commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran. Following this, the Manager of the BFC invited the Federal Minister to address the gathering. In

his remarks, the Honorable Minister appreciated the Centre's pivotal role in bringing government services closer to citizens, enhancing transparency, and improving the efficiency of public sector delivery. He also acknowledged the transformational potential of initiatives like BFC and "Maryam Ki Dastak" in reforming governance and improving public accessibility.

Following his address, the Minister was presented with a copy of the BFC publication titled "BFC Insight", and was invited to pen his remarks in the official visitors' book. To mark the occasion, commemorative shields were presented to the Chief Guest by the President SCCI, Deputy Commissioner, and Deputy Secretary Commerce. The ceremony concluded with a cake-cutting ceremony, celebrating the successful completion of the Centre's first year of operations.



## Visit of **MR. FAISAL SHAHZAD** DPO Sialkot to Sialkot Chamber



On January 18, 2025, a constructive meeting was convened at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) between Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President SCCI, and Mr. Faisal Shahzad, District Police Officer (DPO) Sialkot. The primary agenda of the meeting was to explore avenues of cooperation between the business community and the local police force to cultivate a secure, stable, and business-friendly environment in Sialkot.

Mr. Ikram ul Haq welcomed the DPO and acknowledged the vital role played by the Sialkot Police in safeguarding the interests of citizens and businesses alike. He emphasized that the economic engine of Sialkot, driven largely by exports and industrial activity, requires an uninterrupted and protected environment in order to thrive. He expressed appreciation for the police department's ongoing efforts and underlined the importance of consistent communication between both institutions.

Mr. Faisal Shahzad, DPO Sialkot, reciprocated the sentiments and affirmed the Police Department's full commitment to addressing issues faced by the business community. He noted that Sialkot's position as a national economic contributor warranted dedicated attention to law and order, particularly in industrial zones and commercial districts.

As a major outcome of the meeting, it was mutually agreed that focal persons from both the DPO Office and SCCI will be deputed to address matters of security, case follow-ups, and incident response more efficiently. These designated focal points will serve as immediate and accessible contacts, ensuring that grievances and cases emerging from within the

city are promptly communicated, tracked, and resolved. This initiative aims to streamline coordination, minimize delays, and reinforce trust between law enforcement and the business sector.

Both sides also discussed the possibility of holding periodic review meetings to evaluate ongoing collaboration and address any emerging challenges. The meeting concluded with a strong resolve from both institutions to work in close partnership for the greater good of the city.

The Sialkot Chamber views this engagement as a forward-looking step towards building institutional harmony that supports the long-term growth and security of Sialkot's business ecosystem.





Visit of

**42<sup>ND</sup> MID-CAREER MANAGEMENT COURSE**

National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA)



On January 30, 2025, a delegation of senior officers from the 42nd Mid-Career Management Course (MCMC) at the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) as part of their study tour. The objective of the visit was to provide the officers with firsthand exposure to the operations of a leading export-driven industrial hub and to understand the role of business chambers in economic policy and development.

Vice President SCCI, Mr. Omer Khalid, extended a warm welcome to the delegation, appreciating NIPA's contribution to public sector excellence through advanced training of civil servants. He highlighted several recent government initiatives, including the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and the establishment of Business Facilitation Centers, as progressive steps toward improving the ease of doing business. Mr. Khalid also briefed the officers on SCCI's self-sustaining development model, which includes infrastructure and industrial projects funded without reliance on public resources.

Ms. Sarosh Ejaz, Head of the Delegation, expressed gratitude to SCCI for hosting the officers and emphasized that the visit had significantly enriched the officers' understanding of the industrial landscape of Sialkot. She acknowledged the value of engaging with the private sector to better understand the relationship between governance and industry.

Mr. Omer Khalid discussed the challenges Sialkot faces in industrial diversification, particularly in entering high-tech manufacturing sectors such as medical devices. These

challenges stem from limited research and development capacity, the absence of internationally accredited testing laboratories, and difficulties in securing the necessary certifications. Mr. Murad Arshad emphasized that while exploring alternative export markets is vital, global compliance requirements remain stringent, necessitating that exporters tailor their practices to meet each country's specific regulations. Mr. Khalid also highlighted that SCCI is proactively identifying emerging export opportunities, especially in Saudi Arabia, through collaboration with Pakistani embassies to gather compliance data and assist local exporters. Despite producing for renowned international brands like Adidas and Nike, Sialkot lacks a globally recognized indigenous brand. As such, SCCI is prioritizing value addition and brand development to enhance international competitiveness. Addressing grassroots economic empowerment, Mr. Mian Muhammad Khalil showcased the success of the "Khud Kafalat" interest-free loan scheme, modeled after the Akhuwat approach. Built on community trust, the initiative has maintained a zero-default rate and effectively supports women-led and small-scale enterprises. When questioned about Sialkot's industrial growth trajectory, Mr. Khalid affirmed that the city's export capacity could increase fivefold, provided that consistent policies, improved testing infrastructure, and lower operational costs are ensured. Concluding the session, Mr. Hassan Akbar identified systemic barriers such as high energy tariffs, inconsistent policy frameworks, and political instability as major obstacles. He contrasted Pakistan's slow industrial progress with India's rapid development, underscoring the urgent need for strategic reforms.



## Visit of H.E. MR. YERZHAN KISTAFIN Ambassador of Kazakhstan



On February 11, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) had the honor of hosting H.E. Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan, accompanied by a delegation. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President of SCCI, welcomed the dignitaries and highlighted the Chamber's commitment to enhancing bilateral trade and investment between Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

President SCCI emphasized the steady growth in trade relations and underscored the need for strategic initiatives to further expand economic cooperation. He pointed to the importance of regional connectivity projects, particularly the Trans-Afghan Multimodal Transport Corridor, and proposed the establishment of trade display centers to promote Sialkot's key export sectors—textiles, sports goods, and surgical instruments.

Mr. Haq reported that a number of proposals were tabled, including the organization of joint trade exhibitions, exploration of joint ventures, and negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to provide a regulatory framework for future growth. The Ambassador expressed appreciation for Sialkot's high-quality exports and conveyed the Embassy's full support for enhancing bilateral commerce.

Further, the Ambassador proposed establishing an Azerbaijan Facilitation Desk at SCCI and initiating online engagement sessions between Kazakh trade consultants and Sialkot exporters. These steps were viewed as part of a broader strategy to deepen Central Asian trade integration.

Concerns raised by SCCI members—such as difficulties in exporting surgical instruments and sourcing minerals—were

addressed by the Ambassador, who assured he would raise these matters with the relevant Kazakh authorities. Other initiatives discussed included a 'Made in Sialkot' exhibition in Kazakhstan, facilitation of business visas, and industrial collaborations.

The Ambassador also introduced the concept of Kazakhstan's Special Economic Zones (SEZs), which offer investor-friendly tax regimes and infrastructure. He invited Pakistani businesses to explore investment opportunities in these SEZs and noted that webinars would soon be held to share further details.

The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to deepen trade relations, and President SCCI thanked the Ambassador for his proactive engagement and interest in fostering bilateral cooperation.





Visit of

## H.E. MR. MOHAMMAD IQBAL HUSSAIN KHAN

High Commissioner of Bangladesh



On February 18, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) welcomed H.E. Mr. Mohammad Iqbal Hussain Khan, High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Pakistan. Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President SCCI, hosted the visit and briefed the guest on Sialkot's export legacy and industrial capabilities.

The High Commissioner expressed admiration for Sialkot's contributions to Pakistan's economy and emphasized commonalities in trade sectors between Pakistan and Bangladesh, including leather goods, surgical instruments, and sports items. He also showed strong interest in enhancing agricultural imports from Pakistan, especially rice, sugar, and fruit, which are well received in Bangladesh.

Mr. Lodhi conveyed that the High Commissioner acknowledged the potential for increased economic cooperation and expressed optimism about improving bilateral ties despite historical challenges. He stated that both countries are well-positioned to expand their access to Central and Southeast Asian markets.

In response to queries from SCCI members regarding investment opportunities, the High Commissioner shared that Bangladesh had launched Special Economic Zones (SEZs) throughout the country to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), offering tax incentives, land availability, and infrastructure support.

A key proposal by Mr. Lodhi was for business visas to be granted on the basis of SCCI recommendation letters—a suggestion the

High Commissioner welcomed. The visit concluded with both sides expressing commitment to reinvigorate commercial and cultural ties, with Mr. Lodhi thanking the High Commissioner for his positive and constructive engagement.





## Launching Ceremony of

# HONORARY POSTAGE STAMP

For Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS)



On February 19, 2025, the President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, along with Senior Vice President Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi and Vice President Mr. Omer Khalid, visited the "We Exhibit" event organized by the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS). The exhibition served as a vibrant platform for showcasing the entrepreneurial contributions of women and provided meaningful opportunities for business networking, collaboration, and visibility for women-led enterprises. The participation of SCCI's leadership reaffirmed the Chamber's continued support for initiatives that promote gender inclusion and economic diversity within the business community.

In continuation of this commitment, a historic achievement was marked through the issuance of a commemorative postage ticket by Pakistan Post in honor of WCCIS. This symbolic recognition reflects a national acknowledgment of the critical role that women entrepreneurs and women-led

institutions play in the economic development of the region. The realization of this initiative was made possible through the dedicated efforts of Mr. Ahmed Imtiaz Khan, Chairman of the Post Office Committee, whose contribution was specially acknowledged and appreciated by President SCCI, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq. The issuance of the commemorative ticket stands as a proud milestone, not only for WCCIS but also for SCCI, as it highlights the Chamber's progressive stance on women empowerment and leadership in commerce.

These developments underscore SCCI's vision of fostering an inclusive and forward-looking business environment. By actively supporting platforms like "We Exhibit" and facilitating national-level recognition for WCCIS, the Chamber continues to celebrate excellence, strengthen institutional partnerships, and pave the way for greater participation of women in the economic growth of Sialkot and beyond.





## Visit of 52<sup>ND</sup> COMMON TRAINING PROGRAMME Civil Service Academy, Lahore



On February 20, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) welcomed a delegation from the 52nd Common Training Programme of the Civil Service Academy, Lahore. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, received the officers and briefed them on Sialkot's industrial ecosystem and its role in national economic development.

President Haq informed the delegation that Sialkot contributes over 11.5% to Pakistan's total exports, driven by 100% export-oriented industries such as surgical instruments, sports goods, military gear, and musical instruments. He noted that over

8,000 SMEs operate in the region and that SCCI is actively supporting the development of the IT sector as a new growth area.

He emphasized that the entrepreneurial spirit of Sialkot is culturally embedded and has evolved generationally. Ms. Fizza Shahid, Head of the Delegation, thanked the Chamber for its hospitality and expressed particular interest in the production of musical and military goods.

Vice President Mr. Omer Khalid highlighted the absence of internationally accredited testing labs, especially for medical devices, which hampers compliance with international standards like MDR. President Haq cited additional barriers to branding and market penetration, including policy inconsistency, taxation, inflation, and Pakistan's global image.

It was revealed that over 2,000 businesses had relocated to Dubai due to heavy tax burdens. Chamber leadership recommended revival of the Final Tax Regime, institutional consistency, and enhanced diplomatic efforts to support exports. The session concluded with appreciation for the officers' engagement and the reaffirmation of the importance of public-private partnerships.





## Visit of **H.E. MR. MOHAMED KARMOUNE** Ambassador of Morocco



On February 21, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted H.E. Mr. Mohamed Karmoune, Ambassador of the Republic of Morocco. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, reported that the visit was marked by constructive dialogue focused on expanding trade relations and identifying new areas of cooperation.

The President informed that current bilateral trade volume stood at USD 659 million, with realistic potential to grow beyond USD 1 billion. He proposed tariff reductions on Pakistani products such as textiles and sportswear and urged the pursuit of a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) to improve access.

Mr. Haq highlighted that many Sialkot-based exporters, particularly in surgical instruments and leather goods, face difficulties due to Morocco's complex registration processes. He recommended honorary registration of ten trusted exporters across a variety of sectors to accelerate trade.

Additional proposals included reactivating the Pak-Morocco Business Council, identifying reliable distributors, and encouraging joint ventures. The Ambassador acknowledged Sialkot's manufacturing excellence and stated that Morocco's strategic location—linking Europe, Africa, and North America—offered significant advantages to Pakistani exporters.

He pointed to the growing infrastructure capacity of Morocco,

especially the Dakhla Atlantic Port, and invited Pakistani businesses to explore opportunities in tourism, exhibitions, and women-led enterprises. The visit concluded with both sides expressing strong interest in nurturing mutual trade and investment ties.

The meeting concluded on a high note with shared optimism, and Mr. Haq thanked the Ambassador for his support and vision for deeper bilateral collaboration.





## Visit of **H.E. MR. IRFAN NEZIROĞLU** Ambassador of Türkiye



On February 22, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) welcomed H.E. Mr. Irfan Neziroğlu, Ambassador of Türkiye to Pakistan, along with Mr. Nurettin Demir, Commercial Attaché, and other distinguished guests. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, received the delegation and recalled the historically strong and strategic ties between Pakistan and Türkiye.

The President highlighted the recent visit of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to Pakistan, reaffirming the mutual ambition to raise the bilateral trade volume from USD 1.4 billion to USD 5 billion annually. He emphasized Sialkot's key industrial contributions—particularly in surgical tools, sports goods, gloves, and workwear—and called for deeper linkages between Sialkot exporters and Turkish companies.

As reported by Mr. Haq, the Ambassador praised Sialkot as a hub of innovation and resilience and acknowledged its symbolic status as the birthplace of Allama Iqbal. He emphasized the shared cultural and philosophical bonds between Iqbal and Rumi. The Ambassador proposed organizing a Single Country Exhibition in Türkiye to promote Pakistani products and expressed full support for facilitating trade connections.

He assured that the Turkish Embassy would process five-year multiple-entry visas for SCCI members based on Chamber recommendations. Mr. Haq suggested forming Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with major Turkish Chambers

and requested honorary registration for ten Sialkot-based companies producing medical products to ease market entry.

Mr. Haq also extended invitations for Turkish investors to establish a healthcare facility in Sialkot and proposed creating a Turkish language and cultural center to encourage academic and business exchange. The meeting concluded with gratitude expressed by SCCI and appreciation for the Ambassador's practical proposals to boost bilateral ties.





Visit of

**HER EXCELLENCY, MS. HARERIMANA FATOU**

Ambassador of Rwanda



On February 24, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) had the privilege to receive Her Excellency Ms. Harerimana Fatou, Ambassador of Rwanda. During the visit, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President of SCCI, warmly welcomed the ambassador and remarked that the African region was not unfamiliar territory for Sialkot's exporters. He stated that Pakistan and Rwanda had maintained cordial and productive relations since 1962, marked by collaboration in various sectors including trade, education, culture, and investment.

The President highlighted that in 2024, Rwanda-Pakistan relations had advanced through positive developments in trade and investment. He observed that despite these strong bilateral ties, the trade volume—amounting to only USD 12.493 million in FY24—did not reflect the true economic potential. He called for concerted efforts to enhance trade, noting that Sialkot's business community was eager to explore African markets under the Ministry of Commerce's "Look Africa Initiative." He emphasized that Rwanda's growing economy and consumer market offered an ideal opportunity for Sialkot's exports, particularly if supported by reduced tariff and non-tariff barriers.

He stated that Rwandan import regulations—requiring extensive documentation and permits—created challenges for Pakistani exporters, who also faced high duties compared to EAC and COMESA member states. He proposed working under the Ambassador's patronage to streamline trade procedures

and promote business-to-business linkages. Mr. Haq also pointed out that Rwandan importers were buying Sialkot-made products at significantly higher prices from European markets and advocated for direct imports from Pakistan.

H.E. Ms. Harerimana Fatou appreciated the Chamber's presentation on Sialkot's industry and affirmed Rwanda's commitment to supporting Pakistani businessmen. She noted that the Rwandan Embassy in Pakistan had opened the previous year and was ready to assist entrepreneurs interested in doing business in Rwanda. She stressed that Rwanda's governance was transparent, with a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption. Rwanda also offers visa-on-arrival for Pakistani nationals and a streamlined process for setting up businesses.

The Ambassador informed that although no bilateral trade agreement existed yet, one was in progress, and she anticipated reductions in duties and trade barriers upon its conclusion. She proposed arranging online meetings between Pakistani exporters and Rwandan importers and encouraged participation in bilateral trade exhibitions. She also mentioned that delegations from the textile and IT sectors had visited Rwanda the previous year and that East Africa held vast potential for "Made in Sialkot" products. She concluded by inviting Pakistani businessmen to explore Rwanda's market and stated that 40% of the tea consumed in Pakistan was actually produced in Rwanda but imported via Kenya.

Visit of

**MR. FAIZ AHMED, CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP)



On February 25, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted Mr. Faiz Ahmad, Chief Executive of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), for a strategic meeting focused on trade development, export enhancement, and policy support for Sialkot's industries. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, expressed appreciation for Mr. Ahmad's visit and recognized it as a timely opportunity to address persistent industry concerns. He stated that the business community of Sialkot found reassurance in TDAP's active engagement and efforts to boost exports, and he intended to raise several pressing matters for the betterment of both Sialkot and the national economy.

Mr. Haq emphasized the need to increase Pakistani participation in international exhibitions to help achieve the government's export target of USD 60 billion. He urged TDAP to prioritize stall allocations for Sialkot exporters in major global exhibitions—particularly the ISPO Show in Germany, the Canton Fair in China (May and October editions), Medica Show in Germany, Arab Health in the UAE, and the Magic Show in the USA. He suggested that TDAP consult relevant chambers and associations when formulating strategies for trade fair participation. Sharing SCCI's own initiative, he informed the Chief Executive that the Chamber intended to organize 'Made in Sialkot' pavilions twice a year in Central Asia and the Americas and requested TDAP to offer at least a 70% subsidy to participating exhibitors to encourage widespread engagement.

Raising concerns regarding the underperformance of Trade and Investment Officers (TIOs) posted abroad, Mr. Haq asserted that these officials were failing to fulfill their responsibilities

effectively. Citing the recent example of the Single Country Exhibition in Jeddah, he stated that poor promotion and lack of strategic support from TIOs had led to disappointing results, including minimal visitor turnout. He proposed that only individuals with expertise in trade and commerce should be posted as commercial counselors and suggested that performance evaluations of TIOs be conducted quarterly based on measurable KPIs. Furthermore, he recommended that chambers like SCCI be consulted for direct feedback on TIO performance to ensure meaningful trade promotion.

Addressing the burden on self-financed exporters, Mr. Haq pointed out that those participating in international exhibitions at their own expense bore significant costs in marketing, taxation, and EDF contributions. He proposed a 70% reimbursement-based subsidy to such exporters upon submission of authentic invoices, to further incentivize participation. Referring to EDF contributions, he highlighted that Sialkot's industry had contributed USD 22.5 million over the past four years, but only USD 8.6 million had been allocated to the city in the last 31 years—an imbalance that needed to be addressed.

To strengthen global visibility, Mr. Haq proposed a dedicated budget for marketing Pakistani pavilions at international exhibitions. He suggested a minimum allocation of USD 25,000 per exhibition and at least USD 100,000 for single-country expos, specifically for physical and digital marketing rather than ceremonial events. While appreciating TDAP's role in organizing national events like TEXPO Karachi and the Engineering & Health Expo Lahore, he recommended that Sialkot-based exhibitors be grouped under the unified branding



of the 'Sialkot 2050 Pavilion' in coordination with associations like SIMAP, PSGMEA, PLGMEA, PGMEA, and PRGMEA. He also addressed the issue of uncompetitive electricity rates, noting that Pakistan's exporters were paying significantly more than regional competitors. He advocated for the restoration of the regionally competitive energy tariff (RCET), capping the unit cost at 11 cents to support sustainable growth.

The President strongly advocated for the restoration of the Final Tax Regime (FTR), explaining that the majority of Sialkot's factories operated with compact teams handling production, marketing, and exports. Having functioned under FTR for over three decades, these exporters found it difficult to adapt to the documentary and audit requirements under the Normal Tax Regime (NTR). He requested the government to reintroduce FTR through a fixed-rate system designed in consultation with exporters, urging Mr. Ahmad to use his influence for this cause. Additionally, he highlighted that despite the economic prominence of the Golden Triangle (Sialkot, Gujrat, Gujranwala), the region lacked an international-standard expo center. He proposed that the facility be constructed near Sialkot International Airport for accessibility and revealed that SCCI had already initiated the feasibility study. He asked TDAP to assist in securing EDF funding for the project and provide a formal support letter.

In response, Mr. Faiz Ahmad expressed gratitude to SCCI and stated that he had a long-standing connection with Sialkot's industrial landscape, dating back to his early CSS career when his first assignment was on Pakistan's economic clusters. He mentioned that 28 Trade and Investment Officers had been appointed on merit and were being evaluated against KPIs set by the Government of Pakistan. He suggested that Sialkot exporters should enhance their promotional efforts by displaying the SCCI documentary at their stalls during exhibitions. Recalling his tenure in Spain as a TIO, he shared how he had successfully brought global brands into Pakistan. He expressed agreement with the proposal to provide subsidies to private exhibitors and found the 'Sialkot 2050 Pavilion' concept to be practical, recommending joint procedural planning between TDAP and relevant associations.

Mr. Ahmad assured the business community that he would maintain close coordination with major trade bodies in Sialkot

to collaboratively address their concerns and confirmed TDAP's full support for establishing the Sialkot Expo Center, expressing his personal interest in inaugurating it as a hallmark for the Golden Triangle. He acknowledged the significance of the FTR issue and pledged to raise it with relevant government authorities.

During the open floor session, Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President SCCI, emphasized the urgency of compliance with the Medical Device Regulation (MDR) for exporters targeting European markets. He stated that the surgical industry needed this certification to sustain its market share and requested TDAP's support in facilitating the process. Mr. Adnan Kapoor recommended including newly established foreign exhibitions in TDAP's annual calendar and proposed developing sector-specific promotional documentaries. Mr. Salman Majeed Shaikh pointed out that TDAP's support currently reached only 10% of exporters and advocated for a broader scope through an online facilitation platform. Concerns about the poor performance of commercial counselors were reiterated by Mr. Sheikh Shahid Inam and Mr. Amer Mahmood, the latter highlighting that the Jeddah Single Country Exhibition had failed due to poor execution and lack of planning. In response, Mr. Ahmad acknowledged these issues and stated that improvements to the SCE format would be discussed with trade bodies.

Mr. Murad Arshad recommended that delegate selection for exhibitions be done in consultation with trade associations. Khawaja Masud (SI) (HI), Chairman of PSGMEA, informed the gathering that a research lab proposal for the sports goods sector had been submitted to EDF. Mr. Anas Raheel, Chairman of the Gloves Association, stressed the importance of including the A+A Exhibition in Germany in TDAP's plans, as it held critical value for Sialkot's glove exporters. The President of SCCI raised further issues regarding the colonization of the Export Processing Zone and the delay in issuance of Section 5 for the Sialkot Industrial Zone. He also flagged the FBR's limited capacity to handle audit requirements under the NTR. The Chairman of Sialkot Dry Port Trust provided data on various EDF projects pending approval and requested Mr. Ahmad's personal intervention in expediting their clearance.





Visit of

**SYED NAJAF IQBAL**

CEO Punjab Board of Investment and Trade (PBIT)



On February 26, 2025, Syed Najaf Iqbal, Chief Executive Officer of the Punjab Board of Investment and Trade (PBIT), visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), accompanied by Mr. Abid Saleem, Manager of the Business Facilitation Centre (BFC) Lahore, and Dr. Imran Hashmi, Director Transactions PBIT, to conduct a sensitization and mitigation session on the growing issue of SMOG in Punjab.

The session began with opening remarks by Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of SCCI, who welcomed the delegation and expressed concern over the deteriorating sewerage infrastructure in Sialkot. He drew attention to the alarming absence of both industrial and communal wastewater treatment facilities in the city, linking these gaps in public infrastructure to the reported rise in carcinogenic diseases among the local population. Mr. Haq also briefed the visitors on the Sialkot Industrial Zone project, a key initiative led by the Chamber in technical collaboration with the Punjab Industrial Estates Development and Management Company (PIEDMC). He informed the delegation that 1,406 acres of land in Sahowala, Sambrial, designated for industrial use in the 2023 Sialkot Master Plan, had already been assessed as feasible by PIEDMC. He further shared that Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act had been formally published in the Punjab Gazette. However, he lamented that political delays in the issuance of Section 5 had significantly increased project costs and jeopardized its timely execution. Mr. Haq urged the CEO PBIT to personally intervene to accelerate the process and ensure swift progression of this critical industrial development project.

Following this, Mr. Abid Saleem gave a comprehensive overview of the operational framework and performance of the Business Facilitation Centre Punjab. He stated that the BFC had been launched in December 2023 as a centralized solution designed to streamline business operations across the province, under the supervision of the Industries, Commerce, Investment & Skills Development Department. Mr. Saleem explained that the BFC coordinated with 33 departments to facilitate the issuance of Registration, Licenses, Certificates, and Other Permits (RLCOs),

and had already processed over 35,849 applications with an 88% success rate. He added that the centre had recorded more than 48,000 visitors and received 11,730 expert inputs. Currently operational in six cities of Punjab—including Sialkot—the BFC had played a transformative role in enhancing investor support services, regulatory efficiency, and overall compliance.

The session concluded with a presentation by Dr. Imran Hashmi, who delivered a detailed briefing on SMOG, its causes, and mitigation strategies. Dr. Hashmi identified key pollutants such as sulfur oxides, nitrous oxides, carbon black, fugitive dust, and industrial emissions as the primary contributors to SMOG, particularly when combined with adverse meteorological conditions like fog. Citing data from reputable institutions, he revealed serious implications for public health and the economy, including a 30% increase in asthma cases, a 25% rise in respiratory-related hospital admissions, a 6% contribution to premature mortality, and over \$1 billion in economic losses annually.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Ikram ul Haq expressed appreciation for the PBIT and BFC initiatives and informed the CEO that BFC Sialkot was the only centre in Punjab currently offering NADRA's E-Sahulat services. He elaborated that this facility provided public services including Pakistan Single Window registration, arms license renewals, NTN login creation, biometric verification, and property tax payment—all at no additional cost to users. He also shared that, to enhance public convenience and serve SCCI members more effectively, a complete Traffic Police License Issuance Centre had been established within BFC Sialkot in collaboration with the City Traffic Police. This in-house facility allowed applicants to complete sign tests and practical driving exams in a professional, modern setting. Mr. Haq reaffirmed the Chamber's full cooperation with the Punjab Government's efforts to mitigate SMOG and improve environmental conditions in the region.

## Visit of **H.E. MR. NEIL HAWKIN** High Commissioner of Australia to Pakistan



On February 26, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) had the honor of hosting H.E. Mr. Neil Hawkin, High Commissioner of Australia to Pakistan, for an interactive session with prominent businessmen of Sialkot. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, formally welcomed the High Commissioner and expressed appreciation for his initiative to engage directly with the trade community of Sialkot.

The meeting centered around exploring avenues for enhancing direct trade between Pakistan and Australia. Mr. Haq highlighted Sialkot's globally recognized export industries, including sports goods, surgical instruments, leather products, and textiles, emphasizing their potential to contribute to the Australian market. He underlined the need to diversify export destinations and reduce dependency on indirect trading routes, thereby proposing the development of direct trade corridors between the two nations.

The High Commissioner commended the entrepreneurial spirit and industrial capabilities of Sialkot, acknowledging the city's reputation as a global manufacturing hub. He affirmed Australia's interest in strengthening bilateral trade ties and assured that the Australian High Commission was fully supportive of business initiatives that could foster economic collaboration. He also expressed keen interest in building institutional linkages to promote dialogue and trust between

the business communities of both countries.

A key area of focus was the promotion of regular interaction between the Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations of Pakistan and Australia. Both sides recognized the importance of these institutional linkages in facilitating trade delegations, business matchmaking, and knowledge exchange. The High Commissioner encouraged Pakistani exporters to explore the Australian market through participation in exhibitions and trade fairs.

In response to a proposal by SCCI, the High Commissioner extended an invitation for a business delegation from Sialkot to visit the Australian High Commission in Islamabad for a focused dialogue on trade facilitation. He also invited exporters to attend upcoming Australian trade and business forums relevant to their sectors.

Mr. Ikram Ul Haq reaffirmed SCCI's commitment to enhancing trade ties with Australia and expressed hope that this engagement would serve as a catalyst for future cooperation. The session concluded with a mutual understanding to maintain close communication and pursue practical steps toward developing a robust and direct trade relationship between Pakistan and Australia.



Inauguration of

**SCCI MED PHARMACY**

A Model Healthcare Initiative by the Business Community



On March 29, 2025, corresponding to the 29th of Ramadan, 1446 Hijri, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) marked a major milestone in its community outreach efforts with the formal inauguration of the "SCCI Med Pharmacy." This significant event was held at the SCCI premises, specifically on the D.C. Road side of the Chamber's building, and was jointly officiated by esteemed business leader Mr. Riazuddin Sheikh and President SCCI, Mr. Ikram-ul-Haq.

The establishment of the SCCI Med Pharmacy is the result of a visionary initiative undertaken by Mr. Ikram-ul-Haq upon assuming office as President of the Chamber. During his address at the Chamber's Annual General Meeting, Mr. Ikram-ul-Haq had outlined the urgent need for a sustainable, accessible healthcare solution in the city. He had noted that chronic diseases were increasingly prevalent among the population, with most households requiring regular access to

long-term medication. In light of this widespread concern, he had committed to setting up a dedicated pharmacy that would serve all citizens of Sialkot by offering essential medicines at significantly discounted rates.

The President had further underscored that the initiative would be built on the values of dignity, transparency, and inclusivity. He was of the firm belief that access to affordable healthcare should not be contingent upon one's financial or social status. It was thus decided from the outset that the funding for the pharmacy would not rely on Zakat, Sadaqah, or any other forms of charity. Instead, the project was financed entirely through the generous contributions of the Chamber's members, raising a total of over PKR 13 million. This financial model ensured that every customer, regardless of their background, could access the pharmacy's services with confidence and without hesitation.





Since its inauguration, the SCCI Med Pharmacy has quickly become a vital resource for the people of Sialkot. To date, over 27,753 individuals have benefited from its services, and more than PKR 51,01,259/- worth of discounts have been extended to customers. The pharmacy offers a uniform discount of 14% on all medicines—an unprecedented figure unmatched by any medical store across the region. This commitment to affordability has provided much-needed relief to families struggling with the high costs of regular medication, while also reinforcing the Chamber's broader objective of social impact through business-led initiatives.

In his remarks during the inauguration, President Ikram-ul-Haq expressed his profound appreciation to all members of the business community whose contributions had turned this vision into a reality. He emphasized the importance of continued collective support to ensure the sustainability and growth of the pharmacy, reiterating that the guiding principle of excluding charity-based funding would remain unchanged. He further shared his hope that the project would continue to grow in reach and scale, bringing enhanced quality of life to thousands more in the future.

The President also took the opportunity to formally acknowledge and commend the efforts of Mr. Mian Muhammad Khalil, Chairman of the SCCI Med Pharmacy, and his entire team. Special recognition was given to Project Secretary Mr. Abdul Rauf, whose dedication and operational oversight played a pivotal role in the successful launch and day-to-day functioning of the pharmacy.

The "SCCI Med Pharmacy" stands today as a remarkable example of what can be achieved through unity, purpose, and the proactive spirit of a socially responsible business community. It not only addresses a fundamental need in public healthcare but also sets a compelling precedent for other chambers, institutions, and cities to emulate. Through this initiative, SCCI has reaffirmed its commitment to serving the people of Sialkot—not just as a business platform, but as a partner in the city's social development and collective well-being.





Visit of

**DR. IMRAN HAMID SHEIKH**

Director General Environment Punjab



On April 10, 2025, Dr. Imran Hamid Sheikh, Director General of the Environment Department, Government of Punjab, visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) for a high-level meeting focused on environmental reform and the progress of the Sialkot Tannery Zone (STZ). The session was chaired by President SCCI, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, who welcomed the delegation and provided a detailed update on the STZ project—an initiative aimed at relocating Sialkot's leather industry into an environmentally compliant and centralized zone.

Mr. Haq stated that although the STZ had faced administrative delays in the past, significant headway had been made under his leadership. Land transaction bans were lifted, a transparent exit policy was introduced, and over 300 tanneries had begun construction. He emphasized that 95% of the Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) was complete and requested the conversion of a PKR 28.8 million soft loan into a government grant to ease financial strain on investors. He stressed that timely completion of the project was crucial to preserving Sialkot's competitiveness in the global leather market.

Mr. Muhammad Atif, STZ Project Director, explained that the zone spans 400 acres and consists of 540 plots with advanced infrastructure, including a stormwater drainage system and a 12,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day treatment plant supported by UNIDO. Around 150 tanneries were under construction, and full operations were expected by mid-2025. He highlighted the zone's compliance

with Leather Working Group (LWG) standards and its role in reclaiming Pakistan's leather export share.

CEO STZ, Ch. Ahmed Zulfiqar Hayat, described the initiative as Pakistan's first major private sector-led environmental project. He echoed the request to convert the government's soft loan into a grant and underlined the zone's importance for environmental compliance, chrome recovery, and employment generation.

President SCCI further requested formal recognition of the zone's progress by the Environment Department and asked for support on unresolved issues, including a GEPCO grid connection and cost escalation reimbursements.

In response, Dr. Imran Hamid Sheikh commended SCCI's proactive leadership and acknowledged the environmental urgency confronting the province, including deteriorating air quality, groundwater contamination, and erratic climate patterns. He proposed real-time emission monitoring via CCTV installations on industrial stacks and emphasized that untreated waste must be eliminated to safeguard public health. He endorsed the STZ project and assured full backing for converting the soft loan into a grant. He invited the Chamber to collaborate on a transition plan for broader industrial compliance and to attend the Environment Department's upcoming passing out parade on May 16, 2025.



## SCCI's Active Representation in the **PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATIVE SESSION** with the Federal Finance Minister



On April 12, 2025, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), attended a pivotal Pre-Budget Consultative Session held at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI). The meeting was chaired by Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, and brought together presidents and senior representatives of leading chambers and trade bodies from across the country. The session served as a key platform for gathering recommendations from the business community for the formulation of the Federal Budget 2025–26.

The meeting focused on the government's broader economic reform agenda, improving the ease of doing business, and streamlining fiscal policies in alignment with the needs of industry. President SCCI actively participated in the dialogue and presented a comprehensive set of proposals and concerns reflective of the priorities of Sialkot's dynamic export-led economy. His interventions were aimed at strengthening industrial productivity, restoring investor confidence, and creating an enabling environment for sustained trade and economic growth.

A central part of SCCI's recommendations was the revival and restoration of the Final Tax Regime (FTR), a simplified taxation mechanism that has historically been preferred by exporters for its predictability and reduced compliance burden. President SCCI stressed that the absence of FTR has created uncertainty among exporters and SMEs, and urged the government to reintroduce it as a facilitative measure that aligns with the government's own agenda of broadening the tax base without stifling economic activity.

In addition, President SCCI drew attention to issues related to the implementation of the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), particularly the operational inefficiencies, procedural bottlenecks, and inconsistent interpretations that have led to delays and complications for exporters. He recommended a streamlined, uniform, and technology-driven approach to

ensure timely access to raw materials and inputs without undue administrative hurdles.

Other significant matters raised included the urgent need to rationalize input costs such as energy and raw materials, eliminate anomalies in customs valuation, simplify refund and rebate mechanisms, and improve coordination among regulatory agencies. Emphasis was placed on extending affordable financing solutions to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), improving port and logistics infrastructure, and investing in trade digitization tools that can reduce red tape.

President SCCI also voiced concern over the high cost of doing business in Pakistan and its impact on export competitiveness. He urged the Ministry of Finance to consider practical and sustainable tax reforms, enhance facilitation for new exporters, and remove policy inconsistencies that hamper the growth potential of high-performing industrial clusters like Sialkot.

The Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue attentively listened to the views presented and acknowledged the constructive input from SCCI. He assured the participants that the recommendations received would be critically reviewed and reflected in the upcoming federal budget, wherever feasible. The Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to policy consultation and reiterated the importance of working hand-in-hand with the private sector for national economic development.

SCCI's participation in this session demonstrated the Chamber's proactive approach in advocating for the interests of the business community at the highest policy-making forums. The Chamber remains committed to engaging with federal stakeholders to ensure that Sialkot's voice is effectively represented and that the economic and industrial needs of its members are addressed in national strategies.

Visit of

**37<sup>TH</sup> SENIOR MANAGEMENT COURSE**

National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA)



On April 16, 2025, the 37th Senior Management Course, President SCCI Mr. Ikram ul Haq warmly welcomed the delegation and expressed gratitude to NIPA for its continued efforts in enhancing the capacity of public officials through executive training. He highlighted the indispensable role of effective governance and financial resources in national development, emphasizing that trade and industry are central to sustainable growth. He called on policymakers to prioritize private sector needs, promote ease of doing business, and ensure an enabling environment through joint responsibility of government and bureaucracy.

He appreciated government-led initiatives such as the establishment of Business Facilitation Centers in Punjab and the creation of the Special Investment Facilitation Council, which he believed could accelerate economic revival. Stressing SCCI's partnership with the government, he reaffirmed the Chamber's commitment to supporting trade and industry and advancing national interests. He described Sialkot as a globally recognized entrepreneurial hub, with SMEs contributing over USD 2.5 billion annually in exports. He noted that Sialkot's products—sports goods, leatherwear, surgical instruments, and apparel—are globally renowned, with footballs manufactured in the city used in FIFA World Cups.

Mr. Haq presented Sialkot as a city of self-made success, citing community-led projects such as Sialkot International Airport, Dry Port, AIRSIAL, Medical City, and the upcoming Islamic Commercial Bank. He stated that Sialkot's entrepreneurial strength was evident in the 600–800 companies being registered monthly. However, he warned of structural challenges, including insufficient higher education investment and the withdrawal of business-friendly policies. The abolition

of the Fixed Tax Regime (FTR) in Budget 2024–25 was labeled a major blow to SMEs, many of which operate informally and cannot navigate complex tax systems. He said the SCCI had submitted a phased fixed-rate proposal to the Federal Government for FTR revival, suggesting 1.5%, 1.75%, and 2% tax rates over three years, respectively.

Mr. Haq also called for a review of cumulative direct and indirect taxes on exporters and urged currency stabilization through uniform policy. He listed major hurdles affecting exporters: loss of benefits under the Export Facilitation Scheme, 5% withholding tax on unregistered purchases, Infrastructure Development Cess in Sindh and KPK, reciprocal US tariffs, high energy costs, visa barriers, and security protocols hampering Chinese investor access. He warned that such impediments might force manufacturers to relocate abroad, risking the leakage of trade secrets and Sialkot's competitive advantage. Despite international competition and domestic challenges, he was confident that Sialkot's exports could reach USD 5 billion by 2030 and USD 10 billion by 2040—provided adequate policy support is ensured.

Following the President's address, a documentary on Sialkot's industrial sector was screened. Ms. Samreen Zahra, Head of Delegation, expressed appreciation to SCCI for hosting the visit and acknowledged the Chamber's exemplary role in linking governance with business development. She stated that officers had taken serious note of the issues raised and would advocate for business-friendly reforms. Mr. Sultan, delivering the vote of thanks, called the visit a memorable experience and praised Sialkot's entrepreneurial spirit. He assured the Chamber of continued support from public officials in facilitating the city's business community.



## Visit of **MR. MUHAMMAD SADIQ** Chief Collector (Exports/IOCO) Karachi



On April 18, 2025, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), welcomed Mr. Muhammad Sadiq, Chief Collector (Exports/IOCO) Karachi, and Ms. Saira Agha, Collector, Collectorate of Customs Sialkot, during their official visit to the Chamber. The President termed this engagement a commendable initiative by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to engage directly with the local export community. He stated that such interactions were vital for addressing operational challenges and expressed optimism about the outcomes of enhanced coordination between exporters and customs authorities.

Mr. Sadiq and Ms. Agha thanked the Chamber for the warm reception and reaffirmed their dedication to improving customs procedures. During the session, Mr. Tariq Hussain brought attention to delays in updating gate-out statuses under the Faceless Customs Assessment (FCA) system, presenting specific examples. Mr. Sadiq assured that GDs exceeding 72 hours would be flagged automatically for resolution, and Ms. Agha committed to coordinating follow-up with Karachi.

The President of SCCI expressed concern over the sudden implementation of the Centralized Assessment System without stakeholder consultation. He recommended a two-day turnaround time for assessment, beyond which cases should be escalated. Ch. Ahmed Zulfiqar Hayat supported the idea and proposed submitting daily lists of delayed consignments. Mr. Sadiq acknowledged the inputs and mentioned that structural reforms were underway to improve transparency and reduce delays.

Mr. Majid Raza Bhutta raised issues concerning the retrospective application of new SROs on previously dispatched consignments and recommended a 90-day transition period to mitigate confusion.

He also highlighted the difficulties SMEs face in providing bank guarantees, proposing more accessible alternatives. He requested expedited consideration of exemption proposals sent to the SIFC.

Mr. Waqas Akram Awan questioned the fairness of the current infrastructure cess model, suggesting a shift from value-based to axle load-based calculation. Mr. Rana Sohail called for zero-rating domestic input suppliers of export units to promote local sourcing. Mr. Tariq Hussain recommended including materials for tourism infrastructure in the concession list to stimulate public-private partnership in the sector.

President Ikram ul Haq also discussed the regulatory difficulties faced by exporters dealing in small, high-value air shipments. He recommended implementing a decentralized inspection model for Sialkot's exporters and conducting quarterly stock audits. Ms. Agha supported the proposal and emphasized the need for a dedicated assessment team in Sialkot to expedite processes. Ch. Zulfiqar Hayat proposed that the jurisdiction of the Sialkot Collectorate be expanded to nearby logistics hubs.

The President informed the guests that Chinese investors had shown growing interest in Sialkot due to global supply chain realignments. He proposed establishing a facilitation framework and holding B2B sessions to attract foreign investment into local industries.

In conclusion, Mr. Ikram ul Haq thanked the visiting officials and the business community for their active participation. He stressed the significance of the issues discussed—particularly those regarding FCA challenges, SME constraints, and long-term export policy reforms—and reiterated the Chamber's commitment to policy advocacy and strategic collaboration.

Visit of

**MR. NABIL MOH'D MAH'D ALKHATIB**

First Vice Chairman, Amman Chamber of Commerce



On April 19, 2025, Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), formally received Mr. Nabil Moh'd Mah'd Alkhatib, First Vice Chairman of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, along with a distinguished Jordanian delegation. Mr. Khalid conveyed that the visit reflected the longstanding friendship and growing economic partnership between Pakistan and Jordan. He extended special thanks to the Embassy of Pakistan in Jordan, the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), and the Amman Chamber of Commerce for their pivotal roles in enhancing bilateral trade relations. He particularly appreciated the support of Mr. Saad Ahmad Khattak, Pakistan's Trade and Investment Attaché in Amman, and Mr. Nabil Alkhatib for their cooperation during SCCI's official delegation visit to Jordan in June 2024.

Mr. Khalid emphasized that chambers of commerce must serve as enablers of economic cooperation by supporting trade delegations, easing tariff and non-tariff barriers, and promoting direct sourcing opportunities. He highlighted that the bilateral trade volume—approximately USD 55 million during FY 2024—did not reflect the countries' actual trade potential. He identified key obstacles, including high customs duties on Pakistani products (up to 30%) and Jordan's 16% VAT, which together increased costs for Jordanian importers. To overcome these barriers, he proposed mutual initiatives such as reducing tariffs, facilitating business visas, and organizing exhibitions and delegations. He expressed confidence that under Mr. Alkhatib's leadership, these goals could be achieved and proceeded to brief the delegation on Sialkot's industrial and civic achievements, underscoring its international export reputation.

Following the welcome, Mr. Khalid invited Mr. Alkhatib to address the gathering. Mr. Alkhatib extended heartfelt gratitude for SCCI's hospitality and expressed admiration for the advanced technology, exceptional craftsmanship, and competitive pricing he witnessed during visits to Sialkot's surgical instrument facilities and the Health Engineering & Minerals Show (HEMS). He praised Jordan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. Maen Khreasat, for his active role in facilitating trade delegations and supporting collaboration between

both chambers. Mr. Alkhatib shared his plans to revisit Pakistan in September 2025 with a Jordanian business delegation to participate in TDAP's trade exhibitions in Lahore. He showed interest in sending additional delegations in the future and invited Pakistani entrepreneurs from all sectors to explore business opportunities in Jordan. He also suggested that travel agencies promote Jordan as a religious tourism destination, given the country's many sites referenced in the Holy Quran.

Mr. Alkhatib informed the house of his intention to propose a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Pakistan and Jordan to the Jordanian Ministries of Commerce and Industry, aimed at reducing customs duties and taxes on Pakistani exports. He further noted that Jordan's relatively favorable 16% tariff rate under recent U.S. trade adjustments presented a unique opportunity for Pakistani exporters to use Jordan as a transshipment hub for gaining access to the American market. Mr. Khalid concluded the formal session by expressing hope for sustained and fruitful bilateral relations and invited the delegation to view a documentary showcasing Sialkot's industrial excellence and community-driven development.

During the interactive Q&A session that followed, Ms. Kinza Ijaz, Member Executive Committee SCCI, inquired about the possibility of women trade delegations between the two nations. Mr. Alkhatib responded that the Amman Chamber has around 8,000 women members and that while previous plans were hindered by logistical issues, future visits are under active consideration. Mr. Sarfaraz Butt, Convener of the Trade Fairs and Exhibitions Committee, raised questions about Royal Jordanian Airlines' limited operations and Jordan's current investment priorities. Mr. Alkhatib replied that cargo operations to Karachi had resumed 45 days ago and that commercial flights would follow upon final NOC clearance. He stated that Jordan is welcoming investment in medical instruments and garment sectors and offering incentives including a 10-year tax holiday and permission to employ up to 50% of a firm's workforce from Pakistan. He added that Indian and Bangladeshi companies were already benefiting from similar arrangements.



## Visit of H.E. DR. JEMAL BEKER ABDULA Ambassador of Ethiopia



On April 21, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) welcomed His Excellency Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to Pakistan. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, extended a warm welcome to the Ambassador and described the visit as a testament to the enduring friendship between Pakistan and Ethiopia. He commended Dr. Beker's dynamic leadership and visionary diplomacy, acknowledging the Ambassador's role in strengthening bilateral trade ties through mutual respect and engagement. Recalling his own visit to Ethiopia in May 2024, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq reflected on the beauty of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's rich culture, and the warmth of its people. He particularly praised the Ethiopian Government's initiatives to liberalize the economy and build investor-friendly infrastructure, while also appreciating the hospitality extended during the visit. Looking forward, he highlighted the upcoming Pakistan Single Country Exhibition scheduled in Addis Ababa from May 15 to 17, 2025, organized by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), and noted the keen interest among Sialkot exporters to participate in this significant event. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq emphasized that TDAP must actively facilitate the exhibition by arranging focused B2B meetings, inviting high-potential buyers, and conducting strong promotional campaigns. He expressed hope that with the cooperation of the Ethiopian Government and the patronage of the Ambassador, Pakistani exhibitors would be able to forge meaningful business linkages

and expand bilateral trade, which currently stood at USD 51.232 million according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

President Ikram Ul Haq also acknowledged the role of the University of Sialkot in fostering international linkages and encouraged the dissemination of information about the exhibition among Sialkot's industrial community. He stressed that Ethiopia represented an untapped market with substantial demand for Made-in-Sialkot products and that direct access to this market was crucial. Drawing attention to other regional players, he mentioned that countries like India and China were already actively establishing their footholds in Ethiopia. He noted that while Joint Ventures may not materialize immediately, consistent long-term efforts could eventually yield substantial outcomes. He referred to Ethiopia as a land of opportunity and cited the historical example of King Najashi to highlight its longstanding cultural and religious significance. Concluding his remarks, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq urged stakeholders to collectively seize this moment to build robust commercial bridges that would benefit both nations and reinforce Sialkot's industrial excellence.

In his remarks, H.E. Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula thanked the Sialkot Chamber for the warm reception and congratulated its office bearers. He recalled the previous year's delegation from Sialkot to Ethiopia, coordinated by Mr. Faisal Manzoor, and expressed appreciation for the strong industrial

participation. The Ambassador shared that Ethiopia ranked as the top emerging market in South Africa and fifth on the African continent overall, with a steadily growing economy. Since the opening of the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad in 2022, he had led two trade delegations of more than 80 Pakistani participants each. He emphasized Ethiopia's commitment to foreign investment through a one-window facility and renewable energy initiatives. Reflecting on his visit to the Engineering and Healthcare Show in Lahore, he acknowledged the vast potential for stronger bilateral engagement. He reiterated that the Ethiopian Embassy would act as a bridge between Pakistani and Ethiopian businesses and confirmed that he was personally overseeing arrangements for productive B2B meetings during the upcoming exhibition. The Ambassador also disclosed plans for Ethiopian Airlines to commence operations in Pakistan and affirmed that visitors attending the exhibition would be treated as guests of the Ethiopian Government. He indicated the possibility of pursuing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to reduce trade tariffs and deepen economic ties.

Mr. Khalid Rasool, Director General of TDAP Sialkot, echoed the importance of the exhibition and encouraged robust participation from Sialkot's industry. In his presentation, he provided an overview of Ethiopia's economic outlook, citing its 129 million population, rising GDP, and participation in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as major advantages for exporters. He highlighted the composition of Pakistan's trade with Africa and noted existing challenges such as high freight costs, low visibility of Pakistani products, and logistical constraints. He urged the business community to actively leverage the "Look Africa Policy" and capitalize on emerging trade openings in Africa through strategic events like the Addis Ababa exhibition.

President Ikram Ul Haq appreciated the presentation and remarked that the encouraging statistics would help boost

industry participation. However, Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President SCCI, shared his reservations based on SCCI's prior participation in a Single Country Exhibition in Jeddah. He expressed concern over the lack of meaningful buyer turnout despite the Chamber's extensive follow-ups with Pakistani Missions abroad. He inquired about promotional strategies being undertaken by the Ethiopian Embassy and Government to ensure strong participation at the Ethiopia exhibition. He also proposed that it may be more effective to organize the "Made in Pakistan" exhibition alongside a pre-established event in Ethiopia to maximize buyer engagement. Mr. Lodhi emphasized that TDAP alone should not be held accountable for weak exhibition outcomes, stating that commercial officers abroad must ensure proper matchmaking and meaningful business meetings. He also requested tariff details on products made in Sialkot, as well as tariffs on Ethiopian products being exported to the EU, and asked the Ambassador to share a list of Ethiopian importers that could be circulated among exhibition participants.

It was also discussed that SCCI would aim to encourage at least ten member companies from Sialkot to participate in the Addis Ababa exhibition. During the Q&A session, former SCCI Presidents Dr. Khurram Khawaja, Mian Naeem Javed, and Malik Muhammad Ashraf requested Ethiopia's Embassy to share tariff information and a comprehensive list of potential buyers. Mr. Javed suggested that Sialkot International Airport could offer a 50% discount on cargo handling fees for Ethiopian Airlines when operating transit flights to China, as a goodwill gesture and to support increased connectivity. The session concluded with mutual expressions of interest to strengthen commercial linkages, develop targeted engagement strategies, and pursue institutional cooperation in the shared pursuit of economic progress.





Visit of

**MAJOR GENERAL ABDUL MOEED, HI(M),**

Director General, Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF)



On April 22, 2025, Major General Abdul Moeed, HI(M), Director General of the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), where he was warmly welcomed by Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President SCCI, and the Chamber's office bearers. During the session, Mr. Ikram ul Haq acknowledged the ANF's right to inspect consignments and perform their duties in the interest of national security, but also raised several pressing concerns of the Sialkot business community regarding the procedural challenges faced during the export clearance process. He highlighted that exporters from Sialkot, even those granted Green Channel Status, were subjected to normal examination protocols at ports of origin, unlike exporters from other cities whose consignments were sent directly for loading. He requested parity in treatment and recommended the installation of modern scanning systems to enhance examination efficiency. Mr. Ikram ul Haq also pointed out that consignments pre-cleared by ANF in their city of origin were being re-examined at Karachi Port, often resulting in missed vessel schedules and consequential financial losses. He emphasized the need for removing such redundancies and called for improved coordination between ANF and Customs to streamline processes and eliminate double documentation and profiling delays. Additionally, he proposed the establishment of a digital record system where exporters' essential documents could be stored in scanned form and retrieved as required for faster, transparent clearance.

In response, Major General Abdul Moeed expressed gratitude to the Chamber for the invitation and appreciated Sialkot's industrial contributions to the national economy. He praised the city's exemplary business model, noting its potential to serve as a national template. The Director General reaffirmed the importance of rigorous compliance with SOPs and international trade standards to safeguard Pakistan's global reputation. He urged Chamber members to take greater responsibility for self-regulation, recommending periodic checks and certifications to ensure clean exports. He further explained that while physical

inspections were necessary in certain cases, their frequency had significantly reduced due to profiling improvements under the Green Channel mechanism and the WeBOC system. He informed the participants about ANF's forthcoming access to the Pakistan Single Window platform, which would enhance risk-based profiling and reduce inspection redundancies. While referencing isolated past incidents involving drug concealment in sectors such as leather goods, surgical instruments, and dry fruits, he warned that such violations tarnished the image of the entire export community. He urged exporters to work proactively with enforcement agencies to prevent such instances and assured that recent technological upgrades were being integrated into inspection protocols to ease the burden on compliant businesses. Major General Abdul Moeed reiterated ANF's willingness to maintain open channels of communication and encouraged exporters to provide feedback and propose improvements in the inspection framework.

Mr. Hassan Ali Bhatti, Chairman of Sialkot International Airport Ltd. (SIAL), also addressed the meeting and underlined the need for stronger coordination between ANF and airport authorities to protect export channels. He pointed out the vulnerability of courier cargo, which often consisted of undocumented small shipments, and emphasized the urgency of tightening security protocols to prevent misuse. In response, the Director General shared that the ANF had already submitted a formal proposal to the Government to regulate and monitor courier cargo more effectively and assured further enhancements in cooperation with the concerned institutions.

Concluding the meeting, Mr. Ikram ul Haq once again thanked Major General Abdul Moeed and his team for their visit to SCCI and for their constructive engagement with the Chamber's leadership. He expressed hope that the issues raised would be addressed through collaborative action and that continued dialogue would strengthen trust and coordination between ANF and the Sialkot export community.

Visit of

**DR. TAHIR ZAIDI**

Thematic Expert (Productivity &amp; Quality), National Compliance Center (NCC)



On April 23, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) welcomed a delegation from the National Compliance Center (NCC). Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, received the team and assured the Chamber's full cooperation in supporting NCC's initiatives. He expressed appreciation for the establishment of the NCC by the Ministry of Commerce and the Government of Pakistan and reaffirmed SCCI's commitment to raising awareness among exporters regarding regulatory compliance.

The President highlighted the urgent need for support in the implementation of the Medical Device Regulation (MDR), required for the export of surgical instruments to the European Union. He informed that approximately 100–125 Sialkot-based companies had already submitted applications to Notified Bodies and received extensions, yet MDR compliance remained extremely expensive and complex. Notified Bodies were charging over USD 100,000, excluding lab testing costs. Due to a shortage of qualified consultants in Sialkot, consultancy fees had become exorbitant—ranging from PKR 10 to 20 million—without any assurance of successful certification.

President Haq suggested that the NCC facilitate negotiations with Notified Bodies operating locally—such as SGS, Intertek, and ECM—to adopt rational pricing aligned with Pakistan's industrial realities. He called for government intervention to regulate the fees of these bodies and urged the NCC to promote local capacity-building, including through PCSIR laboratories, to help reduce dependence on foreign testing services.

He also flagged the increasing costs of U.S. FDA certification, citing the annual registration fee of USD 8,500 and additional representative charges. He requested government subsidies to help businesses afford such certifications, warning that rising costs were discouraging exporters and reducing Pakistan's export share in the U.S. market. Out of roughly 3,000 active exporters in the surgical sector, only 100–150 were pursuing MDR certifications—a gap that could allow competitors from China, India, and Turkey to dominate the market.

The President recommended developing a national database of certified exporters and recognized consultants. He offered a building in the Sialkot Export Processing Zone for the establishment of a dedicated MDR material testing lab. He shared that a project proposal worth PKR 1 billion had been submitted in collaboration with the Urban Unit, Government of Punjab, with PCSIR identified as a key implementation partner. He called upon the NCC to help obtain lab accreditation from a credible Notified Body and fast-track collaboration with international organizations like ITC and UNIDO.

The President also discussed looming compliance challenges for other sectors, particularly the need for Leather Working Group (LWG) certification for leather exports to the EU by December 2025. He briefed that efforts were underway to relocate 350 tanneries to the Sialkot Tannery Zone (STZ) to help achieve compliance. He noted that exporters of sports goods, musical instruments, and gloves were similarly affected by costly EU-origin certifications.

Dr. Tahir Zaidi, Thematic Expert (Productivity & Quality) at NCC, thanked SCCI for its input and emphasized that NCC was engaging Chambers and trade bodies across Pakistan to better understand sector-specific compliance needs. He explained that the NCC was launched following World Bank and EU recommendations to create a centralized facility to address testing and certification barriers for exporters, funded under a two-year pilot through the Export Development Fund (EDF).

He affirmed that NCC aimed to upgrade and localize testing and certification infrastructure, facilitate easier access to regulatory services, and compile a qualified consultant directory. He also mentioned that NCC would coordinate interactions with the upcoming EU Delegation to Pakistan and share its activity calendar with SCCI. Dr. Zaidi concluded by reaffirming NCC's mission to offer practical, affordable compliance solutions and serve as a bridge between international regulators and Pakistani industries.



## Launching Ceremony of **ENTE CERTIFICAZIONE MACCHINE (ECM)** Notified Body in Pakistan



On April 24, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted the launching ceremony of ECM (Ente Certificazione Macchine), a globally recognized Notified Body from Italy, marking a significant milestone in the Chamber's ongoing efforts to support the local industry in achieving international regulatory compliance. In his welcoming address, Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President SCCI, expressed great pride in hosting this momentous occasion, which he described as a testament to the Chamber's continued dedication to serving the industrial community of Sialkot. He noted that the event held special significance for the city's renowned surgical instruments sector, which has long exemplified excellence in precision manufacturing.

He emphasized that compliance with the European Union's Medical Device Regulation (MDR) had become essential for exporters of surgical instruments seeking sustained access to EU markets. Recognizing this evolving challenge, Mr. Khalid explained that SCCI had proactively sought to provide its members with competitive and credible alternatives for MDR certification. He announced that the collaboration with ECM was a strategic step in that direction, and shared the Chamber's pleasure in signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ECM to facilitate cost-effective and streamlined certification pathways.

Mr. Khalid further shared that, as a result of persistent efforts by SCCI, ECM had agreed to establish a local office in Sialkot, now being overseen by Mr. Waqar Butt as the Resident Officer. He also revealed that SCCI planned to attract additional Notified Bodies to Sialkot to increase options for its members and ensure competitive pricing and accessibility. He concluded by thanking ECM Italy for their trust, the members for their confidence, and the SCCI team for making this partnership possible, expressing confidence that this initiative would usher in a new era of sustainable export growth for the region.

Ing. Diego Stevanella, Sales Manager of ECM's Medical Devices

Division, took the floor and shared ECM's deep experience in certifying medical devices in accordance with European MDR regulations. He emphasized ECM's commitment to supporting Pakistani manufacturers in navigating the complexities of MDR certification and encouraged early engagement and meticulous documentation as key to ensuring successful certification. Acknowledging the burden MDR places on SMEs, he assured participants that ECM was open to collaborating with the local industry to devise practical solutions for compliance.

Mr. Waqar Butt, Resident Representative of ECM Pakistan, reiterated ECM's long-term commitment to the Pakistani surgical instruments sector. He emphasized the strategic benefit of having a local ECM office, which would help minimize communication barriers and facilitate the certification process. He informed the audience that ECM Pakistan was actively assisting manufacturers with application procedures, documentation standards, and pre-assessment guidance. Addressing the concerns raised by SCCI about high certification costs, he pledged to communicate these concerns to ECM headquarters in Italy to explore the possibility of offering rates better aligned with the financial realities of Pakistani exporters.

Following the speeches, a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between ECM Pakistan and the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The ceremony concluded on a hopeful note, with mutual commitment expressed toward fostering international compliance, boosting export potential, and strengthening the global competitiveness of the Sialkot industry.



Participation of

## MR. IKRAM UL HAQ

in Senate's Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue



on April 30, 2025 the President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Mr. Ikram ul Haq, appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, where he forcefully articulated the concerns of Pakistan's export sector. During his address, Mr. Ikram ul Haq outlined several critical challenges faced by exporters and presented a series of reform proposals for the Committee's urgent consideration.

He underscored the importance of reviving the Final Tax Regime (FTR) for exporters, emphasizing that reinstating this long-standing system would significantly simplify taxation procedures and ease the compliance burden on small and medium-sized export enterprises. He further called for the extension of the withholding income tax exemption to all exporters, regardless of their sector, arguing that such a measure was essential to ensuring equity and enhancing Pakistan's global trade competitiveness.

Mr. Ikram ul Haq also urged the Committee to abolish or rationalize the 5% withholding sales tax currently imposed on exporter

companies. He explained that this tax structure not only increased the cost of doing business but also created cash flow disruptions that hinder timely production and shipment—core components of export viability. Additionally, he proposed comprehensive reforms to the Export Facilitation Scheme, advocating for streamlined documentation and simplified procedures to make the scheme more accessible and exporter-friendly.

Another major recommendation was the restoration of the right to appeal to the Appellate Tribunal in tax refund cases involving amounts below Rs. 20 million. He contended that restricting appellate relief in such cases deprived smaller exporters of a fair recourse mechanism and eroded confidence in the integrity of the tax adjudication system.

Mr. Ikram ul Haq's appearance before the Senate Committee reflected not only the Sialkot Chamber's deep commitment to policy-level engagement but also its strategic leadership in voicing the collective concerns of exporters across the country. Notably, his advocacy on the revival of FTR received widespread endorsement from other leading trade bodies, including the Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, and Gujranwala Chambers of Commerce and Industry. This alignment demonstrated a strong and unified stance from the national business community, urging the government to introduce urgent fiscal reforms to sustain and enhance Pakistan's export performance.

In response to these concerns, Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, acknowledged the validity of the issues raised by Mr. Haq. He assured the delegation that the Committee would thoroughly examine the proposals and recommendations presented by SCCI and other trade bodies. Senator Mandviwalla stated that the Committee was committed to facilitating an enabling environment for exporters and recognized the need to rationalize tax policy in line with ground realities to strengthen Pakistan's export-led growth. He praised the unified approach of the Chambers and affirmed that their input would play a vital role in shaping upcoming legislative decisions related to tax and trade.





## Meeting with **KHAWAJA MUHAMMAD ASIF (NI)** Federal Minister for Defence



On April 30, 2025, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), held an important meeting with Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Federal Minister for Defence, to discuss the ongoing developmental priorities and industrial needs of the Sialkot region.

During the meeting, Mr. Ikram ul Haq conveyed his deep appreciation for the Minister's continued dedication and resolute support for Sialkot's economic progress. He acknowledged Khawaja Muhammad Asif's decades-long role as a steadfast advocate for the city at the highest levels of government and praised his consistent efforts in securing vital infrastructure, industrial, and civic improvements for the region. Mr. Ikram ul Haq remarked that under Khawaja Muhammad Asif's leadership, Sialkot had seen notable advancement in connectivity, energy infrastructure, and public services key enablers of industrial productivity and investor confidence.

Particularly, the President of SCCI highlighted the Minister's exceptional accessibility and responsiveness to the concerns of the business community. He noted that this openness to dialogue had greatly strengthened the relationship between government representatives and local stakeholders, fostering a collaborative approach toward resolving challenges and identifying growth opportunities.

In response, Federal Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif reaffirmed his unwavering commitment to the business and industrial development of Sialkot. He assured Mr. Ikram ul

Haq of his personal attention to the timely execution of all key infrastructure projects that impact the city's industrial ecosystem and citizen well-being. The Minister also reiterated that he views Sialkot not only as an economic engine of Pakistan but as a model of private sector-led development that deserves continuous public investment.

Significantly, Khawaja Muhammad Asif informed the SCCI President that development projects amounting to over Rs. 40 billion had been approved for inclusion in the upcoming Federal Budget 2025–26 as a special initiative of the Prime Minister for the people of Sialkot. These projects span a range of sectors including roads, industrial estates, public health, water supply, and energy infrastructure all aimed at accelerating Sialkot's economic transformation and improving the quality of life for its residents.

The Minister further conveyed that he would soon pay a formal visit to the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry to officially announce these development projects in the presence of SCCI leadership and the broader business community. He emphasized that the federal government remains committed to supporting regions like Sialkot that demonstrate high productivity, entrepreneurship, and export excellence.

This meeting not only reflected the strong synergy between SCCI and the federal leadership but also reaffirmed the Chamber's strategic role in mobilizing public-private collaboration for sustainable regional development.

## Visit of TRADE & INVESTMENT OFFICERS DELEGATION



On May 2, 2025, Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), warmly welcomed a visiting delegation of Trade & Investment Officers (TIOs), organized by the Ministry of Commerce and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP). In his address, he congratulated the officers on their appointments and highlighted the crucial role they play in expanding Pakistan's global trade footprint, attracting foreign investment, and promoting national economic interests abroad.

Mr. Lodhi emphasized that the visit provided an excellent opportunity for the officers to understand Sialkot's unique export-led industrial ecosystem, which supports internationally recognized brands across multiple sectors. A short documentary showcasing Sialkot's export profile and industrial strengths was presented to the delegation.

In his policy briefing, Mr. Lodhi made several proposals to the Group Leader, Mr. Qazafi Rind. He called for the abolition of the Final Tax Regime (FTR) to support exporters, greater participation in international trade shows, and a strategic shift toward multinational exhibitions instead of single-country events, to maximize exposure. He also urged that TDAP explore emerging markets in Central Asia and Africa, as traditional markets were becoming saturated.

Mr. Qazafi Rind, Director Training, Ministry of Commerce, appreciated SCCI's active policy engagement and acknowledged Sialkot's role in shaping Pakistan's export strategy. He briefed the Chamber on new initiatives under Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's URAAN PAKISTAN vision, including the establishment of 12 new trade missions in strategic locations such as Singapore, Baghdad, Mozambique, and Beijing. He emphasized the need for TIOs, Chambers, and exporters to work collaboratively as a unified sales team and encouraged prompt sharing of data and leads.

He further suggested that companies prepare concise marketing brochures or videos in local languages for TIOs to distribute internationally. In response to the SVP's recommendations, Mr. Rind advised that formal submissions be made to the Trade Promotion Council and assured the delegation's full support in resolving pressing concerns.

During the Q&A session, one TIO shared that each officer typically handles 40–50 sectors, making focused engagement challenging. He urged chambers to provide sector-specific goals, clear deliverables, and relevant contacts to facilitate more effective outreach and business generation.

The visit concluded with mutual appreciation and a reaffirmation of commitment to continued collaboration in expanding Pakistan's trade and investment horizons.



## Study Tour Report

**SCCI DELEGATION TO 137<sup>TH</sup> CANTON FAIR**

Guangzhou, China



The 137th Canton Fair (Phase 3), held in Guangzhou, China, from May 3 to 5, 2025, served as a key platform for international trade and business exploration. Representing the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, President Mr. Ikram Ul Haq and Assistant Secretary (R&D) Mr. Ammar Ahmed Khan participated in the study tour with the objective of identifying potential product lines and sourcing materials that could be introduced to the Sialkot business community, either through direct trade or strategic joint ventures.

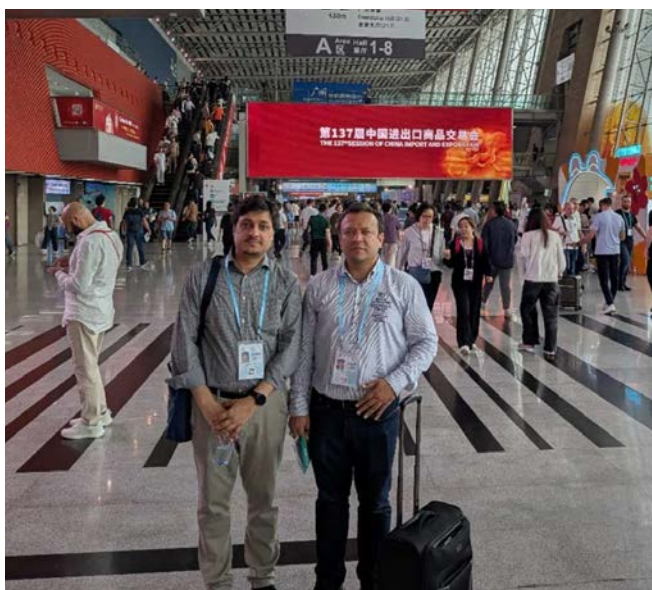
The Canton Fair showcased an extensive and diverse array of products across multiple sectors, including textiles, fashion accessories, health and medical devices, personal care, sports goods, food, toys, office supplies, and various industrial materials. Products were available in a full range of quality and pricing tiers, indicating an inclusive supply chain capable of serving global markets with varying demands. The delegation observed that China continues to maintain its pivotal role in global trade by offering fair, competitive prices and a high degree of readiness to handle large-scale international orders. Exhibitors frequently provided on-the-spot quotations (primarily in USD and RMB under FOB terms) and were well-equipped with product certifications adhering to international standards,

reassuring potential buyers of quality and compliance.

A key point of interest was the Pakistan Pavilion, coordinated by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), which featured approximately 22 booths. These highlighted Pakistan's export strengths including manicure and beauty products, soccer balls, footwear, leather accessories, MMA gear, and motorbike apparel. The pavilion projected a focused representation of Pakistan's craftsmanship, although it was noted that there remains significant potential for diversification and expansion into new product lines. The International Pavilion underscored the Fair's global outreach, with participants from over 25 countries including Turkey, South Korea, India, Malaysia, Germany, Japan, USA, and Nepal (a new entrant). The range of participating countries reflected the fair's continued relevance despite recent global trade fluctuations.

During interactions with stakeholders, it was reported that U.S. tariffs had a noticeable impact on participation from American buyers, leading to a redirection of attention toward alternative markets. Meanwhile, traders from India, South America, and Bangladesh appeared notably proactive in exploring and placing orders. African buyers, however, were seen to be more





cautious, likely due to the rising dollar and economic constraints in their domestic markets. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq emphasized the importance of leveraging such global platforms to identify both exportable products and import-substitutable raw materials, which could be locally manufactured in Sialkot through strategic investments or joint ventures with Chinese partners. The fair presented a vast opportunity for exploring such collaborations, particularly in segments like sports goods, pet accessories, healthcare items, and mid-range fashion products — all of which are sectors with potential for Sialkot's diversified manufacturing base.

The Delegation observed that the Fair's infrastructure allowed for seamless interaction among buyers, sellers, third-party inspection services, and logistics providers. The ease of doing business — from quotation to sample procurement — added considerable value to the buyer experience. Moreover, China's supply chain ecosystem remains unmatched in its responsiveness and integration, a key takeaway for Pakistani businesses seeking to replicate similar efficiency locally. The delegation also noted a significant insight regarding Pakistan's import behavior: while traders tend to avoid high-end Chinese products due to pricing constraints, exporters and manufacturers actively source high-quality materials necessary for fulfilling international orders. This distinction calls for a shift in mindset to explore higher-value imports as long-term investments in product development and export growth.

As per the State Bank of Pakistan data, Pakistan's import volume from China during July–April FY25 stood at approximately PKR 41,940.94 million, indicating the importance of China as a strategic trade partner for both raw materials and finished goods. In conclusion, the study tour reaffirmed that the Canton Fair remains a vital hub for global sourcing, partnership development, and market intelligence. The SCCI delegation recommends that local manufacturers and entrepreneurs in Sialkot explore structured opportunities for joint ventures, especially in product categories that are underrepresented in Pakistan but in high demand globally. Such efforts would not only support industrial innovation but also contribute significantly to expanding Sialkot's export footprint.





## Sialkot Chamber's Proactive Role in OPERATION "BUNYAN-UN-MARSOOS"



May 10, 2025, Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos stands as a testament to the unwavering valor, resilience, and unshakable spirit of the Pakistan Armed Forces. Under the strategic command and visionary leadership of the Field Marshal, our forces displayed exceptional courage in safeguarding the sovereignty of the nation during a time of grave national crisis. Their resolute defense, unmatched professionalism, and selfless sacrifices have once again reaffirmed Pakistan's indomitable strength and unity in the face of external aggression. Amid this challenging situation, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), as the prime trade body representing over 25,000 active members, assumed a proactive and supportive role to ensure alignment between the business community and national security objectives. Recognizing the gravity of the moment, SCCI mobilized its resources and network to contribute to national efforts both during and after the conflict. Prior to the escalation, SCCI's leadership maintained constant communication with the local military command, including senior officers of the 15 Division, 8 Division, and intelligence agencies, assuring full support from the business community. Despite being on an official mission abroad, the President of SCCI coordinated efforts to ensure readiness for any emergency. With the outbreak of hostilities, SCCI immediately pledged its support to the civil and military administration. A delegation participated in a high-level meeting chaired by the Deputy Commissioner, reaffirming the Chamber's commitment to assist in crisis management.

Official advisories were issued to member units to synchronize factory sirens with the district emergency system for timely alerts. In addition, SCCI arranged the provision of 3,000 liters of petrol on an urgent basis and disseminated comprehensive safety guidelines to 24,000 members and the general public through digital platforms. Following the successful defense of the homeland, SCCI launched a wide-reaching solidarity campaign across social media, followed by district-wide billboards expressing unwavering support for the Armed Forces. On May 15, 2025, a delegation led by the President visited CMH to meet the wounded soldiers, presenting each with a cash token of PKR 10,000 and a gift hamper in recognition of their heroic service. Furthermore, the Executive Committee convened an emergent session to pass a resolution condemning unprovoked aggression and to establish a War Welfare Fund, beginning with an initial contribution of PKR 10 million dedicated to the Pakistan Armed Forces. This initiative has been amplified through an awareness campaign, urging members and the public to participate in honoring the sacrifices of our defenders. Through timely action, strategic coordination, and unwavering patriotism, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry has demonstrated its steadfast commitment to national defense and community welfare. These measures underscore SCCI's role not only as a custodian of trade and industry but also as an institution deeply aligned with the security and integrity of Pakistan.

Visit of

## MS. SABA ASGHAR ALI

Deputy Commissioner Sialkot



On May 14, 2025, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), warmly welcomed Ms. Saba Asghar Ali, Deputy Commissioner Sialkot, and congratulated her on assuming office. He lauded her effective leadership during the recent Indo-Pak escalation, particularly her proactive role in conducting Civil Defense drills.

During the meeting, the President briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the Chamber's landmark achievements, including the establishment of the Sialkot Dry Port Trust, Sialkot Tannery Zone, and Sialkot International Airport. He emphasized the city's emerging IT and e-commerce sectors, noting a surge in youth-led startup registrations. He proposed the development of a dedicated Software Park in Sialkot, modeled after the Arfa Karim Technology Incubator, to harness this growth and prevent brain drain.

The Deputy Commissioner acknowledged the importance of IT infrastructure and expressed willingness to collaborate with SCCI under the Chief Minister's Free Wi-Fi Program through PITB. However, she noted that the business community would need to co-finance infrastructure costs for such projects.

President Ikram ul Haq also highlighted infrastructure issues including outdated sewerage, inadequate waste disposal, and traffic congestion. He pointed out the need to relocate bus stands and create parking plazas to decongest the city center. He proposed utilizing land near Sialkot Railway Station for this purpose and emphasized that although PICIIP had introduced

improvements, significant gaps remain.

The Deputy Commissioner responded positively, stating that the Suthra Punjab initiative aims to address these exact challenges. She suggested that local institutions like Sialkot Dry Port and SIAL contribute through CSR for urban beautification and public service enhancement.

On the topic of industrial development, the President discussed the Sialkot Industrial Zone and stressed the urgency of notifying Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act for land marked in Sahowala. He pointed out delays caused by political inertia and requested the DC's support to expedite the matter.

Regarding the Sialkot Tannery Zone (STZ), the President shared that despite full payment to GEPCO for grid installation, power had yet to be supplied, delaying the relocation of tanneries. He requested the Deputy Commissioner's intervention with GEPCO to ensure timely progress.

Ch. Jahangir Rashid, Chairman of the Environment Committee, highlighted green initiatives like Air Quality Index monitoring and distribution of denim tote bags. He also requested the resumption of environmental monitoring sessions.

In conclusion, Ms. Saba Asghar Ali thanked the Chamber for its input and reaffirmed her full cooperation in addressing key developmental issues in collaboration with the business community.



## Visit of SCCI DELEGATION TO CMH SIALKOT to Meet Victims of Border Skirmishes



On May 15, 2025, a delegation from the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), led by its President, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, paid a visit to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) Sialkot to express solidarity with the civilians and members of the armed forces who had been injured in recent border skirmishes between Pakistan and India.

During the visit, the President and members of the delegation personally interacted with the injured individuals, offering words of encouragement and praising their bravery in the face of adversity. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq conveyed the Chamber's deepest respect and appreciation for their sacrifices and resilience. He acknowledged the courage demonstrated by both the civilians and military personnel who had stood firm in the defense of the nation.

As a gesture of goodwill and support, the delegation presented goodie buckets to the patients. This symbolic act was meant to convey the business community's heartfelt concern and unity with those who had borne the brunt of recent hostilities. Mr. Ikram emphasized that the people and business community of Sialkot stood in unwavering support of the armed forces and all citizens impacted by conflict.

He also took the opportunity to commend the medical staff at CMH Sialkot for their dedication and professional care, noting the hospital's vital role in delivering timely and compassionate treatment to the injured. He further stated that SCCI would continue to support efforts that contribute to national unity and

morale during times of national distress.

The visit concluded with a reaffirmation of solidarity by the Chamber with the victims and a renewed pledge to continue supporting those who serve and sacrifice for the nation. The delegation's presence at CMH was well received and appreciated as a meaningful demonstration of communal and institutional empathy.



Visit of

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL NUML BRIG. SHEHZAD MUNIR**

to SCCI Language Courses Inaugural Ceremony



On May 19, 2025, a notable ceremony took place at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) to inaugurate new foreign language courses in collaboration with the National University of Modern Languages (NUML). During the event, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of SCCI, was reported to have formally welcomed the Chief Guest, Brigadier Shehzad Munir, Director-General NUML, along with members of the SCCI Executive Committee and the enrolled students. In his opening address, Mr. Haq explained that the initiative stemmed from a widely recognized need among exporters in Sialkot to improve client communication by learning foreign languages beyond English. He shared his personal perspective as an exporter, noting that while English was the common medium in global trade, conversing in a client's native language could significantly enhance trust and business relationships. He informed that, in response to this demand, SCCI approached NUML to initiate evening language classes in Arabic, French, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, and German. These classes, he added, were being launched as a pilot project on a "no cost, no profit" basis to maximize accessibility for exporters, export managers, and SME members. Mr. Haq expressed satisfaction over the positive reception of the initiative and reiterated the Chamber's full support to ensure its success.

Brigadier Shehzad Munir was reported to have lauded SCCI's leadership for taking a progressive step in launching the language program, and conveyed his appreciation for NUML's partnership with the Sialkot business community.

Sharing his connection to Sialkot, Brigadier Munir expressed pride in serving his hometown and praised the resilience and patriotism displayed by its citizens and the Pakistan Army during recent regional tensions. He informed the audience that NUML currently offered 27 language courses and was ranked 15th among linguistic institutions in Asia. He stated that the university's strength lay in its ability to provide high-quality linguistic education in both online and interactive formats. Regarding the SCCI-NUML collaboration, he shared that it would feature synchronized virtual classes designed to provide engaging and consistent instruction by experienced language teachers. Brigadier Munir reiterated NUML's dedication to supporting the export-oriented business community of Sialkot by equipping them with essential linguistic skills, adding that language served not only as a communication tool but also as a bridge to cultural understanding and international trade enhancement.

The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks from Mr. Ikram ul Haq, who once again expressed gratitude to the Director-General NUML for his support and participation. He also presented a commemorative souvenir to Brigadier Munir, marking the event as a promising milestone in Sialkot's pursuit of greater global connectivity and export competitiveness.



## Visit of **MR. ALI KHAN** Regional Manager of PICIIP



On May 20, 2025, Mr. Ali Khan, Regional Manager of the Punjab Intermediate Cities Improvement Investment Program (PICIIP) – Sialkot, visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) and gave a comprehensive briefing to the President of SCCI, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, on the progress and strategic roadmap of PICIIP projects within the city. Mr. Khan reportedly outlined that the core mission of PICIIP was to improve urban infrastructure, enhance municipal services, and drive sustainable development across Punjab's intermediate cities. He provided detailed insights into the project's calendar, geographical scope, and the key components currently under execution in Sialkot. According to the briefing, sewerage works had been categorized into three major lots—Lot-1 (Pipe Works), Lot-2 (Conduits), and Lot-3 (Force Main Pipe and Disposal Station)—with combined revised costs exceeding PKR 8 billion and projected completion dates ranging from June 2024 to June 2025. It was further informed that water supply initiatives under Lot-4 were underway at a revised cost of PKR 1.68 billion. Additional major projects included the construction of a Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) at a cost of PKR 2.92 billion, the Shahabpura Flyover expected to be completed by July 2025 with an allocated budget of PKR 1.98 billion, the development of parking sheds in Allama Iqbal Town, and the upgradation of four public parks across the city.

In response, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq was reported to have expressed appreciation for the government's substantial investment and the infrastructure improvements underway. However, he also voiced serious concerns over longstanding civic issues, particularly in the city's southern zone and the Shahabpura industrial area. He reportedly highlighted the absence of a proper sewerage system in these critical zones, stating that untreated wastewater and inefficient drainage infrastructure had severely polluted underground water, resulting in alarming public health consequences such as increased cases of cancer and chronic kidney disease. The President urged the PICIIP

management to address these neglected areas with urgency, warning that continued neglect could jeopardize both public welfare and the industrial output of the region.

Mr. Ikram Ul Haq further pointed to the strategic potential of the Sialkot Industrial Zone as a long-term solution to these infrastructural challenges. He was said to have emphasized that the timely completion and operationalization of the Industrial Zone could offer a centralized and well-managed system to mitigate the city's sewerage crisis, while also fostering foreign direct investment and joint ventures. He asserted that such infrastructure would not only enhance production capacity and value addition but would also elevate Sialkot's profile on the international stage by expanding its export competitiveness. The meeting reportedly concluded with mutual understanding on the need for sustained dialogue and close coordination to ensure that the benefits of public infrastructure investments are efficiently delivered to the broader population and industrial stakeholders of Sialkot.



Visit of

**H.E. MR. NAWAF BIN SAID AL-MALKI**

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



On May 22, 2025, Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), extended a warm welcome to H.E. Mr. Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, and his delegation. The SVP remarked that the visit reaffirmed the fraternal and longstanding ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, built on a foundation of shared faith, history, and bilateral support.

During his remarks, Mr. Lodhi noted that under the leadership of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the facilitation of the Saudi Embassy, Saudi investments in Pakistan had

surpassed \$3 billion across sectors such as energy, mining, technology, and agribusiness. He recalled the signing of over 34 MoUs worth \$2.8 billion in October 2024 in Islamabad and expressed gratitude for the Kingdom's generous support, particularly during the Pakistan Single Country Exhibition held in February 2025.

Mr. Lodhi congratulated the Kingdom on being chosen as the host of the FIFA World Cup 2034, highlighting the opportunity for Pakistani and Saudi businesses to collaborate—especially given Sialkot's global prominence in sports goods manufacturing. He underscored the potential for joint ventures in sectors such as surgical instruments, leather goods, high-value textiles, and IT services, aligning with Saudi Vision 2030.

H.E. Mr. Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki thanked SCCI for the warm hospitality and praised the resilience of the Pakistani nation and its armed forces. He emphasized the strong religious, cultural, and diplomatic ties between the two countries and encouraged deeper collaboration in trade and investment. He acknowledged the growing reputation of Sialkot-manufactured products in the Kingdom and expressed optimism for greater economic cooperation.

The SVP SCCI encouraged Saudi investors to pursue joint ventures with Pakistan's SME sector, proposing a 70/30 production model split between Sialkot and Saudi Arabia. The meeting concluded with mutual commitments to strengthen trade and industrial partnerships.





## Visit of **H.E. MR. DAN STOENESCU** Ambassador of Romania to Pakistan



On May 22, 2025, Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), extended a warm welcome to H.E. Mr. Dan Stoenescu, Ambassador of Romania to Pakistan. In his opening remarks, the SVP highlighted the longstanding diplomatic relationship between Pakistan and Romania, established in 1964, and emphasized the potential to elevate the existing trade volume, which currently stands at approximately USD 291.705 million.

Mr. Lodhi elaborated on Sialkot's substantial contributions to Pakistan's exports, particularly in sports goods, surgical instruments, leather, and textiles. He pointed out that these sectors had earned international recognition and credibility and proposed expanding bilateral ties to include emerging sectors such as information technology, defense production, renewable energy, and industrial manufacturing. He suggested developing institutional linkages between chambers of commerce in both countries through formal MoUs, which would facilitate structured engagement. He also stressed the need for easing visa procedures to enable seamless business travel.

The Ambassador acknowledged the strong export credentials of Sialkot and praised the quality of goods produced in the city. He expressed Romania's interest in significantly boosting bilateral economic cooperation and announced Romania's goal to elevate trade between the two countries to USD 5 billion. Ambassador Stoenescu mentioned that Romania was already importing surgical instruments, footballs, and basmati

rice from Sialkot and recognized vast unexplored potential in various other sectors.

He proposed establishing a regional office of the Pakistan–Romania Business Council (PRBC) in Sialkot to better facilitate trade and investment flows. Highlighting Romania's status as a hub for advanced IT and industrial innovation, he invited Sialkot's business community to participate in trade missions to Romania for firsthand exploration of investment and joint venture opportunities. He identified artificial intelligence, musical instruments, citrus and dried fruits, agricultural machinery, and academic exchanges as key collaborative areas. He also advised that Pakistani businesses prepare early and complete visa documentation, including formal invitations from Romanian partners, to ensure smoother entry.

Ambassador Stoenescu encouraged direct B2B engagements and emphasized the value of the PRBC platform as a vehicle for sustained bilateral cooperation. He further advised stakeholders to utilize the Council's services for identifying Romanian buyers and investment partners.

The meeting concluded with Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi reaffirming SCCI's commitment to strengthening economic linkages with Romania and supporting all efforts that would translate diplomatic goodwill into tangible commercial outcomes.

Visit of

**MAJ. GEN. IMRAN KHAN BABAR**

General Officer Commanding, 15 Division Sialkot Cantt



On May 30, 2025, Maj. Gen. Imran Khan Babar, General Officer Commanding, 15 Division Sialkot Cantt, visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), where he was warmly received by President Mr. Ikram ul Haq and the Executive Committee members. The meeting commenced with a tribute from the President to the Pakistan Army's courageous performance during Operation "Bunyan Umarsos." He described the military's role in neutralizing enemy assets, including Rafale jets, missile depots, and installations, as a demonstration of outstanding professionalism and strategic acumen.

Mr. Ikram underscored Pakistan's identity as a peace-loving nation that unites in the face of adversity. He praised the 15 Division, under the leadership of Maj. Gen. Imran Khan Babar, for repelling a 150-kilometre border incursion and reaffirmed national gratitude for their service. The President highlighted SCCI's contributions to national defense, including the donation of ambulances, fuel supplies, and synchronization of emergency sirens, as well as initiating a public support campaign and establishing a War Welfare Fund of Rs. 10 million to assist martyrs and their families. He further shared that the Chamber had visited CMH Sialkot to support injured civilians and soldiers, offering financial aid and tokens of appreciation.

Maj. Gen. Imran Khan Babar thanked the Chamber for its steadfast support. He provided a historical overview of the 15 Division, which was established in 1951 and stationed in Sialkot in 1952. He noted the Division's current responsibility

for a 150-kilometre stretch of border from Head Marala to Zafarwal and stressed the strategic significance of Sialkot. He explained distinctions between the Working Boundary, Line of Control, and International Border and warned of India's continued hostility, including symbolic assertions over Sialkot.

He emphasized that Pakistan's defense is not only military but also moral and faith-based, contrasting it with India's aggression-driven strategy. The General expressed appreciation for the Chamber's support and called for national vigilance against both external threats and internal destabilization. He highlighted Pakistan's restrained and targeted counterattacks that avoided civilian casualties, reinforcing the nation's adherence to moral principles.

In the interactive session, Dr. Mariam Nauman from the Women Chamber commended the Army's collaboration with educational institutions and support for WE-Exhibit 2025. Mr. Ehtesham Gillani acknowledged the Army's morale-boosting effect on the civilian population, while Mr. Khawar Hussain Spall praised the bravery of soldiers and their families. Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President SCCI, expressed gratitude to the armed forces for renewing the public's resolve and patriotism.

The meeting concluded with a unanimous expression of support for the Pakistan Army, with all participants reaffirming their commitment to national defense and solidarity.



## Visit of SCCI DELEGATION to Qatar Chamber, Doha



On June 3, 2025, a high-level delegation from the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), led by President Mr. Ikram ul Haq, paid an official visit to the Qatar Chamber headquarters in Doha. The delegation held a comprehensive and constructive meeting with Mr. Ali Boushraibek Al Mansouri, General Manager of the Qatar Chamber, to discuss enhancing bilateral trade ties and exploring new avenues of cooperation between the private sectors of Pakistan and Qatar. The visit was part of the Chamber's continued efforts to strengthen economic diplomacy and promote global connectivity for the Sialkot business community.

The SCCI delegation included key representatives from Sialkot's leading industrial sectors: Mr. Muhammad Imtiaz Khan, Executive Director of Med Ask (healthcare), Dr. Ghulam Murtaza, CEO of DRM Pharma & Diagnostic, and Mr. Khawaja Masood Akhtar, Chairman of Forward Group – one of the world's foremost manufacturers of professional footballs.

During the meeting, both Chambers engaged in a focused dialogue centered on institutional collaboration, private sector facilitation, and opportunities for mutual investments. President Ikram ul Haq provided an overview of Sialkot's export-driven economy, particularly emphasizing the city's global prominence in sports goods manufacturing and its expanding footprint in healthcare and pharmaceuticals. He expressed strong interest in establishing structured partnerships with Qatari enterprises and urged the Qatar Chamber to encourage its members to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan, particularly in the sectors of sports manufacturing, healthcare infrastructure, and export services.

In response, Mr. Ali Boushraibek Al Mansouri welcomed the delegation warmly and acknowledged the historic and strategic nature of Qatar-Pakistan relations. He highlighted that trade volume between the two countries reached QAR 12.7 billion in 2024 and reiterated Qatar Chamber's commitment

to supporting greater bilateral engagement. Mr. Al Mansouri noted the presence of more than 2,000 Pakistani-Qatari joint ventures and 37 wholly Pakistani-owned companies operating successfully across various sectors in Qatar. He assured the delegation that Qatar Chamber remained open and receptive to expanding its partnerships with Pakistani businesses.

The meeting also featured targeted proposals from members of the SCCI delegation. Mr. Muhammad Imtiaz Khan introduced investment opportunities in Pakistan's healthcare sector, inviting Qatari stakeholders to consider joint ventures in hospitals, pharmacies, diagnostic labs, and digital health platforms. He emphasized the strong demand for high-quality medical services in Pakistan and the potential for cross-border collaboration to meet regional healthcare needs.

Mr. Khawaja Masood Akhtar, Chairman of Forward Group, highlighted the company's achievement as the official manufacturer of footballs used during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and its ongoing production commitment for the upcoming 2026 World Cup. He expressed his intent to leverage Forward Group's global reputation by building strategic alliances with Qatari firms, particularly in sports branding, logistics, and innovation. He extended an invitation to Qatari entities to visit Sialkot and witness firsthand the city's production excellence and export infrastructure.

The meeting concluded with a mutual expression of goodwill and a shared desire to deepen economic ties through sustained business-to-business engagement. The SCCI delegation acknowledged the hospitality and forward-looking vision of the Qatar Chamber and emphasized that both institutions could play a pivotal role in fostering a new chapter of economic cooperation between Pakistan and Qatar. The leadership of both Chambers agreed to continue coordination and facilitate follow-up actions to transform proposals into tangible projects and partnerships.

Launch of the

**ESTABLISHMENT OF MATERIAL TESTING LABORATORIES**

Project in Sialkot



On June 4, 2025, a landmark inaugural meeting was convened to formally launch the “Establishment of Material Testing Laboratories” project in Sialkot. This pioneering initiative, envisioned to strengthen Sialkot’s industrial and export infrastructure, is the outcome of an exemplary collaboration between the Urban Unit, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Industries, Commerce, Investment and Skills Development Department (ICI&SDD), and the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI).

The meeting brought together key stakeholders and development experts to mark the beginning of what is expected to be a transformative undertaking for the region’s manufacturing and export sectors. Representing the Chamber, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President SCCI, engaged with a delegation from UNIDO comprising Mr. Nima Bahramalian, Industrial Development Expert from the Quality Infrastructure & Smart Production Division (Department of Digitalization, Technology and Innovation, UNIDO Headquarters in Vienna); Mr. Badar ul Islam, National Program Coordinator, UNIDO Pakistan; and Mr. Qasar Wasique Ahmed, Enterprise Development Expert overseeing the Sialkot laboratory project.

During the deliberations, it was formally shared that the project’s PC-1 had already been approved by the relevant government departments, and the costing of the project had been duly vetted and endorsed by the Communication & Works Department, Government of the Punjab. With technical assistance and supervision from UNIDO, the project is now positioned to transition from planning into the execution phase, signaling an important milestone for Sialkot’s export-oriented industries.

President Ikram ul Haq emphasized that the establishment of a world-class material testing facility was a longstanding priority of the Chamber, particularly in light of the evolving demands of international markets and the need to comply with global

quality standards. He noted that the planned laboratory, to be established in Sambrial, would offer internationally accredited testing services tailored to Sialkot’s flagship industrial clusters, namely surgical instruments and electric fans. He further highlighted that the lab would significantly reduce exporters’ dependency on out-of-city or overseas testing facilities, thereby improving time efficiency, cost competitiveness, and compliance assurance for local manufacturers.

This initiative is a prime example of multi-institutional coordination and strategic planning. The project’s successful inception reflects the combined efforts of several important institutions, including the Planning & Development Board, Government of the Punjab; the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Government of Pakistan; the Urban Unit; UNIDO; and the ICI&SDD. Their aligned vision for quality infrastructure development demonstrates a collective commitment to fostering sustainable industrial growth and facilitating exports through robust compliance mechanisms.

The representatives of UNIDO reaffirmed the organization’s long-standing cooperation with Pakistan in the field of industrial upgrading and expressed their confidence in the project’s successful implementation. They underscored that the Sialkot laboratory would not only serve as a national model for material testing excellence but also position Pakistan’s exports more competitively in the global marketplace.

President SCCI expressed his gratitude to all participating institutions for their continued support and reaffirmed the Chamber’s readiness to ensure smooth facilitation of the project at the local level. The meeting concluded with a shared resolve to expedite the development timeline and to ensure that the laboratory becomes fully operational within the anticipated schedule, thereby bringing long-awaited quality assurance infrastructure to Sialkot’s doorstep.



Meeting with

**MR. MUHAMMAD OMAR MASUD** Secretary ICI&SD  
**MS. SAIRA OMER**, Managing Director PSIC  
 at Commerce, Investment & Skills Development Department, GoP



On June 4, 2025, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), held an important meeting with Mr. Muhammad Omar Masud, Secretary of the Industries, Commerce, Investment and Skills Development Department (ICI&SDD), Government of the Punjab. The meeting, held in Lahore, was convened to discuss two strategic initiatives vital to the industrial advancement of Sialkot—the establishment of the Materials Treating Laboratory (MTL) and the expedited execution of the Sialkot Industrial Zone Project.

Also present during the meeting were Ms. Saira Omer, Managing Director of the Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC), along with representatives from the Urban Unit and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The presence of key institutional stakeholders reflected the high-level importance placed on these projects and the collaborative approach being pursued for their timely realization.

The President of SCCI emphasized that the proposed Materials Treating Laboratory would serve as a crucial facility for improving quality compliance, ensuring that products manufactured in Sialkot meet international standards for health, safety, and environmental requirements. He informed the participants that the MTL project had been under discussion for several years and urged the Department to prioritize its approval and implementation. He stated that the establishment of this lab would particularly benefit exporters by reducing their dependence on third-party testing services located outside the city, which often resulted in delays and increased costs. The facility would also contribute to the development of a more robust quality assurance ecosystem in Sialkot, strengthening the global competitiveness of the region's industries.

Regarding the Sialkot Industrial Zone, President Ikram ul Haq provided an overview of the progress made in terms of planning and stakeholder engagement, particularly in coordination with the Punjab Industrial Estates Development and Management Company (PIEDMC) and NESPAK. He reiterated that Sialkot,

despite being an export powerhouse, lacked a dedicated and well-planned industrial estate to accommodate future industrial expansion and address longstanding issues related to land shortages, zoning, and infrastructure bottlenecks. He strongly advocated for the early initiation of Section 5 under the Land Acquisition Act to fast-track the development process.

Secretary Muhammad Omar Masud acknowledged the significance of both projects and assured the Chamber of the Department's full support in facilitating their timely approval and execution. He noted the Government's strategic focus on industrial modernization, SME facilitation, and investment-led growth, all of which aligned closely with the objectives of the MTL and Industrial Zone initiatives. He appreciated the Chamber's proactive role in championing industrial development and emphasized that such collaborations were key to creating sustainable and globally competitive industrial infrastructure.

Ms. Saira Omer, Managing Director PSIC, reaffirmed the Corporation's commitment to supporting SCCI's initiatives and stated that PSIC remained actively engaged with STAGL and other institutions in facilitating projects of shared importance. The representatives of the Urban Unit and UNIDO echoed their organizations' willingness to extend technical and institutional support in project design, compliance alignment, and implementation frameworks.

The meeting concluded with a shared understanding of the urgency surrounding both projects and a mutual commitment from all stakeholders to ensure their accelerated execution. President Ikram ul Haq expressed gratitude to Secretary Omar Masud and all present officials for their positive engagement and reiterated that the Sialkot Chamber would continue to work in close coordination with the Government to bring transformative development to the region's industrial landscape.

## Session on **ZERO PLASTIC, ZERO POLLUTION** World Environment Day



On June 5, 2025, in commemoration of World Environment Day, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), in collaboration with the Government of Punjab, organized a high-impact seminar titled "Zero Plastic, Zero Pollution". Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of SCCI, formally welcomed the participants and opened the seminar with a tribute to Ms. Maryam Nawaz, Chief Minister of Punjab, for launching the province-wide "Zero Plastic, Zero Pollution" campaign, which he stated was a timely and visionary initiative reflecting the government's strong commitment to sustainability and environmental protection. He stressed the urgent need to ban plastic bags and pledged full support from the business community towards the district administration's environmental efforts. Mr. Ikram also highlighted two major initiatives of the Chamber: the near-completion of the Sialkot Tanneries Zone Project and the development of the Sialkot Industrial Zone as a green industrial estate to address pollution caused by inadequate sewage and waste management systems.

Ms. Saba Asghar Ali, Deputy Commissioner Sialkot, addressed the audience by underscoring the importance of collective responsibility and public participation. She stated that meaningful change could only occur with community cooperation and highlighted the dangers of microplastics to public health. She encouraged citizens to shift to reusable, eco-friendly bags. A detailed technical presentation was then delivered by Dr. Khawar Hussain Qureshi, who emphasized the overlooked dangers of indoor air pollution and the hazardous effects of endocrine-disrupting chemicals found in plastics. He discussed the persistence of plastic in the environment, citing that plastic bags can take between 400 and 1000 years to degrade. He urged a transition toward bioplastics, renewable materials, and traditional alternatives such as glass and stainless steel utensils, while discouraging the use of thermoplastics in food packaging.

Mr. Jahangir Rashid Choudhry, Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Environment Protection and PHA, introduced a new initiative by SCCI to produce custom-designed, washable, reusable bags for distribution across educational institutions,

markets, and restaurants. He also advocated for installing plastic bottle crushers in public places, inspired by successful European models, to promote recycling. Additionally, he spoke about SCCI's collaboration with universities on waste recycling research and water filtration testing. During the open forum, several participants shared ideas and concerns.

Dr. Ayyaz Qaiser proposed the formation of a local academic consortium to facilitate applied research, while Ms. Romessa Ejaz Khokhar and others called for improved waste management in underserved areas. Mr. Mirza Abdul Shakoor emphasized sustained government-community collaboration, and Mr. Muhammad Saleem highlighted inefficiencies in municipal sanitation and price control. Ms. Rebecca Zainab urged for installing plastic recycling units at key locations, and Mr. Aftab recommended ecological beautification along the Nullah Bhed natural drain.

Mr. Muhammad Ejaz Ghauree pointed out environmental issues caused by market encroachments and poor sanitation near Islamia School Road. Mr. Farooq Mushtaq from WWF proposed initiating carbon credit pilot projects in accordance with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement to incentivize emissions reduction through financial mechanisms. Mr. Ejaz ul Haq suggested regulating plastic prices to discourage its usage, and Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President SCCI, proposed recognizing and celebrating industries that demonstrate leadership in environmental beautification to motivate broader engagement.

The event reaffirmed the shared commitment of SCCI and the district administration to position Sialkot as a model green city. Participants unanimously endorsed the rapid implementation of the Sialkot Industrial Zone and sewerage infrastructure, the need for policy advocacy to reduce plastic use, continued public awareness efforts, and enhanced coordination among academia, industry, and government. The seminar succeeded in fostering awareness, encouraging practical solutions, and laying the groundwork for collaborative environmental leadership in Sialkot.



## Joint Press Conference

**AGAINST FEDERAL BUDGET 2025–26**

## SCCI Leads Nationwide Business Alliance



In a landmark show of unity, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) hosted a joint press conference on June 13, 2025, bringing together leading voices from Pakistan's business and trade community in a firm rejection of the Federal Budget 2025–26. Spearheaded by SCCI President Mr. Ikram ul Haq, the gathering was attended by Presidents and Chairpersons from prominent Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations across the country. The participants unanimously denounced the new budget as "anti-export, anti-business, and anti-industry." Mr. Ikram ul Haq opened the proceedings by expressing strong condemnation over the government's disregard for months of consultation and stakeholder recommendations. He criticized the budget's failure to reinstate the Final Tax Regime (FTR) and the original Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), and highlighted the damaging impact of the newly imposed 5% withholding sales tax on unregistered suppliers, warning that it would severely affect exporters' liquidity. He appreciated the continued support from national leaders such as Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Haroon Akhtar Khan, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, and Jam Kamal Khan, and called on the Prime Minister for urgent corrective measures.

Among the key voices, Mr. Mian Abuzar Shad, President LCCI, labeled the budget as disastrous, while Mr. M. Jawed Bilwani, President KCCI, harshly criticized Section 37AA and reaffirmed full solidarity with SCCI. Mr. Rehan Naseem Bharara, President FCCI, cautioned that exporters may relocate operations due to high energy costs and unkept promises. Mr. Usman Shaukat, President RCCI, lamented broken government assurances and warned of the budget's potential to trigger negative GDP growth. Mr. Sheikh Azmat Saleem, President Sahiwal CCI, suggested observing a symbolic "No Export Week" to register protest. Additional strong objections were raised by Mr. Mian Bakhtawar Tanveer Sheikh (President Multan CCI), Mr. Rana Muhammad Siddique Khan (President Gujranwala CCI), Mr. Muhammad Munir Peshawari (President Gujrat CCI), and

Dr. Maryam Siddiqua (President Women CCI Sialkot), each emphasizing the harmful direction of the budget.

Trade association leaders echoed similar dissatisfaction. Mr. Babar Khan (Central Chairman, PHMA), Mr. Ather Bari (Chairman, TMA), Mr. Syed Ahtesham Mazhar (Chairman, PLA), Mr. Mahmood Nara (Chairman, Knitwear & Sweater Exporters), and Mr. Khawaja Masud Akhtar (Chairman, Sports Goods) all expressed alarm over regressive taxation and refund delays. Likewise, Mr. Annas Raheel (Chairman, Gloves Association), Mr. Zeeshan Tariq (Chairman, SIMEA), Mr. Sheikh Sohail Afzal (Readymade Garments Association), and Mr. Tasawar Butt (Pakistan Tanners Association) collectively urged for immediate policy reversal to safeguard exports. Mr. Saqib Fayyaz Magoon, Senior Vice President FPCCI, concluded the press conference by calling for federation-wide unity and announced a follow-up national business conference to be held on June 16, 2025.

The collective business leadership presented a Charter of Demands, which included: restoration of the Final Tax Regime at a fixed rate of 1.5%, reinstatement of the original Export Facilitation Scheme, exemption from 5% withholding tax on purchases from unregistered suppliers, revival of energy tariffs at 9 cents per unit, withdrawal of Section 37AA of the Sales Tax Act, abolition of the 18% sales tax on imported solar panels, the introduction of a 5–10 year roadmap for policy continuity, and mandatory stakeholder consultation before implementing any trade-related policies. The participants passed a unanimous resolution warning that, if these demands were not met, a nationwide "No Export Week" would begin on June 20, 2025, during which exporters would suspend their return submissions in protest. Concluding the session, Mr. Ikram ul Haq made an impassioned appeal to the government, asserting that the business community was not seeking charity, but rather its rightful recognition in sustaining Pakistan's economic backbone.

## Signing of **LOAN AGREEMENT BETWEEN PSIC & STAGL** for the Sialkot Tannery Zone



On June 19, 2025, a landmark event was held at the headquarters of the Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) in Lahore, where the Loan Agreement was officially signed between PSIC and the Sialkot Tannery Association Guarantee Limited (STAGL). This agreement marked a significant milestone in the ongoing development of the Sialkot Tannery Zone and underscored the continued commitment of both public and private sector stakeholders to modernize the leather industry in Sialkot.

The Loan Agreement was executed for the provision of essential financial support required for two key components of the Tannery Zone infrastructure: the completion of the Chrome Recovery Plant and the settlement of outstanding payments to the Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO) against a previously issued demand notice for the installation of an independent grid station at the Zone. These developments are vital for ensuring the environmental sustainability and uninterrupted power supply necessary for the smooth operation of leather processing units within the Zone.

It is with great pride that the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) reported that the Government of the Punjab, recognizing the strategic importance of the project, had approved a substantial financial package amounting to PKR 661.220 million. This funding is a result of extensive and persistent efforts undertaken by Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President SCCI, who has consistently advocated for the development of the Sialkot Tannery Zone at the highest levels of provincial leadership. His unwavering dedication and effective representation played a crucial role in securing the much-

needed financial commitment from the government.

Mr. Ikram ul Haq was also present at the Loan Agreement Signing Ceremony, where he witnessed the formalization of this critical initiative. During the ceremony, stakeholders reaffirmed their collective resolve to transform Sialkot's leather industry through the implementation of environmentally sound practices and infrastructure modernization. The establishment of the Chrome Recovery Plant is expected to significantly mitigate the environmental impact of industrial effluents, aligning with international compliance standards, while the dedicated GEPCO grid station will address longstanding power supply issues that have impeded production efficiency in the sector.

The successful signing of this agreement signifies more than just the provision of financial resources—it reflects a shared vision for sustainable industrial growth, improved environmental stewardship, and the long-term competitiveness of Sialkot's export-oriented leather sector. The Chamber reiterated its full support to STAGL in ensuring timely and transparent execution of the funded projects and expressed its gratitude to PSIC and the Government of the Punjab for their continued partnership and support.

The event concluded with renewed optimism and a strong sense of collaboration, as all parties committed to advancing the Tannery Zone's development to realize its full potential as a model of industrial innovation and environmental compliance in Pakistan.



## Report on the Visit of **HER EXCELLENCY MADAM RITA DHITAL** Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan



On July 9, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) had the honor of hosting Her Excellency Madam Rita Dhital, Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan. The meeting commenced with the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, followed by a warm welcome from Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President SCCI. In his address, Mr. Lodhi reflected on the enduring diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Nepal, established in 1960, and emphasized the potential for enhancing economic cooperation beyond the modest bilateral trade volume of USD 3.62 million in FY 2024. He proposed initiatives such as single-country exhibitions, reciprocal business delegations, and the use of digital trade platforms. Highlighting Sialkot's SME-led industrial success particularly in footballs, sports gear, and surgical instruments with exports exceeding USD 2.5 billion, he also commended the city's CSR achievements, including the establishment of Sialkot International Airport and AirSial.

Her Excellency Madam Rita Dhital expressed her gratitude for the warm reception, noting her assumption of office in November 2024 and the presentation of her credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari. She praised Sialkot's globally recognized manufacturing expertise and underscored the potential synergies between Pakistan's industrial strengths and Nepal's sectors, including silver jewelry, pashmina wool garments, tourism, IT, and hospitality. She emphasized the need for increased delegation exchanges, people-to-people contact, and restoration of direct air connectivity. Citing the successful joint venture of Al Habib Bank Pakistan with Himalayan Bank Nepal, she encouraged Pakistani businesses to explore Nepal's markets, particularly in leather, pharmaceuticals, and sports goods, and highlighted Nepal's visa-on-arrival facility as well as its investment potential.

Dr. Mariam Noman, President of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WCCI) Sialkot, introduced WCCI as one of Pakistan's fastest-growing chambers and extended an invitation to Nepali women entrepreneurs to participate in the upcoming "We-Exhibit" trade fair. Further discussions included proposals from Mrs. Gulzaib Waqas Awan (SVP WCCI) for regional women chamber collaborations, inquiries from Mr. Syed Ehtesham Gillani (PLGMEA) regarding Nepal's buffalo hide exports and FTAs, and suggestions from Mian Naeem Javed (AirSial) for future rail connectivity and improved trade routes. Mr. Umer Khalid (VP SCCI) advocated for a Free Trade Agreement and exchange of business databases, while Mr. Salman Majeed (Executive Committee Member) proposed collaboration on e-commerce platforms to expand Nepal's reach into the Middle Eastern market.

In her responses, H.E. Madam Rita Dhital mentioned the South Asian Women Development Forum (SAWDF) in Nepal as a potential partner for WCCI, confirmed Nepal's small volume of buffalo hide and sports shoe exports, and noted the country's transition from Least Developed Country (LDC) status. She acknowledged challenges in establishing rail connectivity through India but proposed AirSial flights via Bangladesh as a feasible alternative. Mian Naeem Javed supported the idea by suggesting cargo operations contingent on diplomatic progress and enhanced B2B trade.

The visit concluded with the signing of the visitors' book by H.E. Madam Rita Dhital, followed by the presentation of a souvenir and commemorative diaries by SCCI's Senior and Vice Presidents.

## Peaceful Exporters' Protest

# LED BY SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

to Demand Urgent Trade Policy Reforms



On July 11, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), in collaboration with all major trade bodies of Sialkot, organized a peaceful yet powerful protest outside its premises on Paris Road to voice the growing concerns of the export sector. The protest was held in response to a series of policy decisions and fiscal measures that, according to exporters, are threatening the viability of Pakistan's exports. Addressing the gathering, President SCCI, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, issued a stern warning that if the legitimate demands of the exporters continue to be ignored, the entire export industry of Sialkot would observe a "No Export Day" on July 19, 2025. This symbolic action would serve as a wake-up call to the federal authorities, highlighting the urgency of restoring business confidence and facilitating exports.

During the protest, the exporters put forward a set of well-defined and reasonable demands. These included the restoration of the Final Tax Regime (FTR) at 1.5% for exporters, reinstatement of the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS) in its original structure, exemption from the 5% withholding sales tax on purchases from unregistered suppliers, and the provision of regionally competitive energy tariffs (RCET) of 9 cents per unit for electricity. Additionally, they demanded the withdrawal of arbitrary arrest powers granted to the FBR under Sections 37A and 37B of the Sales Tax Act, abolishment of the 10% sales tax on solar panels to encourage renewable energy use, the introduction of long-term policy stability with a clear 5 to 10-year trade roadmap, and a commitment from the government that no policy changes be made without consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Prominent business leaders and association chairpersons expressed their views during the protest. Mr. Riaz ud Din Sheikh

remarked that inconsistent taxation policies have disrupted long-term export contracts and urged the government to bring predictability in fiscal matters. Dr. Nouman Idris Butt strongly criticized the increasing harassment of exporters and condemned the unjustified arrest powers granted to FBR officers under Sections 37A and 37B. He referred to these provisions as "draconian tax laws" that are fostering fear and distrust among genuine exporters, instead of facilitating them. Mr. Majid Raza Bhutta termed the protest a historic event, emphasizing that exporters are not adversaries but partners in national economic development. Mr. Fazal Jilani, Chairman Air Sial, highlighted the need for an integrated logistics and export support system, while Mr. Hassan Ali Bhatti, Chairman Airport, called for immediate improvements at Sialkot Airport to support exporters.

Similarly, Mr. Raza Iqbal, Chairman Dryport, highlighted logistical delays and requested digitization of customs clearance processes. Dr. Mariam Siddiqua, President of the Women Chamber, pointed out the disproportionate impact of anti-export policies on women entrepreneurs and called for more inclusive and gender-sensitive policymaking. Mr. Muhammad Jamal Bhutta, Chairman of the Cutlery Association, demanded restoration of EFS, noting that SMEs are particularly vulnerable. The Chairman of the Hunting Knives and Daggers Association from Wazirabad warned that heritage industries are nearing collapse under current tax pressures.

Khawaja Masud Akhtar, Chairman Sports Goods Association, shared that Pakistan's iconic sports goods industry is losing ground globally and needs urgent tax and energy relief. Mr. Zeeshan Tariq, Chairman SIMAP, stressed that surgical





manufacturers face the risk of relocation due to a hostile tax environment. Syed Ahtesham Gillani, Central Chairman of the Leather Association, called for immediate dialogue on policy reversals. Mr. Annas Raheel, Chairman Pakistan Gloves Association, demanded repeal of Sections 37A and 37B, terming them coercive. Mr. Sarfraz Bhatti and Mr. Ahmed Zulfikar Hayat, representing the Tannery Zone, raised issues of poor infrastructure and the urgent need for environmental policy clarity. Mr. Tassawar Butt of the Pakistan Tanners Association echoed the demand for policy consistency, warning that global buyers are shifting away from Pakistan.

Mr. Nadeem Khalid Lone, Vice Chairman ACAAP, urged customs reforms and transparency in valuation procedures. Mr. Sajid Ali of the Pakistan International Freight Forwarders Association stressed the importance of zero-rating export-related services. Mr. Razzaq Chaudhary from the Pakistan Customs Clearing Agent Association raised concerns about overregulation and supported the withdrawal of FBR's arrest powers. Ghulam Mujtaba Mehar, President Anjuman-e-Tajiran, emphasized the need for unified national trade policies and pre-legislation consultation. Mr. Abdul Hameed, Chairman (North Zone) of the Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers & Exporters Association, shared the challenges of increasing raw material costs and refund delays. Dr. Muhammad Ayyazud Din, Senior Vice Chairman (North Zone) of the Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association, expressed concern over the discontinuation of FTR and unjust taxation policies that are severely impacting the competitiveness of the garment sector. He emphasized the urgency of restoring facilitative regimes and engaging exporters before any further policy decisions.

Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry, delivered a forceful and heartfelt speech that echoed the collective frustration of Pakistan's export community. He began by expressing gratitude to all participating associations and industry leaders for standing shoulder to shoulder in defense of Pakistan's export economy. He remarked that this protest was not a political act, nor an expression of rebellion, but rather a cry for survival — a unified appeal from those who have for decades carried the weight of Pakistan's economy on their shoulders.

Mr. Ikram stated, "We are not here today to disrupt. We are here because we are being disrupted. Our industries, our contracts, our livelihoods — all are being strangled by irrational policies,

unpredictable tax regimes, and excessive enforcement powers that treat exporters like criminals rather than contributors to the national exchequer." He pointed out that exporters are not asking for subsidies or favors — they are demanding what is just, fair, and essential to sustain export-led growth. He questioned how any country could expect its export sector to flourish when the cost of doing business continues to rise and trust between the government and the business community is steadily eroded.

He condemned the recently imposed measures including the reversal of the Final Tax Regime (FTR), suspension of the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), the imposition of sales tax on solar panels, and the unchecked enforcement powers granted to tax authorities. "Instead of easing the path for those who bring in foreign exchange, we are being punished with every new policy," he said. "Policies must not be dictated from offices in Islamabad alone. They must be shaped with those who are on the ground — in the factories, on the production floors, and in international markets — battling inflation, compliance burdens, and unstable supply chains."

Mr. Ikram emphasized that the Sialkot Chamber, along with all trade bodies present, is united in its message: the business community demands immediate and meaningful engagement from the federal government. He reiterated the eight key demands, urging the government to not only reverse the damaging policies but also adopt a long-term, consultative approach to trade governance. "The business community is the backbone of this economy — treat us like partners, not prey," he declared.

Raising a solemn warning, he announced that if no action is taken, the exporters of Sialkot will observe a "No Export Day" on July 19, 2025 — a protest that will reverberate not just within the borders of Pakistan, but across global markets where Sialkot's name is synonymous with quality and trust. "This will not be a strike. It will be a statement. A day when Pakistan's export engine comes to a halt — not out of defiance, but out of despair."

In closing, Mr. Ikram Ul Haq called on the Prime Minister, the finance minister, and all relevant authorities to open the doors to dialogue before irreparable damage is done. "We are not at war with the government — we are in a struggle for survival. And in this struggle, we will stand firm, united, and peaceful — but we will not be silent. The voice of Sialkot is the voice of Pakistan's exporters — and it must be heard."



Visit of

**MAJOR GENERAL FARRUKH SHAHZAD RAO**

Director General NLC, &amp; DP World Delegation



On August 07, 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) hosted a high-level delegation comprising Major General Farrukh Shahzad Rao, Director General NLC, Mr. Fakhar e Alam, Vice Chairman DP World, and Mr. Abdullah Yaqoob Al Sayed Ahmad Al Hashmi, Head of Traders Market, along with other distinguished officials.

The agenda of the meeting was the discussion of “Pakistan Mart”, a pioneering initiative in Dubai, aimed at providing Pakistani exporters with direct access to global markets through modern warehousing, dedicated retail outlets, exhibition spaces, and digital platforms.

The session commenced with a welcome address by Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi, Senior Vice President SCCI, who highlighted the significance of the initiative for the export community of Sialkot. He acknowledged the contributions of NLC in developing Pakistan's logistics infrastructure and DP World's global expertise in port and trade management.

Major General Farrukh Shahzad Rao (DG NLC) briefed participants on Pakistan Mart's objectives, emphasizing its role as a joint venture between NLC and DP World. He informed that the project, strategically located in Dubai's trade corridor, would cover 103,000 sq. meters with 63,000 sq. meters of leasable space, integrating warehousing, retail, logistics, and B2B platforms. He underscored that the initiative would strengthen the “Made in Pakistan” brand and enhance the country's global trade visibility.

Mr. Abdullah Yaqoob Al Sayed Ahmad Al Hashmi (Head of Traders Market) highlighted Dubai's role as a global trade hub handling over 15 million containers annually and re-exporting to more than 360 cities. He explained the cost advantages arising from cargo imbalance in Dubai and shared details of the UAE's

trade facilitation through CEPAs and GAFTA agreements. He stressed that Pakistan Mart would provide a special customs regime, tax incentives, and simplified monthly consolidated billing, making it a cost-effective platform for exporters.

Mr. Fakhar e Alam (Vice Chairman, DP World) acknowledged the vision of DG NLC in initiating DP World's collaboration with Pakistan. He introduced DP World as a USD 80 billion Dubai government entity operating in 80 countries and managing 96 ports worldwide. He highlighted that the Ruler of Dubai had generously gifted land for Pakistan Mart, which DP World would develop free of cost for Pakistani businesses. He assured exporters of seamless supply chain support, tax-free re-exports, and cost-effective logistics solutions to enhance their competitiveness in global markets.

An interactive Q&A session was held, during which members raised concerns regarding company and product registrations in Dubai, timelines for the completion of Pakistan Mart, availability of e-commerce facilities, competitive freight services for SMEs, and high CFS charges at Pakistani ports. These queries were addressed comprehensively by the visiting delegation, with assurances of facilitation, quick regulatory processes, and government-level efforts to revise export-related charges.

In the end of the session Mr. Omer Khalid, Vice President SCCI presented the closing remarks and extended heartfelt gratitude to the delegation for their valuable insights and reaffirmed the Chamber's full cooperation in promoting the Pakistan Mart initiative. He emphasized that the project aligns with the aspirations of Sialkot's export-oriented community and would play a pivotal role in strengthening the global identity of “Made in Sialkot.”



## 78<sup>TH</sup> INDEPENDENCE DAY OF PAKISTAN'S



On 14<sup>th</sup> August 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry marked Pakistan's 78<sup>th</sup> Independence Day with a dignified and spirited cake-cutting ceremony, reflecting both national pride and institutional solidarity. The event was graced by President SCCI Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, Senior Vice President Mr. Waseem Shehbaz Lodhi, Vice President Mr. Omer Khalid, Executive Committee members, and the dedicated employees of SCCI, all gathered to honor the historic day that gave birth to our beloved motherland. The ceremony began with expressions of gratitude to Allah Almighty, followed by a collective reaffirmation of the values and aspirations laid down by the founding fathers.

In his address, President Ikram Ul Haq reiterated the Chamber's steadfast resolve to uphold the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal—a vision rooted in unity, faith, and discipline. He highlighted the pivotal role of the Pakistan Army in safeguarding that vision since the country's inception, paying tribute to their tireless efforts in defending Pakistan from both internal and external challenges. He particularly lauded their unmatched courage in Marqa-e-Haq and their unwavering commitment in the ongoing war against Fitna-e-Khwarij in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Acknowledging their sacrifices as the bedrock of national security, the President called upon the business community and citizens alike to stand united behind the armed forces, ensuring that Pakistan continues to progress as a strong, sovereign, and prosperous nation. The ceremony concluded with prayers for the stability, integrity, and enduring success of Pakistan.



Visit of

**CH. TARIQ SUBHANI**

Chairman, Punjab Land Records Authority (PLRA)



On 22nd August 2025, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) had the honor of hosting Chaudhry Tariq Subhani, Chairman Punjab Land Records Authority (PLRA), in a high-level session dedicated to addressing land record challenges faced by the business community. Accompanied by MPA Faisal Ikram, Additional DG (Operations) PLRA Mr. Muhammad Farooq Akmal, ADCR Sialkot Mr. Abbas Zulfarnain, and Assistant Director PLRA Ch. Shafique, the Chairman was warmly received by Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, along with leading members of the Chamber.

The session focused on longstanding concerns such as complications in joint land holdings (Mushtarka Khata), irregularities caused by illegal housing societies, and the pressing need for efficient, transparent, and digitalized services. President Ikram Ul Haq reiterated SCCI's call for a Punjab Arazi Moawin Counter within the Chamber to provide direct facilitation for members and the wider public. In response, Chairman PLRA announced the establishment of the counter at SCCI and briefed members on the forthcoming Green Certificate initiative, a secure digital property verification system that authenticates ownership, possession, and land demarcation. He also highlighted the Land Record Services for Overseas Pakistanis, recently launched in London, which provide expatriates with one-window access to verified property documents through advanced digital platforms.

A detailed presentation by PLRA officials demonstrated how the Green Certificate will streamline property verification through biometric checks, NADRA integration, and GIS-based mapping. The certificate will enhance market value, enable bank financing and insurance, and minimize litigation risks. Members engaged actively in discussion, raising concerns

regarding valuation disparities (DC rates), record errors, and outdated registries. PLRA assured that record corrections would be made free of cost, land dimensions and passages would be updated, and joint ownership ambiguities would be systematically addressed.

In closing, President Ikram Ul Haq presented the Sialkot Master Plan 2016 and stressed the urgency of implementing the Sialkot Industrial Zone (SIZ) to address environmental challenges, outdated sewerage, and industrial waste management deficiencies that hinder investment and pose public health risks. He emphasized that the activation of the SIZ is crucial for both economic competitiveness and social well-being.

The session concluded with a shield presentation ceremony in recognition of Chairman PLRA and his team's commitment to reform. This milestone reflects SCCI's continued role in bridging the gap between government institutions and the business community, ensuring that policy reforms translate into tangible facilitation for industry and society alike.





## JOINT FLOOD RELIEF FUNDRAISING

By Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry and  
Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot



The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), in collaboration with the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot, organized a Fundraising Event on August 23, 2025, to support the flood-affected people of Pakistan. The session was chaired by Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, and attended by leading industrialists, philanthropists, and representatives of welfare organizations. The event was convened in response to the mid-August flash floods and cloudbursts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which severely affected districts including Buner, Matta, and Mingora in Swat, resulting in over 300 deaths, thousands of displaced families, and the destruction of homes, roads, bridges, and power infrastructure.

Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President SCCI, highlighted the urgent need for coordinated support and informed the participants that the Chamber was aligning its efforts with frontline organizations such as Al-Khidmat Foundation and Helping Hands Foundation to ensure a timely and effective response. Mr. Syed Ahsan Ullah Waqas, Vice President Al-Khidmat Foundation, briefed the gathering on the organization's nationwide disaster management infrastructure and its role in providing emergency medical treatment, cooked meals, clean drinking water, tents, and other essential relief supplies in the affected areas. He further emphasized that rehabilitation would require phased efforts, including housing repair and livelihood restoration. Mr. Waqas also shared details of Al-Khidmat Foundation's international relief activities, noting that the organization had sent three cargo aircraft carrying 2,000 tons of relief goods, food, and medical equipment to Gaza, and had established educational facilities for displaced students in Turkey and Cairo.

Mr. Majid Raza Bhutta, former president of SCCI, appreciated the efforts of the Al-Khidmat Foundation and recalled the

important role played by SCCI members during previous national calamities. Representatives of Helping Hands Organization Sialkot, including Mr. Sheikh Usman Altan and Ms. Asma Khawar, provided an overview of their welfare operations. They informed that the organization, comprising volunteers from Beaconhouse School Sialkot, City School Sialkot, and CSS Sialkot, had carried out projects such as establishing a library in Model Care Orphanage Sialkot, distributing rickshaws to unemployed youth, installing water pumps in Thar, and arranging internships for school students. They also highlighted the organization's ongoing relief efforts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, focusing on family ration packs, clean water, and hygiene kits in collaboration with private sector partners.

Dr. Maryam Noman, President of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sialkot, voiced her support for the coordinated relief efforts of both Al-Khidmat Foundation and Helping Hands Organization, and appealed to the business community for generous contributions. The fundraising campaign reflected the continued spirit of philanthropy among Sialkot's business community, generating a total of PKR 28,050,000 through immediate donations and pledges. Of this amount, PKR 6,050,000 was contributed on the spot, with significant support from Silver Star, First American, Friends Surgico (Pvt) Ltd, and Vivify International, alongside numerous individual contributions. In addition, pledges worth PKR 22,000,000 were made, with major commitments from AirSial, Anwar Khwaja Industries, Forward Sports, Kent Housing, and Fircos Shoes. The leadership of SCCI also set an example, with the President pledging PKR 500,000, the Vice President pledging PKR 200,000, and the Executive Committee collectively pledging PKR 500,000.

Visit of

**MR. MUHAMMAD NAEEM GHASUS**

Secretary Labour &amp; Human Resource Department, Punjab



On August 23, 2025, Mr. Muhammad Naeem Ghaus, Secretary of the Labour & Human Resource Department, Government of Punjab, was welcomed by Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). The meeting brought together representatives from the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce, the Punjab Labor Department, and the Workers' Welfare Fund to discuss labor welfare, recent legislative changes, and improvements to service delivery. The visiting officials commended the Sialkot business community for their commendable approach to worker welfare, noting that Sialkot treats its workers like family and provides them with essential facilities like transportation, clean drinking water, social security, and bonuses.

A significant portion of the discussion centered on the new Punjab Labor Code. The Labor Department official explained that the code consolidates 26 existing labor laws to simplify regulations and includes new worker categories, such as platform workers. They emphasized that the government is open to consultation. However, the Sialkot Chamber representative expressed frustration, arguing that previous drafts had ignored the business community's input and questioned the imposition of a foreign-drafted code. He requested a more collaborative process and a better understanding of business operations from government officials.

The Sialkot Chamber proposed a one-window operation, suggesting the integration of the Social Security, Workers' Welfare, and Labor Departments into a single "Workers'

Welfare Complex." The goal is to create a seamless system that would prevent workers from having to visit multiple offices, reducing their harassment and improving the efficiency of service delivery. The Labor Department acknowledged this as a valid proposal and committed to exploring its practical implementation.

The Secretary of the Workers' Welfare Fund gave a presentation detailing the fund's core functions, which include building labor colonies, providing free education for workers' children, and distributing marriage and death grants. The Sialkot Chamber's representative challenged the official's use of the term "free of cost," clarifying that these are "pre-paid facilities" funded by mandatory employer contributions. He also highlighted a major issue with a backlog of pending claims for scholarships and marriage grants, with some cases remaining unsettled for years. The meeting also touched upon the new Maryam Nawaz Ration Card initiative, a digital card that provides secured workers with 3,000 PKR monthly for groceries, with the government contributing 50% of the total budget.

Both sides agreed to continue consultations on the Punjab Labor Code to work toward a consensual draft. The Labor Department pledged to clear the backlog of pending welfare grants and committed to a "zero pendency" target by November or December. The Sialkot Chamber's proposal for a one-window operation was well-received, with both parties agreeing to explore its feasibility to improve services for workers.



## The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) **FLOOD RELIEF EFFORTS 2025**



In mid-August 2025, flash floods and landslides hit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with devastating force. Districts such as Buner, Swat, and Bajaur bore the brunt of torrential rains and cloudbursts, which claimed hundreds of lives, displaced thousands, and destroyed homes and infrastructure.

At this critical moment, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), under the leadership of President Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, mobilized its members and the wider business community and on August 23, 2025, SCCI held a Flood Relief Fundraising Event, where leading industrialists and philanthropists pledged their support. The campaign generated PKR 28.16 million.

In collaboration with Sialkot Chamber of Commerce aid organizations including Al-Khidmat Foundation and Helping Hands stepped in to provide cooked meals, tents, clean water, and emergency medical care. Their timely efforts offered much-needed relief to families facing displacement and uncertainty in the northern districts.

Barely a week later, the disaster extended southward into Punjab. Sialkot and its adjoining tehsils of Sambrial, Chaprar, and Zafarwal were submerged after record rainfall coupled with river overflows from the Chenab, Ravi, and Sutlej. Streets, markets, and villages were inundated, electricity and communications broke down, and health risks began to rise sharply as waterborne diseases spread. The scale of damage placed urgent pressure on local institutions to respond quickly and effectively.

Moving from fundraising to field operations, SCCI partnered with Al-Khidmat Foundation and the Pakistan Army's 15 Division to arrange large-scale ration distribution. Food, water, and other essentials were delivered directly to families in flood-hit villages, ensuring that immediate needs were met at a time when local supply chains were cut off. President Ikram Ul Haq personally oversaw these initiatives, providing direction and support to relief teams on the ground.

Recognizing the mounting health challenges, SCCI also focused on medical support. With the assistance of the Pakistan Army's 15 Division, 08 Division, and 101 Brigade, Medical Relief Camps were set up in the worst-affected areas of Chaprar, Zafarwal, and Sambrial. These camps were staffed with doctors, paramedics, and volunteers, and treated victims for injuries, infections, and waterborne diseases. SCCI Med Pharmacy further reinforced these camps by supplying medicines and additional doctors, making it possible to sustain operations during critical days.

Through its coordinated actions fundraising, ration distribution, and medical relief, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, guided by President Ikram Ul Haq, stood firm with affected families both in KPK and Punjab. The Chamber's leadership not only mobilized the business community but also ensured that aid was delivered swiftly and effectively, reaffirming Sialkot's tradition of service and solidarity in times of national crisis.



Report on

**CHEQUE DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY**

of Workers' Welfare Grants



A Cheque Distribution Ceremony of Workers' Welfare Grants was organized by the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the District Labour Office, Sialkot, on September 2, 2025, at Sheikh Muhammad Shafi Hall. The event was presided over by Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President SCCI, and attended by legislators, industrialists and a large number of workers. A total of 359 cheques, including **65 Death Grants** and **294 Marriage Grants**, were distributed among eligible workers' families.

The President, Mr. Ikram ul Haq, highlighted the indispensable role of workers in the success of Sialkot's export-oriented industries and reaffirmed the Chamber's commitment to their welfare. He emphasized the need for a balanced approach safeguarding the interests of both workers and employers.

Mr. Tariq Subhani, MPA, appreciated the Chamber's role as a bridge between workers, employers, and Government, and assured that all pending welfare cases would be cleared promptly. Mr. Muhammad Mansha Ullah Butt, MPA, paid tribute to the workers as the true builders of Sialkot's economic success and informed that proposals for Labour Colonies and additional welfare initiatives were under active consideration by the Punjab Government. Mr. Faisal Ikram, MPA, praised the unique relationship of mutual respect between employers and workers in Sialkot and emphasized the need for balanced policies addressing the needs of both labour and industry.

Mr. Ammar Faisal Al-Assad, Chairman of the Departmental Committee on Labour Laws, stressed the importance of sustaining welfare initiatives, particularly housing, healthcare, and education, and acknowledged the role of the Chamber and Government in clearing long-pending cases.

The ceremony concluded with the distribution of cheques by special guests, who personally met the families of beneficiaries. The event reflected the spirit of solidarity between employers, workers, and the Government, and reaffirmed Sialkot's tradition of treating workers as partners in progress.





## SEMINARS AND CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES 2024-25

As part of our ongoing commitment to the professional development and capacity building of our members, SCCI has organized a series of informative seminars and sessions throughout the year. These initiatives aim to provide valuable insights, enhance knowledge, and address current issues that impact our members and the broader community. By facilitating these educational opportunities, we strive to empower our members with the latest information and tools needed to excel in their respective fields.

This year, we successfully arranged the following seminars:

1. Report of Awareness Session on **Islamic Banking and Finance Concepts** held on October 17, 2024.
2. Report of Awareness Session on **Electronic Certificate of Origin** held on October 19, 2024.
3. Report of Seminar on How to Develop **Sialkot's IT Industry for Global Exports** held on December 03, 2024.
4. Report of Seminar on **Islamic Lecture given by Molana Abdul Habib Attari** held on December 14, 2024.
5. Report of Awareness Session on **Maryam Ki Dastak, Platform** held on December 21, 2024.
6. Report of Seminar on **Importance of Leather Working Group Certification** held on December 23, 2024.
7. Report of Seminar **Regarding Trade with Brazil** held on December 26, 2024.
8. Report of seminar on **Innovation-Led Productivity Program/Initiatives by NPO and Punjab Job Center by PITB** held on January 21, 2025.
9. Report of Seminar on **Leads Generation & Networking** held on February 11, 2025.
10. Report of an **Awareness Session on SMOG Strategy by PBIT** held on February 26, 2025.
11. Report of Seminar on **Import & Export Transactions by SBP** held on March 12, 2025.
12. Report of seminar by **Mediators Marketing on ISPO** held on April 22, 2025.
13. Report of Launching Ceremony of Notify Body from Italy **ENTE CERTIFICAZIONE MACCHINE SRL (ECM)** held on April 24, 2025
14. Report of seminar on **"Zero Plastic, Zero Pollution"** held on June 05, 2025.
15. Report of seminar on **AI & Related Technologies and Business Process Transformation** held on June 16, 2025.
16. Report of seminar on **E-Commerce held** on June 26, 2025
17. Seminar on **Career Counselling in the Digital Era**, held on July 10, 2025.
18. Seminar on **SBTi and CBAM, in collaboration with SGS-Pakistan**, held on July 18, 2025.
19. Seminar on **Build a Business Funnel-Turn Leads into Loyal Customers** held on July 22, 2025
20. Report of seminar on **SEO Tools & Keywords Research to Ranking** held on July 26, 2025.
21. Cardiac **Camp at SCCI** on 20,08,2025
22. Report of Awareness Seminar on **Digital Invoicing System of FBR** held on August 25, 2025
23. Free of **Cost Alibaba Training Fair at SCCI** on September 2, 2025
24. **5 Days Basic Social Media Marketing Training Course** September 8th-13 2025.

These events reflect our dedication to fostering a well-informed and capable membership base, contributing to both individual and collective growth.

## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Delegation of SCCI Visits Business Facilitation Center (BFC) in Sialkot



Ms. Fouzia Aslam, Chief Manager State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Sialkot.



Meeting with the representative of the International Trade Center (ITC).



6th Performance Review Meeting of the BFC Sialkot



Mr. Khalid Rasool, Director General of TDAP, Sialkot.



Ms. Syeda Noreen Zahra, Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue, Sialkot.



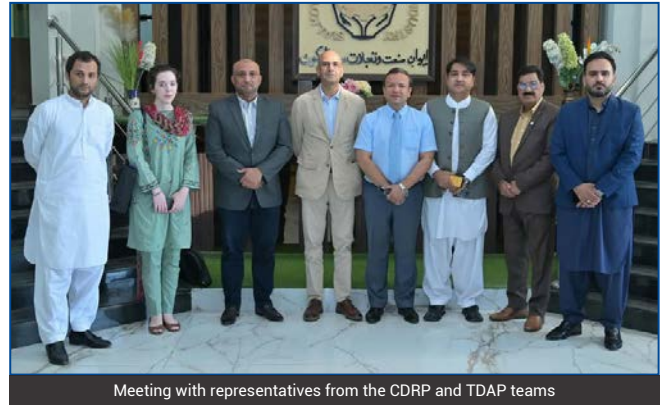
Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS)



Ch. Faisal Akram, MPA (PP-46), Sialkot



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25





## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of the SCCI, had a meeting with a delegation from UMT.



Delegation from the Air Cargo Agents Association of Pakistan (ACAAP).



Sialkot Medical City Ltd. (SMCL) meeting with Qatar delegation



Mr. M. Siddique Sheikh, President of the US-Pakistan International Chamber (USPICC)



Meeting with a representative from UNIDO



Book Inauguration Ceremony held in SCCI



Cricket Festival Organized by the Sports Activities Committee of SCCI



Visit of the Government Technical College in Sialkot.



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Event Organized by Travel to Light Educational Institute



Delegation from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).



Annual Dinner event organized by SKANS School of Accountancy.



Meeting with the team from The Urban Unit.



Project Committee Meeting on ISLAMIC COMMERCIAL BANK was held at SCCI



Event celebrated outstanding achievements and contributions by women entrepreneurs



Meeting with the Regional Manager of HBL & his team.



Convocation Ceremony of the Government Graduate College of Commerce, Sialkot



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Visited the Embassy of the People's Republic of China



Meeting with Mr. Nouman Yousuf, Chairman of the Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA)



Commissioner, Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA), Gujranwala to discuss notices issued PRA



PRGMEA and held a meeting with the Deputy Ambassador of the Netherlands



Attended the Graduation Ceremony of the Beaconhouse School System



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Attended the Annual Corporate Luncheon General Meeting of SMCL



Maulana Abdul Habib Attari, a renowned Islamic scholar, visited SCCI



CEO of the National Productivity Organization, Ministry of Industries and Production.



A Departmental Committee Meeting on Education was held at SCCI



The visit aimed to foster closer collaboration between the SCCI and MIDC



Productive luncheon meeting with the DSPs of Sialkot Traffic Police



Delegation from the Sarwar Shahida Research Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences Trust



Ms. Gull Zaiba and her team member to discuss the Incubation Center



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Ms. Sadia Masood, Project Director of TUSDEC visited the SCCI



Hosted a delegation from Government College Women University Sialkot (GCWUS)



Honorable Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for Industries & Production



Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of SCCI met with a delegation from Cleft Hospital Pakistan.



Met with Mr. Zeshan Tariq, Chairman, and other representatives of the SIMAP



Provincial Minister for Construction and Communications Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth



Mr. Ikram ul Haq, President of SCCI held a meeting with the team of Rescue 1122



Inauguration ceremony of the Damas Jewelry Exhibition



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Meeting with the Ambassador of Pakistan to KSA.



Annual Drama Festival organized by LGS



SCCI organized a special event to commemorate the 100th birthday of the late Mr. Hamid Ali Khan



Meeting with representatives of Trade Link



Meeting with the team from the Asian Development Bank



Meeting with the Ambassador of Pakistan to Switzerland



President Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, visited the Akhuwat Foundation



Visited Sialkot Dry Port for the activation ceremony of NLC as a TIR



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Visit of AlHuda International School for its Annual Ceremony



Met with a delegation from the Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce & Industry



Visit of Radio Pakistan FM101 Sialkot to celebrate World Radio Day.



Charity dinner organized by Al-Khidmat Foundation



Visited of Kidney Centre Sialkot.



Inauguration ceremony of the newly constructed building of Isaar Foundation.



Attended the inauguration ceremony at Munjal General Hospital



Meeting with Future World School.



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Meeting with the PADC Delegation at SCCI



Meeting with the SE Wapda Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry



Attended the Sports Day of Classic School System as a special guest



Visited the "We Exhibit" event organized by WCCIS



Meeting with ANF Punjab Regional Directorate Commander Brigadier Sikandar Hayat Choudhary



Meeting with Mr. Haroon Akhtar Khan, SAPM on Industries



Attended the Annual Parents' Day at Future World School



Government College Women University Sialkot



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Representatives from the Punjab Revenue Authority



Delegation of Europe Pakistan Economic Corridor (EPEC)



Attended the Green Drive Spring Plantation Campaign



CEO Divisible AI Italy Mr. Michele Grazioli



Rikshaw Distribution Ceremony organized by HasbunAllah Foundation



Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Liaison office, Gujrat.



Seminar on International Forests Day at TEVTA



Balloting ceremony for plot allotment in the Sialkot Tannery Zone.



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



A high level meeting chaired by H.E. Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.



VP of SCCI, celebrated with orphanage children, sharing moments of happiness & warmth.



Meeting with the Consultant of the International Trade Centre at SCCI



Col (R) Mohsin Adeel, Former Deputy Director Army Museum Lahore



Annual Dinner of the Sialkot Tax Bar Association



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



President of SCCI visited the "Made in Gujranwala Expo"



Inauguration ceremony of the State Bank of Pakistan



Visited the Book Fair organized at Government College Women University Sialkot



President SCCI, was presented with a sacred piece of the Kiswa of the Holy Kaaba



Mr. Syed Tajamal Naqvi, Excise and Taxation Officer (ETO) at SCCI.



Meeting with a delegation from the Tax Bar Association at SCCI



Mr. Fahad Shahbaz, Focal Person to the Prime Minister on the Youth Programme



All Pakistan Chamber President's Conference 2025



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Annual General Meeting of Siakot Medical City Limited (SMCL)



Held a meeting with Mr. Taimoor Malik, Director SAP.



King's Day Celebration hosted by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



Ms. Amina Ahmed Raza, Representative of Global SME Business Home



Group photo of officials and staff



Statue inauguration ceremony



Meeting with Lieutenant Colonel Ali Aman Rana.



Mr. Jeehund Hoth, President of the Gwadar Chamber of Commerce & Industry



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Meeting with a delegation from AESP



Meeting with Mr. Naveed, District Emergency Officer



Meeting with representatives from Alibaba Group



2-Day Free Health Camp, organized in collaboration with Nutrifactor and SCCI Med Pharmacy



METAS Qatar Trading and SMCL signed a landmark MOU to establish a healthcare facility in Sialkot



Dr. Nabeel from the National compliance center (NCC)



Meeting with Mr. Mudassar DSP Traffic Sialkot



Annual Prize Distribution Ceremony of the Classic School System.



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Seminar on "AI & Related Technologies and Business Process Transformation"



Seminar on "Family Business – Sustainability Over Generations"



3rd Technology & Innovation Summit 2025, organized by SIMAP



Ms. Iffat un Nisa, Deputy Secretary, Development I&C Wing, S&GAD.



Inauguration ceremony of the PRA, Commissionerate Sub-Office in Sialkot.



Seminar on E-Commerce Lead Generation



Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue, RTO Sialkot



Ms. Saba Rafay, Environment Specialist, Urban Unit Punjab



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



World's largest Quran exhibited at Sialkot Chamber



Inaugurated a Free Medical Camp, in collaboration with Welnox and SCCI Med Pharmacy.



Meeting of all Trade Bodies



Celebrating FPCCI President Birthday.



All Pakistan Chamber President's Conference 2025



VP SCCI, attended an meeting at SIMAP



Press Conference at FPCCI Islamabad Office



Mr. Tahir Anis, Advocate High Court /Tax Consultant



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Azadi Football Match 2025



inauguration ceremony of the Captain Sarosh Shaheed Gate



Renowned Islamic scholar Peer Muhammad Ajmal Raza Qadri



Azadi celebration with the children of SOS Village



Independence Day flag-hoisting ceremony at Polo Ground, Sialkot



Marka-e-Haq and Independence Day celebration ceremony at GC Women University



Mr. Shafiq, Additional Director, Land Authority



Meeting with Pakistan Business Forum (PBF-Karachi)



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF DIFFERENT OCCASIONS 2024-25



Inauguration ceremony of the world's largest handwritten Quran Majeed



Birthday of President SCCI Mr. Ikram ul Haq



Mr. Shafiq, Additional Director, Land Authority.



DSP Traffic Police Mr. Mudassir Siddique



Dr. Ahmed Shuja Khan Chief Commissioner of Income Tax Inland Revenue Sialkot



Prof. Dr. Bilal S. Mohyidin, Executive Direct, Punjab Institute of Cardiology



Mr. Riasat Ali Bajwa, Regional Manager SNGPL



Pakistan Britain Business Council (PBBC)





# MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE





# COMMITTEE 2024-25

**The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry**





# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
**JUNE 30, 2025**



**PKF F.R.A.N.T.S.**  
Chartered Accountants  
1st Floor, PRGMEA House,  
Opposite Anwaar Club,  
Paris Road, Sialkot - Pakistan.

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sialkot@pkf.com.pk  
www.pkf.com.pk

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY  
Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

### Opinion

We have audited the annexed financial statements of THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (the Company), which comprise the statement of financial position as at June 30, 2025, and the statement of income and expenditure, the statement of changes in funds, the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information and other explanatory information, and we state that we have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, were necessary for the purposes of the audit.

In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the statement of financial position, the statement of income and expenditure, the statement of changes in funds and the statement of cash flows together with the notes forming part thereof conform with the accounting and reporting standards as applicable in Pakistan and give the information required by the Companies Act, 2017 (XIX of 2017), in the manner so required and respectively give a true and fair view of the state of the Company's affairs as at June 30, 2025 and of the surplus, the changes in funds and its cash flows for the year then ended.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) as applicable in Pakistan. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* as adopted by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (the Code) and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Information Other than the Financial Statements and Auditor's Report Thereon

Management is responsible for other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, but does not include the financial statements and our auditors' report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### Responsibilities of Management and Executive Committee for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the accounting and reporting standards as applicable in Pakistan and the requirements of Companies Act, 2017 (XIX of 2017) and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Executive Committee is responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

### OTHER OFFICES: KARACHI | LAHORE | ISLAMABAD | PESHAWAR | MULTAN | KABUL

**PKF F.R.A.N.T.S.** Chartered Accountants is a member of PKF Global, the network of member firms of PKF International Limited, each of which is a separate and independent legal entity and does not accept any responsibility or liability for the actions or in actions of any individual member or correspondent firm(s).





### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs as applicable in Pakistan will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs as applicable in Pakistan, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the executive committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

### Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

Based on our audit, we further report that in our opinion:

- a) proper books of account have been kept by the Company as required by the Companies Act, 2017 (XIX of 2017);
- b) the statement of financial position, the statement of income and expenditure, the statement of changes in funds and the statement of cash flows together with the notes thereon have been drawn up in conformity with the Companies Act, 2017 (XIX of 2017) and are in agreement with the books of account and returns;
- c) investments made, expenditure incurred and guarantees extended during the year were for the purpose of the Company's business; and
- d) No Zakat was deductible at source under the Zakat and Ushr Ordinance, 1980 (XVIII of 1980).

The engagement partner on the audit resulting in this independent auditor's report is Mr. Zulfiqar Ahmed Nasir, FCA.

PKF F.R.A.N.T.S.  
Chartered Accountants  
Sialkot  
Date: 04-09-2025



UDIN: AR20251023752rUySCEe

# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT JUNE 30, 2025

|                                                       | Note | 2025             | 2024        |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------|------------------|-------------|
|                                                       |      | -----Rupees----- |             |
| ASSETS                                                |      |                  |             |
| NON CURRENT ASSETS                                    |      |                  |             |
| Property and equipment                                | 5    | 86,968,037       | 85,487,743  |
| Intangible assets                                     | 6    | 574,058          | 717,574     |
| Long term investment in SBCC                          | 7    | 31,095,317       | 31,095,317  |
| Long term deposits                                    |      | 187,583          | 187,583     |
|                                                       |      | 118,824,995      | 117,488,217 |
| CURRENT ASSETS                                        |      |                  |             |
| General store inventory                               | 8    | 3,242,951        | 2,944,437   |
| Advances, deposits, prepayments and other receivables | 9    | 18,139,775       | 10,090,404  |
| Cash and bank balances                                | 10   | 171,991,031      | 152,409,369 |
|                                                       |      | 193,373,757      | 165,444,210 |
| TOTAL ASSETS                                          |      | 312,198,752      | 282,932,427 |
| FUNDS AND LIABILITIES                                 |      |                  |             |
| FUNDS AND RESERVES                                    |      |                  |             |
| Unrestricted funds                                    | 11.1 | 103,699,514      | 97,733,684  |
| Restricted funds                                      | 11.2 | 146,402,205      | 135,284,349 |
|                                                       |      | 250,101,719      | 233,018,033 |
| NON CURRENT LIABILITIES                               |      |                  |             |
| Long term security payable                            |      | 542,505          | 722,505     |
| Deferred tax liability                                | 12   | 3,031,108        | -           |
|                                                       |      | 3,573,613        | 722,505     |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES                                   |      |                  |             |
| Advance fee and subscription                          | 13   | 39,576,339       | 36,510,067  |
| Advance rent                                          |      | 60,061           | 54,600      |
| Accrued and other payables                            | 14   | 18,887,020       | 12,627,222  |
|                                                       |      | 58,523,420       | 49,191,889  |
| Contingencies and commitments                         | 15   |                  |             |
| TOTAL FUNDS AND LIABILITIES                           |      | 312,198,752      | 282,932,427 |

The annexed notes from 1 to 23 form an integral part of these financial statements.



PRESIDENT



SECRETARY GENERAL



# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

|                                            |      | 2025             |                    |             | 2024        |
|--------------------------------------------|------|------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
|                                            | Note | Restricted Funds | Unrestricted Funds | Total funds | Total funds |
| INCOME                                     |      |                  |                    |             |             |
| Contributions from members                 | 11.3 | 96,828,648       | -                  | 96,828,648  | 143,638,696 |
| Fee and subscription                       | 16   | -                | 138,451,461        | 138,451,461 | 123,669,706 |
| Profit on PLS accounts                     |      | -                | 17,604,279         | 17,604,279  | 19,107,846  |
| Gain on Disposal                           |      | -                | 22,158             | 22,158      | -           |
| Rental income                              |      | -                | 3,563,040          | 3,563,040   | 3,615,342   |
|                                            |      | 96,828,648       | 159,640,938        | 256,469,586 | 290,031,590 |
| EXPENDITURE                                |      |                  |                    |             |             |
| Staff salaries and benefits                |      | 10,315,952       | 77,255,894         | 87,571,846  | 68,504,528  |
| Other utilization of restricted funds      |      | 74,843,233       | -                  | 74,843,233  | 113,860,434 |
| Printing and stationery                    |      | -                | 12,333,854         | 12,333,854  | 12,114,877  |
| Utilities                                  |      | -                | 5,669,297          | 5,669,297   | 5,942,055   |
| Repair and maintenance                     |      | -                | 7,017,547          | 7,017,547   | 4,922,283   |
| Advertisement                              |      | -                | 3,897,278          | 3,897,278   | 844,044     |
| Communication                              |      | -                | 1,987,320          | 1,987,320   | 1,613,897   |
| Traveling and conveyance                   |      | -                | 1,813,477          | 1,813,477   | 1,715,120   |
| Entertainment and functions                |      | -                | 12,151,903         | 12,151,903  | 9,738,764   |
| Donation                                   |      | -                | 4,887,800          | 4,887,800   | 3,942,449   |
| Auditors' remuneration                     |      |                  |                    |             |             |
| - Audit fee                                | 20   | -                | 200,000            | 200,000     | 175,000     |
| - Tax consultancy                          |      | -                | 50,000             | 50,000      | 50,000      |
| Fee and subscription                       |      | -                | 2,219,688          | 2,219,688   | 1,990,699   |
| Legal and professional charges             |      | -                | 1,000,440          | 1,000,440   | 906,645     |
| Bank charges                               |      | -                | 61,772             | 61,772      | 58,313      |
| SCCI shields and trophies                  |      | -                | 2,980,933          | 2,980,933   | 3,398,611   |
| Insurance                                  |      | -                | 102,262            | 102,262     | 261,931     |
| Property tax                               |      | -                | 885,958            | 885,958     | 841,660     |
| Exhibition Expenses                        |      | -                | 2,036,955          | 2,036,955   | 1,122,484   |
| Miscellaneous expenses                     |      | -                | 1,289,961          | 1,289,961   | 1,139,995   |
| Deficit on sale & written off fixed assets |      | -                | -                  | -           | 686,641     |
| Petrol & Fuel Charges                      |      | -                | 2,229,932          | 2,229,932   |             |
| Amortization                               |      | 143,516          | -                  | 143,516     | 179,394     |
| Depreciation                               |      | 408,091          | 6,184,408          | 6,592,499   | 6,236,529   |
|                                            |      | 85,710,792       | 146,256,679        | 231,967,471 | 240,246,353 |
| Surplus before tax                         |      | 11,117,856       | 13,384,259         | 24,502,115  | 49,785,237  |
| Taxation                                   | 17   | -                | (7,418,429)        | (7,418,429) | (5,938,517) |
| Surplus after tax                          |      | 11,117,856       | 5,965,830          | 17,083,686  | 43,846,720  |

The annexed notes from 1 to 23 form an integral part of these financial statements.



PRESIDENT



SECRETARY GENERAL

# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUNDS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

|                                          | Restricted<br>Funds | Un Restricted<br>Funds | Total Fund  |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-------------|
|                                          | -----Rupees-----    |                        |             |
| Balance as at June 30, 2023              | 115,364,835         | 73,806,478             | 189,171,313 |
| Surplus for the year ended June 30, 2024 | 19,919,514          | 23,927,206             | 43,846,720  |
| Balance as at June 30, 2024              | 135,284,349         | 97,733,684             | 233,018,033 |
| Surplus for the year ended June 30, 2025 | 11,117,856          | 5,965,830              | 17,083,686  |
| Balance as at June 30, 2025              | 146,402,205         | 103,699,514            | 250,101,719 |

*The annexed notes from 1 to 23 form an integral part of these financial statements.*



PRESIDENT



SECRETARY GENERAL



# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

|                                                                  |      | 2025             | 2024         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------------|--------------|
| CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES                              | Note | -----Rupees----- |              |
| Surplus before taxation                                          |      | 13,384,259       | 29,865,723   |
| Adjustment for:                                                  |      |                  |              |
| Depreciation                                                     | 5.1  | 6,592,499        | 6,236,530    |
| Loss on write off / disposal of fixed assets                     |      | -                | 686,641      |
| Amortization                                                     | 6.1  | 143,516          | 179,394      |
| Gain on disposal                                                 |      | (22,158)         | -            |
| Profit on PLS accounts                                           |      | (17,604,279)     | (19,107,846) |
| Net cash provided by operating activities                        |      | 2,493,837        | 17,860,442   |
| Working capital changes:                                         |      |                  |              |
| (Increase) in general store inventory                            |      | (298,514)        | (462,259)    |
| (Increase)/ decrease in advances, deposits and other receivables |      | (8,049,371)      | 10,683,748   |
| Increase in advance fee and subscription                         |      | 3,066,272        | 608,322      |
| Increase / (decrease) in advance rent                            |      | 5,461            | (4,100)      |
| Increase/ (decrease) in creditors and accruals                   |      | 5,769,081        | (8,889,017)  |
|                                                                  |      | 492,929          | 1,936,694    |
| Cash generated from operations                                   |      | 2,986,766        | 19,797,136   |
| Taxes paid                                                       |      | (3,896,604)      | (3,970,745)  |
| Net cash generated from operating activities                     |      | (909,838)        | 15,826,391   |
| CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES                              |      |                  |              |
| Additions in operating fixed assets                              |      | (8,108,635)      | (19,501,860) |
| Proceeds from disposal of operating fixed assets                 |      | 58,000           | 145,000      |
| Profit on PLS accounts                                           |      | 17,604,279       | 19,107,846   |
| Long term security payable                                       |      | (180,000)        | -            |
| Net cash generated from / (used in) investing activities         |      | 9,373,644        | (249,014)    |
| CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES                              |      |                  |              |
| Increase in funds                                                |      | 11,117,856       | 19,919,514   |
| Net cash generated from financing activities                     |      | 11,117,856       | 19,919,514   |
| Net increase in cash and cash equivalents                        |      | 19,581,662       | 35,496,891   |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year           |      | 152,409,369      | 116,912,478  |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year                 |      | 171,991,031      | 152,409,369  |

The annexed notes from 1 to 23 form an integral part of these financial statements.



PRESIDENT



SECRETARY GENERAL

# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

#### 1 LEGAL STATUS AND OPERATIONS

The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry "the Chamber" was incorporated in Pakistan on 28th July, 1982 under the companies Act 1913 (now Companies Act, 2017) vide Federal Government License No. 24 dated 15th, 1982. The main object of the Chamber is to promote trade, commerce and industry and conduct research and development work.

Geographical location of the company is as under:

The registered office of SCCI is situated at Paris road, Sialkot.

#### 2 BASIS OF PREPARATION

##### 2.1 Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting and reporting standards as applicable in Pakistan. The approved accounting and reporting standards applicable in Pakistan comprise of:

-International Financial Reporting Standard for Small and Medium-sized Entities (IFRS for SMEs) issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) as notified under the Companies Act, 2017;

-Accounting Standard for Not for Profit Organizations (Accounting Standard for NPOs) issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan as notified under the Companies Act, 2017; and

-provisions of and directives issued under the Companies Act, 2017.

Where provisions of and directives issued under the Companies Act, 2017 differ from the IFRS for SMEs or the Accounting Standard for NPOs, the provisions of and directives issued under the Companies Act, 2017 have been followed.

##### 2.2 Functional and presentation currency

These financial statements are presented in Pakistan Rupee (Rs. / Rupees) which is the Company's functional currency. Amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded off to the nearest of Rs. / Rupees, unless otherwise stated.

#### 3 BASIS OF MEASUREMENT

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for certain items as disclosed in the relevant accounting policies below.

##### 3.1 Key judgment and estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with the accounting and reporting standards as applicable in Pakistan requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. In addition, it requires management to exercise judgement in the process of applying the Company's accounting policies. The areas involving a high degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements, are documented in the following accounting policies and notes, and relate primarily to:

-Useful lives, residual values and depreciation method of property, plant and equipment – Note 4.2 & 5

-Useful lives, residual values and amortization method of intangible assets – Note 4.3 & 6

-Provision for impairment of inventories – Note 4.4 & 8

-Impairment loss of non-financial assets other than inventories – Note 4.10 & 5

-Current income tax expense, provision for current tax and recognition of deferred tax asset (for carried forward tax losses) – Note 4.8, 14.1 & 17

The revisions to accounting estimates (if any) are recognized in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

#### 4 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICY INFORMATION

The significant accounting policies set out below have been applied consistently to all periods presented in these financial statements, except for the changes as explained in note 3.1.

##### 4.1 Accounting guidance issued by Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) issued a guidance 'Application Guidance on Accounting for Minimum Taxes and Final Taxes' through Circular No. 07/2024 dated May 15, 2024. In accordance with this guidance, minimum taxes and final taxes are not calculated on 'taxable profit' as defined in Section 29 of the IFRS for SMEs, but instead are determined on turnover or other prescribed bases under the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001.

Accordingly, minimum taxes and final taxes are not accounted for as income taxes under Section 29, but as levies within the scope of Section 21 (Provisions and Contingencies). Based on the guidance, minimum taxes under the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001 have a hybrid nature, comprising a component within the scope of Section 29 (Income Tax) and a component within the scope of Section 21 (Provisions), whereas final taxes fall entirely within the scope of Section 21.



# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

#### 4.2 Property and equipment

##### 4.2.1 Operating fixed assets

###### Initial recognition

All items of property, plant and equipment are initially recorded at cost.

###### Subsequent Measurement

Items of property and equipment are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment loss (if any).

###### Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on reducing balance method over the estimated useful lives of the assets at rates specified in note 5.1.

Depreciation on additions is charged from the day of acquisition and on disposals up to the day the asset is in use. Maintenance and normal repairs are charged to income as and when incurred. Major renewals and improvements are capitalized.

Gain / loss on disposal of operating fixed assets is taken to the income and expenditure account. Gains or losses on disposal or retirement of operating fixed assets are determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying amount of assets and are included in the income and expenditure account.

The company assesses at each reporting date whether there is any indication that operating fixed assets may be impaired. If such indication exists the carrying amount of such assets are reviewed to assess whether they are recorded in excess of their recoverable amount. Where carrying values exceed the respective recoverable amount, assets are written down to their recoverable amounts and the resulting impairment loss is taken to income and expenditure account.

#### 4.3 Intangibles and amortization

Intangible assets, which are assets without physical substance, are recognized at cost, which comprise purchase price, non-refundable purchase taxes and other directly attributable expenditures relating to their implementation and customization. After initial recognition, an intangible asset is carried at cost less accumulated amortization and impairment losses, if any. Intangible assets are amortized from the day, when these assets are available for use, using the reducing balance method, whereby the cost of the intangible asset is amortized over its estimated useful life over which economic benefits are expected to flow to the Company. The useful life and amortization method are reviewed and adjusted, if appropriate, at each reporting date.

#### 4.4 General Store Inventory

General store inventory is valued at lower of cost determined on first in first out basis and net realizable value.

#### 4.5 Advances and receivables

Advances and receivables are not derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. They are included in current assets, except for maturities greater than 12 months after the end of reporting period, in which case, these are classified as non current assets.

#### 4.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents are carried in the balance sheet at cost. For the purpose of cash flow statement, cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand and balances with banks in current and savings accounts and TDRs.

#### 4.7 Accrued and other liabilities

Accrued and other liabilities are carried at their cost, which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the company.

#### 4.8 Income Tax

Income tax comprises of current tax and deferred tax.

Income tax expense is recognized in the statement of profit and loss except to the extent that it relates to items recognized in other comprehensive income or directly in equity (if any), in which case the tax amounts are recognized directly in other comprehensive income or equity.

###### Current tax

Current tax is the expected tax payable on the taxable income for the year; calculated using rates enacted or substantively enacted by the end of the reporting period. The calculation of current tax takes into account tax credit and tax rebates, if any, and is inclusive of any adjustment to income tax payable or recoverable in respect of previous years.

# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

#### Deferred tax

A deferred tax liability is recognized for all temporary differences that are expected to increase taxable profit in the future. Deferred tax assets are recognized for all temporary differences that are expected to reduce taxable profit in the future, and the carry forward of unused tax losses.

The amount of deferred tax provided is based on the expected manner of realization or settlement of the carrying amount of assets and liabilities using the tax rates enacted at the balance sheet date.

#### 4.9 Staff Gratuity

The Chamber operates a fully funded gratuity scheme covering all of its employees. The gratuity liability is determined on the basis of employees' last drawn basic salary. With effect from the current year, admissible ad-hoc allowances have been merged into the definition of basic salary for the purpose of gratuity calculation. This change has resulted in a higher gratuity expense during the year.

A separate gratuity fund has been established, managed by trustees, to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet the gratuity obligations as they fall due. Annual transfers are made to the fund equivalent to the provision for gratuity for the year, after adjusting for any profits earned on the investments of the gratuity fund during the same period.

#### 4.10 Impairment of non-financial assets

Non-financial assets are reviewed for impairment whenever events indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable. Any impairment loss is recognized in the income statement.

#### 4.11 Fund Accounting

##### Unrestricted / general fund

Revenue from admission, subscription and other receipts collected from members are recognized on accrual basis. Return on deposits is accrued on a time proportion basis by reference to the principle outstanding and the applicable rate of return.

##### Restricted fund

The organization follows the restricted fund method for recognition of its funds, as prescribed by ICAP in Accounting Standards for Not for Profit Organizations (NPOs). Under this method grants and contributions from members are recognized as revenue of the fund when received, irrespective of the expenses incurred.

#### 4.12 Financial Instruments

Financial assets and liabilities are recognized and measured under Section 11 of IFRS for SMEs. All financial assets & liabilities are recorded at amortized cost in the financial statements.

#### 4.13 Figures

Figures have been rounded off to the nearest rupee.



# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

|     |                        |      |            |
|-----|------------------------|------|------------|
| 5   | PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT | Note |            |
|     | Operating fixed assets |      |            |
| 5.1 | Operating fixed assets | 5.1  | 86,968,037 |
|     |                        |      | 85,487,743 |

| Particulars | Cost                |                      |                      | Depreciation rate | Accumulated depreciation |                       |                         | Net book value as at June 30, 2025 |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
|             | As at July 01, 2024 | Additions / Transfer | Deletions / Transfer |                   | As at June 30, 2025      | Charge for the period | Adjustment for the year |                                    |
|             |                     |                      |                      | %                 |                          |                       |                         |                                    |

#### Chamber assets

|                         |             |           |          |  |             |           |          |            |            |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|--|-------------|-----------|----------|------------|------------|
| Building                | 61,731,806  | 4,669,801 |          |  | 66,401,607  | 2,509,222 |          | 17,549,336 | 48,852,271 |
| Furniture and fixtures  | 10,748,188  | 961,788   |          |  | 11,709,976  | 780,974   |          | 4,438,783  | 7,271,193  |
| Office equipment        | 6,756,790   | 569,443   |          |  | 7,326,233   | 481,197   |          | 2,593,507  | 4,732,726  |
| Air conditioner         | 4,561,495   | 837,936   |          |  | 5,399,431   | 341,174   |          | 1,967,626  | 3,431,805  |
| Fans                    | 358,990     | 15,785    |          |  | 374,775     | 20,892    |          | 172,472    | 202,303    |
| Electric installation   | 24,394,847  |           |          |  | 24,394,847  | 1,958,422 |          | 6,769,050  | 17,625,797 |
| Telephone installation  | 150,900     |           |          |  | 150,900     | 8,174     |          | 77,337     | 73,563     |
| Other assets            | 451,701     |           |          |  | 451,701     | 22,546    |          | 248,784    | 202,917    |
| Vehicles                | 283,300     | 164,400   | (82,400) |  | 365,300     | 46,149    | (46,558) | 129,167    | 236,133    |
| Gas/Electric Appliances | 231,845     | 44,000    |          |  | 275,845     | 15,658    |          | 126,246    | 149,599    |
|                         | 109,669,862 | 7,263,153 | (82,400) |  | 116,850,615 | 6,184,408 | (46,558) | 34,072,308 | 82,778,307 |

#### Chamber - R & D Assets

|                        |             |            |             |   |             |           |           |            |            |
|------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|---|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Building               | 1,476,766   |            |             |   | 1,476,766   | 16,292    |           | 1,167,216  | 309,550    |
| Furniture and fixtures | 433,656     |            |             |   | 433,656     | 21,376    |           | 241,274    | 192,382    |
| Office equipment       | 4,255,219   | 845,482    |             |   | 5,100,701   | 318,189   |           | 1,809,850  | 3,290,851  |
| Air conditioners       | 611,260     |            |             |   | 611,260     | 32,707    |           | 316,900    | 294,360    |
| Electric installation  | 68,850      |            |             |   | 68,850      | 4,895     |           | 24,791     | 44,059     |
| Library - Books        | 156,871     |            |             |   | 156,871     | 14,632    |           | 98,343     | 58,528     |
|                        | 7,002,622   | 845,482    | -           |   | 7,848,104   | 408,091   | -         | 3,658,374  | 4,189,730  |
| Total June 30, 2025    | 116,672,484 | 8,108,635  | (82,400)    |   | 124,698,719 | 6,592,499 | (46,558)  | 37,730,682 | 86,968,037 |
| Total June 30, 2024    | 98,919,076  | 19,501,860 | (1,748,452) | - | 116,672,484 | 6,236,530 | (961,699) | 31,184,741 | 85,487,743 |

# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Note | 2025<br>-----Rupees----- | 2024        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------------|-------------|
| 6 Intangible assets                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |      |                          |             |
| Balance as on July 01, 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |      | 1,761,200                | 2,293,200   |
| Addition / (Deletion)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |      | -                        | (532,000)   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | 1,761,200                | 1,761,200   |
| Accumulated amortization                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 6.1  | (1,187,142)              | (1,043,626) |
| Balance as on June 30, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |      | 574,058                  | 717,574     |
| 6.1 Accumulated amortization                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |      |                          |             |
| Balance as on July 01, 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |      | 1,043,626                | 1,351,344   |
| For the year                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |      | 143,516                  | 179,394     |
| Adjustment for written off intangibles                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |      | -                        | (487,112)   |
| Balance as on June 30, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |      | 1,187,142                | 1,043,626   |
| 6.2 Intangible assets comprise of documentary films on Sialkot industry amortized at 20% using reducing balance method.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |      |                          |             |
| 7 LONG TERM INVESTMENT IN SBCC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 7.1  | 31,095,317               | 31,095,317  |
| 7.1 The Chamber invested Rs 31.095 million (earlier shown as "Capital Work in progress") in Mega project of "Sialkot Business and Commerce Center" adjacent to the Chamber building. The Chamber entered in to agreement with Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority to join hands and complete the project. This project is being managed by Management Committee comprising of 9 members. The Management Committee has been constituted vide Management Agreement dated 05-06-2020 signed between SMEDA & SCCI. The Chairman of the Management Committee shall be from amongst the members nominated by SCCI. |      |                          |             |
| 8 INVENTORY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |      |                          |             |
| Stock Stationery - General                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |      | 808,844                  | 517,506     |
| Stock Stationery - Printed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |      | 1,988,325                | 1,938,169   |
| Stock Scci Gift/Presentation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |      | 445,782                  | 488,762     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | 3,242,951                | 2,944,437   |
| 9 ADVANCES, DEPOSITS, PREPAYMENTS AND OTHER RECEIVABLES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |      |                          |             |
| Advances:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |      |                          |             |
| Considered good -unsecured                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |      |                          |             |
| - to suppliers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |      | 243,375                  | 243,375     |
| - to employees                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |      | 14,712,825               | 8,661,601   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | 14,956,200               | 8,904,976   |
| Advance against expenses                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |      | 1,000,000                | 124,140     |
| Prepaid expenses                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |      | 1,296,482                | 988,688     |
| Rent receivable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | -                        | 72,600      |
| Receivable from EDF for IMAC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |      | 887,093                  | -           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | 18,139,775               | 10,090,404  |
| 10 CASH AND BANK BALANCES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |      |                          |             |
| Cash in hand                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |      |                          |             |
| Postage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |      | 10,820                   | 7,897       |
| Petty cash                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |      | 165,000                  | 165,000     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | 175,820                  | 172,897     |
| Cash at bank                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |      |                          |             |
| Current accounts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |      |                          |             |
| Faysal Bank Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |      | 302,447                  | 302,447     |
| National Bank of Pakistan - child labor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |      | 221,583                  | 5,928,787   |
| United Bank Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |      | 181,032                  | 181,032     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | 705,062                  | 6,412,266   |
| Saving accounts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      |                          |             |
| Faysal Bank Limited - research and development                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |      | 5,337,023                | 6,304,976   |
| Faysal Bank Limited - child labor fund                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |      | 1,921,269                | 527,458     |
| MCB Bank Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |      | 15,476,949               | 4,735,705   |
| Askari Bank Limited - emergency fund                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |      | 11,907,942               | 6,853,810   |
| Askari Bank Limited - regular funds                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |      | 11,504,680               | 1,943,444   |
| Bank Islami Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |      | 19,807,614               | 45,108,077  |
| Alfalsh Bank Limited - child labor fund                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |      | 17,573                   | 17,573      |
| TDR Bank Deposit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |      | 105,000,000              | 80,000,000  |
| Faysal Bank Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |      | 137,099                  | 333,163     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | 171,110,149              | 145,824,206 |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |      | 171,991,031              | 152,409,369 |



# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

|                                                   | Note | 2025<br>-----Rupees----- | 2024               |
|---------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 11 FUNDS AND RESERVES                             |      |                          |                    |
| Unrestricted funds (represents general fund)      | 11.1 | 103,699,514              | 97,733,684         |
| Restricted funds (represents specific fund)       | 11.2 | 146,402,205              | 135,284,349        |
|                                                   |      | <u>250,101,719</u>       | <u>233,018,033</u> |
| 11.1 Unrestricted funds (represents general fund) |      |                          |                    |
| Balance as at July 01, 2024                       |      | 97,733,684               | 73,806,478         |
| Surplus for the year                              |      | 5,965,830                | 23,927,206         |
| Balance as on June 30, 2025                       |      | <u>103,699,514</u>       | <u>97,733,684</u>  |
| 11.2 Restricted funds (represents specific fund)  |      |                          |                    |
| Balance as at July 01, 2024                       |      | 135,284,349              | 115,364,835        |
| Surplus for the year                              |      | 11,117,856               | 19,919,514         |
| Balance as on June 30, 2025                       | 11.3 | <u>146,402,205</u>       | <u>135,284,349</u> |

11.3

| Fund names                             | Note    | Balance as at<br>July 01, 2024 | Inflows                    | Outflows                                    | Balance as at<br>June 30, 2025 |
|----------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                                        |         |                                | From<br>receipts/Transfers | Due to<br>utilization /<br>refund/Transfers |                                |
|                                        |         | -----Rupees-----               |                            |                                             |                                |
| Capital fund                           |         | 41,632,531                     | -                          | -                                           | 41,632,531                     |
| R&D fund                               | 11.3.1  | 21,223,876                     | 14,732,846                 | (11,411,459)                                | 24,545,263                     |
| Child labour fund                      | 11.3.2  | 4,221,834                      | 14,242,005                 | (18,463,839)                                | -                              |
| SBCC                                   | 11.3.3  | 23,749,309                     | -                          | -                                           | 23,749,309                     |
| Delegation funds                       | 11.3.4  | 4,332,000                      | 870,000                    | (3,288,000)                                 | 1,914,000                      |
| Welfare Fund                           | 11.3.5  | -                              | 675,425                    | (85,000)                                    | 590,425                        |
| Education fund                         | 11.3.6  | 5,109,741                      | 5,430,617                  | (3,604,150)                                 | 6,936,208                      |
| Sadqa and zakat fund                   | 11.3.7  | 50,000                         | -                          | (50,000)                                    | -                              |
| Emergency fund                         | 11.3.8  | 29,565,934                     | 13,715,230                 | (7,870,011)                                 | 35,411,153                     |
| Surplus of various funds               | 11.3.9  | 849,496                        | 2,544,000                  | (809,000)                                   | 2,584,496                      |
| Education fund for free tuition centre | 11.3.10 | 1,604,108                      | 6,850,000                  | (7,868,615)                                 | 585,493                        |
| Miscellaneous fund                     | 11.3.11 | 2,000,000                      | -                          | (2,000,000)                                 | -                              |
| SCCI Masjid Renovation Fund            | 11.3.12 | 236,095                        | -                          | -                                           | 236,095                        |
| Sialkot Club                           | 11.3.13 | 334,000                        | -                          | -                                           | 334,000                        |
| Palestine relief fund                  | 11.3.14 | 375,425                        | -                          | (375,425)                                   | -                              |
| SCCI Dairy 2025                        | 11.3.15 | -                              | 5,950,000                  | (2,645,000)                                 | 3,305,000                      |
| WCCIS Postal Ticket                    | 11.3.16 | -                              | 200,000                    | (200,000)                                   | -                              |
| SCCI made in Skt Catalog               | 11.3.17 | -                              | 2,270,000                  | -                                           | 2,270,000                      |
| SCCI Medical Store                     | 11.3.18 | -                              | 27,196,525                 | (25,008,293)                                | 2,188,232                      |
| Electric Bike for women                | 11.3.19 | -                              | 592,000                    | (592,000)                                   | -                              |
| EPZ - Collection of legal fee          | 11.3.20 | -                              | 480,000                    | (480,000)                                   | -                              |
| SCCI Language Course Fee               | 11.3.21 | -                              | 1,080,000                  | (960,000)                                   | 120,000                        |
|                                        |         | 135,284,349                    | 96,828,648                 | (85,710,792)                                | 146,402,205                    |

- 11.3.1 To fund operations of Research and Development Cell established under letter # 13(s)/87 T.O dated 29-08-1987 of Ministry of commerce Govt. of Pakistan.
- 11.3.2 To receive funds under "Child Labor Elimination Program in Soccer Ball Industry". IMAC and CSDO projects are also funded from this fund.
- 11.3.3 To contribute in construction of Sialkot Business and Commerce Center.
- 11.3.4 This fund is maintained to plan visit of business delegation of SCCI members to abroad to participate in International Fair &
- 11.3.5 This fund is created for welfare of the society.
- 11.3.6 To promote education in society and help children of staff of SCCI and other needy person in seeking education through stipend issued on monthly, quarterly or annual basis.
- 11.3.7 To help needy persons from sadqa and zakat fund.
- 11.3.8 To contribute and take part in rescue activities in natural disasters and calamities.
- 11.3.9 Surplus and remaining unused balance of different funds are transferred to this fund and ultimately disbursed to the needy.
- 11.3.10 To provide free tuition classes through Alsuffa coaching center.
- 11.3.11 This fund is maintained to hold the amount on behalf of SDPT for recovery of loss occurred due to theft.
- 11.3.12 This fund is maintained for renovation chamber masjid.
- 11.3.13 The project is initiated for construction of swimming pool dated 27-03-2010, however due to non-continuance of project the payment is transferred to SCCI.
- 11.3.14 This fund is created to provide medical aid to Palestine.
- 11.3.15 This fund is created to provide members with updated business information, industry contacts, and Chamber activities.
- 11.3.16 A commemorative postal ticket was issued in collaboration with the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot to highlight women's contribution to trade and industry.
- 11.3.17 To develop and circulate the "Made in Sialkot" Catalogue to comprehensively showcase local industries and products at national and international forums.
- 11.3.18 To establish the SCCI Med Pharmacy to provide affordable and quality medicines for members, employees, and their families.
- 11.3.19 To facilitate the provision of electric bikes to women constables of the Sialkot Police Rapid Response Team deputed on women harassment and related cases.
- 11.3.20 The Chamber coordinated the collection of legal fees from EPZ plot owners to contest the decision of the Industries Department, Government of Punjab, regarding cancellation of plots for non-construction of factories.
- 11.3.21 To organize six professional language training courses at SCCI, with fee collection structured to support program sustainability

# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          |                                  |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| 12   | DEFERRED TAX LIABILITY / (ASSET)                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |          |                                  |
|      | The deferred tax liability represents the tax effect of temporary differences between the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities for financial reporting purposes and the corresponding tax bases used in the computation of taxable profit. |                            |          |                                  |
|      | As at June 30, 2025, the deferred tax liability comprises the following:                                                                                                                                                                         |                            |          |                                  |
|      | Particulars                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Temporary Difference<br>Rs | Tax Rate | DTL / (DTA)<br>Rs                |
|      | Property & Equipment                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 18,306,443                 | 29%      | 5,308,868                        |
|      | Gratuity Provision                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | (7,854,344)                | 29%      | (2,277,760)                      |
|      | Net Deferred Tax Liability                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                            |          | 3,031,108                        |
|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            | Note     | 2025<br>-----Rupees-----<br>2024 |
| 13   | ADVANCE FEE AND SUBSCRIPTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                            |          |                                  |
|      | Admission fee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                            |          | 104,664 105,301                  |
|      | Annual subscription                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                            |          | 12,008,807 10,234,026            |
|      | Certificate fee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | 11,596,500 11,172,000            |
|      | Identity card                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                            |          | 3,507,672 3,018,388              |
|      | Application processing charges                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                            |          | 1,282,555 1,310,176              |
|      | Publication charges                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                            |          | 8,744,588 8,423,551              |
|      | Sports and culture                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                            |          | 2,331,553 2,246,625              |
|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | 39,576,339 36,510,067            |
| 14   | ACCRUED AND OTHER PAYABLES                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                            |          |                                  |
|      | Accrued expenses                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |          | 1,712,766 1,089,454              |
|      | Income tax payable                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 14.1                       |          | 631,600 140,883                  |
|      | Advance from members -lunch contribution                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 14.2                       |          | - 448,150                        |
|      | Payable to CSDO                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | 4,841,596 7,078,831              |
|      | Payable to IMAC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | 3,640,196 3,317,186              |
|      | Gratuity Payable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |          | 7,854,344 -                      |
|      | Other payables                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                            |          | 206,518 552,718                  |
|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | 18,887,020 12,627,222            |
| 14.1 | Income tax (refundable) / payable                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                            |          |                                  |
|      | Balance as at July 01, 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                            |          | 140,883 (1,826,889)              |
|      | Paid during the year                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                            |          | (3,896,604) (3,970,745)          |
|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | (3,755,721) (5,797,634)          |
|      | Provision for taxation- current year                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                            |          | 5,212,515 6,495,200              |
|      | -prior year                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                            |          | (825,194) (556,683)              |
|      | Balance as at June 30, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                            |          | 631,600 140,883                  |
| 14.2 | Advance from members -lunch contribution                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                            |          |                                  |
|      | Balance as at July 01, 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                            |          | 448,150 433,150                  |
|      | Charged to members                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                            |          | (475,150) -                      |
|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | (27,000) 433,150                 |
|      | Received from members                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                            |          | 27,000 15,000                    |
|      | Balance as on June 30, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                            |          | - 448,150                        |
| 15   | CONTINGENCIES AND COMMITMENTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                            |          |                                  |
|      | There are no contingencies and commitments at the year end. (2024: nil)                                                                                                                                                                          |                            |          |                                  |
| 16   | FEE AND SUBSCRIPTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                            |          |                                  |
|      | Admission fee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                            |          | 962,737 980,525                  |
|      | Annual subscription and membership certificate                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                            |          | 55,305,925 49,650,164            |
|      | Membership application processing fee                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                            |          | 6,242,813 5,495,374              |
|      | Publication charges                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                            |          | 19,862,513 17,994,167            |
|      | Sports and cultural contribution                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |          | 4,913,209 4,222,138              |
|      | Identity card fee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                            |          | 6,420,254 6,281,013              |
|      | Visa certificate fee                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                            |          | 20,178,900 16,404,400            |
|      | Attestation fee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | 2,508,810 2,357,665              |
|      | Sale of C.O.O. pads                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                            |          | 174,410 229,700                  |
|      | Advertisement in circular                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                            |          | 216,200 163,200                  |
|      | Change of constitution                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                            |          | 1,085,030 752,060                |
|      | Firm name reservation fee                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                            |          | 20,335,580 19,114,300            |
|      | Other income                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                            |          | 245,080 25,000                   |
|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | 138,451,461 123,669,706          |
| 17   | TAXATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                            |          |                                  |
|      | Taxation for the year                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | -Current Year              |          | 5,212,515 6,495,200              |
|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | -Prior Year                |          | (825,194) (556,683)              |
|      | Deferred tax                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                            |          | 3,031,108 -                      |
|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                            |          | 7,418,429 5,938,517              |



# THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2025                         | 2024                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | -----Rupees-----             |                                |
| 17.1 Reconciliation of tax expense & accounting surplus                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                              |                                |
| Accounting surplus before taxation                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 13,384,259                   | 29,865,723                     |
| Applicable tax rate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 29 %                         | 29 %                           |
| Tax on accounting profit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 3,881,435                    | 8,661,060                      |
| Effect of accelerated depreciation                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | (759,036)                    | (1,972,932)                    |
| Effect of non adjustable advance against rent                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 15,733                       | 20,953                         |
| Effect of inadmissible expenses                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2,277,760                    | -                              |
| Effect of gain on disposal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 6,426                        | -                              |
| Effect of Property Insurance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | (209,803)                    | (213,881)                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <u>5,212,515</u>             | <u>6,495,200</u>               |
| 18 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                              |                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | At amortized cost            | Total                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2025 2024                    | 2025 2024                      |
| Financial assets                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                              |                                |
| Long-Term Deposits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 187,583 187,583              | 187,583 187,583                |
| Advances and prepayments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 16,843,293 9,101,716         | 16,843,293 9,101,716           |
| Cash and bank balances                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 171,991,031 152,409,369      | 171,991,031 152,409,369        |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <u>189,021,907 1,761,200</u> | <u>189,021,907 161,698,668</u> |
| Total current                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                              | <u>188,834,324 161,511,085</u> |
| Total non-current                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                              | <u>187,583 187,583</u>         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | At amortized cost            | Total                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2025 2024                    | 2025 2024                      |
| Financial liabilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                              |                                |
| Long term security payable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 542,505 722,505              | 542,505 722,505                |
| Advance fee and subscription                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 39,576,339 36,510,067        | 39,576,339 36,510,067          |
| Advance rent                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 60,061 54,600                | 60,061 54,600                  |
| Accrued and other payables                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 18,887,020 12,627,222        | 18,887,020 12,627,222          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <u>59,065,925 49,914,394</u> | <u>59,065,925 49,914,394</u>   |
| Total current                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                              | <u>58,523,420 49,191,889</u>   |
| Total non-current                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                              | <u>542,505 722,505</u>         |
| 19 REMUNERATION OF KEY EXECUTIVE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                              |                                |
| The aggregate amount charged in the financial statements for remuneration including all benefits to Key Executives of the Company is as follows:                                                                                                                |                              |                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2025                         | 2024                           |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | -----Rupees-----             |                                |
| Managerial Remuneration - Secretary General                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 4,697,989                    | 3,478,236                      |
| Number of key executive                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1                            | 1                              |
| 20 AUDITOR'S REMUNERATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                              |                                |
| Audit fee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 190,476                      | 166,667                        |
| Sales Tax @ 5%                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 9,524                        | 8,333                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <u>200,000</u>               | <u>175,000</u>                 |
| 21 NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                              |                                |
| Average number of employees during the period                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 43                           | 39                             |
| Number of employees at period end                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 46                           | 40                             |
| 22 DATE OF AUTHORIZATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                              |                                |
| These financial statements were authorized for issue on 29th August, 2025 by the executive body of the Chamber.                                                                                                                                                 |                              |                                |
| 23 RECLASSIFICATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                              |                                |
| Figures of the comparative period have been rearranged and regrouped, wherever deemed necessary, to facilitate comparison and to present statements according to industry common practices. There are no major reclassifications in these financial statements. |                              |                                |



PRESIDENT



SECRETARY GENERAL







ایوان صنعت و تجارت سیالکوٹ



**THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY**

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