

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
HELD ON FEBRUARY 28, 2026

01. A Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry was held on February 28, 2026 at 11:30 a.m. at Sheikh Muhammad Shafi Hall of the Sialkot Chamber.

02. Syed Ahtesham Mazhar, President of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry presided over the meeting. He thanked the members for attending the meeting.

03. The proceedings of the meeting started with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Arshad Jamil Chaudhary.

04. The following members attended the meeting:

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| • Syed Ahtesham Mazhar | President |
| • Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad | Senior Vice President |
| • Mr. Salman Sheikh | Vice President |
| • Mr. Adnan Safdar | -Member- |
| • Mr. Haseeb Tahir | -do- |
| • Mr. Mehtab Maqsood | -do- |
| • Mr. Mohammad Iqbal Asad | -do- |
| • Mr. Muhammad Abid | -do- |
| • Sheikh Atique-ur-Rehman | -do- |
| • Mr. Sohail Masood | -do- |

05. Leave of Absence

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| • Mr. Ikram Ul Haq | -Member- |
| • Mr. Waseem Shahbaz Lodhi | -do- |
| • Mr. Omer Khalid | -do- |
| • Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Malik | -do- |
| • Mr. Aamer Mahmood | -do- |
| • Mr. Arshad Jamil Chaudhry | -do- |
| • Mr. Hassan Akbar | -do- |
| • Mr. Khurram Javaid Sethi | -do- |
| • Ms. Kinza Ijaz | -do- |
| • Sh. Muhammad Shahid Inam | -do- |
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06. Members who could not attend the meeting.

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| • Mr. Bilal Ahmed Khan | -do |
| • Mr. Jawad Khalid | -do- |
| • Ms. Syeda Ayesha Wadood | -do- |

07. Special Invitees

- Mr. Akmal Javed, Chairman Departmental Committee On Banking
- Mr. Imran Ali Rana, Chairman Departmental Committee on Income tax
- Mr. Lahshan Khilji, Chairman Departmental Committee on SME
- Malik Naseer Ahmed, Chairman Departmental Committee on Accounts
- Dr. Raza Ullah Shah, Chairman Departmental Committee Industry Academia Linkage.

08. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Executive Committee held on January 31, 2026.
<u>Discussion:</u>	
The President said that the following Chairmen of the Departmental Committees were working very actively to resolve the issues of the members reported to them.	

	• .Haji Tariq Hussain, Departmental Committee on Dry port/ shipping. • Mr. Imran Ali Rana, Departmental Committee on FTR • Dr. Raza Ullah Shah, Departmental Committee Industry Academia Linkage • Mr. Lahshan Khilji, Departmental Committee on SME
Participants	The President
Approval	Approved.

09. Point discussed.	Approval of Statement of Accounts for the month of January 2026 and Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Accounts and finance held on Feb 25, 2026.
<u>Discussion</u> Malik Naseer Ahmed informed the House that the accounts had been thoroughly reviewed by the Committee and were found to be 100% satisfactory. He further stated that the Committee had proposed certain recommendations, including the formulation of a Gift Policy to establish financial limits for routine gifts and shields, ensuring that high-value gifts remain exceptional and reserved strictly for dignitaries. The President stated that he had already exercised control over the distribution of gifts. Malik Naseer Ahmed further mentioned that leather bags were purchased for the first time to be presented as gifts. Mr. Murad Arshad explained that the purpose of purchasing leather bags was to control expenses, as an alternative to the cutlery sets previously given as gifts, the cost of which was approximately Rs. 46,000 per set. Malik Naseer Ahmed clarified that the Committee had no objection to the purchase of leather bags; rather, the suggestion was merely a recommendation of the Committee. The Secretary General stated that it was the prerogative of the President to decide on the selection of gifts. Malik Naseer Ahmed also informed the House that Mr. Jalil Aslam, a member of the Accounts Committee, who had expressed his unavailability, had therefore been dropped from the list of members.	
Participants	The President, Mr. Muhammad Murad, Malik Naseer Ahmed and the Secretary General.
Approval	Approved.

10. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Labor Laws held on January 27, 2026.
Approval	Approved.

11. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of joint meeting of the Departmental Committees on Sales Tax/PRA and Customs and Income Tax/FTR held on February 09, 2026.
<u>Discussion:</u> Mr. Imran Ali Rana informed the meeting that a joint meeting had been convened to deliberate upon and finalize focused, practical, and workable budget proposals for the Federal Budget 2026–27, particularly in relation to exporters, Small and Medium	

Enterprises (SMEs), and taxation matters under the Income Tax, Sales Tax, and Customs regimes.

He stated that, following detailed deliberations, the finalized Budget Proposals for the Federal Budget 2026–27 had been formally forwarded to Dr. Najeeb, Director General (Tax Policy), as well as to the FPCCI.

Mr. Imran Ali Rana further briefed the participants on the budget proposals submitted, the salient points of which were summarized below:

Proposal I: Restoration of Final Tax Regime (FTR) for Exporters (Optional Regime)

- A. Restoration of the Final Tax Regime (FTR) for exporters on an optional basis
- B. Enhancement of SME thresholds under the 14th Schedule
- C. Extension of this facility to all exporters, including commercial exporters

Proposal II: Alternate Strategy in Case Final Tax Regime (FTR) was not restored

- A. Restoration of Rule 216, allowing a 55% rebate to exporters
- B. Immunity from submission of audited accounts
- C. Five-year immunity from audit under Section 177
- D. Complete exemption from withholding and advance taxes

Proposal III: Abolition of 5% Withholding Sales Tax on Purchases from Unregistered Persons by Export-Oriented Companies

It was proposed to amend Serial No. 4 of the Eleventh Schedule to the Sales Tax Act, 1990, by revising the description of the withholding agent as follows:

“Excluding companies exporting Surgical Instruments, Sports Goods, and Leather Goods.”

Proposal IV: Enhancement of Utilization Period and Rationalization of Security Requirements under the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS)

- A. Enhancement of the utilization period to three (03) years
- B. Replacement of bank and insurance guarantees with more rational and facilitative security mechanisms,

Participants	The President and Mr. Imran Ali Rana.
Approval	Approved.

12. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Sports Goods& Sports Wears, Textile, Apparels and Bags held on February 12, 2026.
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Discussion:	
Miss Hina, Secretary of the Committee briefed that the following recommendation were given by the Committee:	
1. Recommendation to Customs Authorities that approved HS codes should not be changed, and any related issues should be resolved through assessment advisories instead of altering codes, thereby minimizing airport demurrage charges. 2. An awareness session on certifications would be organized for members after Ramzan. 3. A self-financed trade delegation would be organized to explore the UK market. 4. It was decided that information would be disseminated to members clarifying that	

for single-piece or two-piece shipments under one consignment, GD was not required, and clearance was given directly on Customs letterhead to facilitate sample imports.

5. A help desk would be established immediately after approval from the President, Sialkot Chamber, to provide information on certifications

On Point No. 5: The President recommended to nominate a staff member from the R&D Department.

The Secretary General informed that Mr. Salman Mir had already been working as the focal person regarding certifications.

On Point No. 4: The President sought certain clarifications.

Ms. Hina explained that the said point related to import shipments, which had been discussed in detail by Haji Tariq Hussain, Chairman of the Committee, who had also been invited to attend the meeting. She informed that the Government had issued a notification in 2020, wherein the entire procedure had been explained step by step. However, unfortunately, this information had not been properly disseminated among importers and exporters. The Committee therefore recommended that this information should be circulated to the members for their awareness.

The President further stated that the Government had issued an SRO regarding the import of samples without duty, but due to lack of awareness among members, courier companies were still charging duties.

Ms. Hina explained that a complete procedure was clearly mentioned in the notification.

The President advised Ms. Hina to circulate the notification among the members.

The Secretary General suggested that the notification should first be checked by Haji Tariq Hussain before circulation.

The President directed that it should also be shown to him before being circulated to the members.

Mr. Adnan Safdar informed the house that the members were facing multiple issues regarding the import shipments of surgical instruments. He stated that the clearance process was taking a considerable time, sometimes extending to more than half a month. He further added that even after filing of GD, the importers were willing to pay the required duties; however, the department was demanding approval from DRAP and clearance of dues before releasing the shipment.

The Secretary General informed the participants that the role of DRAP in such matters had already been abolished.

Mr. Umair Nisar clarified that the role of DRAP had been exempted in export transactions; however, in the case of the import of samples, there was still a clause under which a certificate from DRAP was required.

Mr. Muhammad Murad stated that there was, in fact, no complete exemption from DRAP yet, and that only temporary relief had been obtained. He further mentioned that he had attended the last meeting of the Surgical Association, where it was discussed that the Association should engage with DRAP to ensure that additional supplements and requirements beyond DRAP's basic regulations for medical devices and medicines were not made mandatory. He assured the members that he would

try to obtain further updates on the matter.

Mr. Salman Sheikh shared his personal experience regarding an import shipment and informed the house that he had to pay customs duty amounting to Rs. 60,000 on a parcel weighing only 1 kilogram.

The Secretary General assured the participants that the matter would be taken up with the concerned authorities for resolution.

Mr. Lahshan Khilji suggested that the import heads of DHL, FedEx, and UPS should be invited for a meeting in order to discuss the SRO under which members were currently facing difficulties.

Mr. Muhammad Murad agreed with the suggestion and supported inviting the representatives of these courier companies for further discussion.

Participants	The President, Mr. Muhammad Murad, Mr. Salman Sheikh, Mr. Adnan Safdar , Mr. Lahshan Khilji, the Secretary General and Miss Hina.
Approval	Approved.

13. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on SME/Training/E-Commerce held on February 13, 2026.
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Discussion:

Mr. Lahshan Khilji stated that the meeting was organized with the following agenda points:

1. Review of decisions taken in the previous meeting.
2. Identification of key issues faced by members along with proposed solutions.
3. Discussion on the future roadmap and planning of upcoming activities.

He further informed the participants that a seminar was also organized in connection with the meeting. The President remarked that he observed a very high level of attendance at the seminar. In response, Mr. Lahshan Khilji informed that approximately 300 students participated in the seminar.

The President suggested that Mr. Lahshan Khilji coordinate with Mr. Akmal, Chairman Banking Committee, to guide new exporters on exporting goods through B2B channels instead of B2C, including awareness of related benefits and procedures.

Mr. Lahshan Khilji agreed with the suggestion and stated that during the last Banking Committee meeting, a joint meeting had been held in which his committee had been included; however, they had not been formally informed about it. He requested the President to ensure that he would be properly informed in advance about any meeting to which he was invited.

The President replied that it would be ensured in the future.

Participants	The President and Mr. Lahshan Khilji.
Approval	Approved.

14. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of Joint Departmental Committees held on February 17, 2026.
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Discussion:

Mr. Akmal Javed informed the Committee that a joint meeting, with the participation of the Chairmen of the Banking Affairs, Shipping & Transport, and Income Tax/FTR Committees, was convened to conduct a comprehensive review of the B2C e-

commerce exports circular issued by the State Bank of Pakistan. The review primarily focused on taxation matters, courier and logistics arrangements, and banking-related implications.

Mr. Imran Sadiq, Area Manager, Askari Bank, was also invited to attend the meeting. Mr. Akmal further apprised the Committee that all Chairmen were requested to thoroughly examine the technical and operational challenges affecting the implementation of the B2C e-commerce framework and to submit their recommendations accordingly.

After detailed deliberations, it was concluded that there were no major impediments to the implementation of the B2C e-commerce framework under the SBP circular. Mr. Akmal proposed initiating a pilot program with a limited number of successful young entrepreneurs, in collaboration with Askari Bank, to practically demonstrate the operational process prior to extending the framework to other banks.

Following further discussion, the Committee made the following recommendations:

- **The Banking Committee would organize a seminar to educate members on identifying reliable agents and avoiding engagement with unreliable intermediaries.**
- **The R&D Department would record short informational videos and awareness clips on the same subject for dissemination through social media platforms, subject to the approval of the President and the Executive Committee of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry.**

Mr. Akmal further highlighted that approximately USD 400 million worth of exports is currently being routed through informal or alternative channels. He emphasized that routing these exports through the formal banking system would be in the national interest and would significantly contribute to documented trade and foreign exchange inflows.

Mr. Imran Ali Rana said that he had forwarded 4 cases of the clients to Mr. Imran Sadiq, Area Manager, Askari Bank to open their accounts as a test case. Mr. Akmal replied that hopefully it would be done but at the start of new work, there could be some issue which would be resolved.

Mr. Sohail Masood inquired about the documents required to be filed and whether the rebate facility could be availed.

In response, Mr. Akmal Javed informed the members that filing of a Goods Declaration (GD) was mandatory.

Mr. Imran Ali Rana further clarified that exporters could avail all facilities available under the SME provisions, and the rebate facility would also be admissible. However, sales tax refund would not be applicable, as the exporters were not registered as manufacturers.

The President observed that there was a need to properly guide courier companies to ensure that shipments were forwarded along with a copy of the GD.

The Secretary General suggested that banks should be requested to actively promote B2C business and facilitate exporters accordingly.

During the discussion, members highlighted issues related to consolidated shipments, which exporters route through cargo agents and the challenges faced, in this regard.

Mr. Imran Ali Rana suggested that exporters should avail services of well-reputed courier companies registered with International Air Transport Association (IATA) and should also request separate copies of the Bill of Lading (BL).

Mr. Malik Naseer Ahmed pointed out that exporters generally fulfilled all required formalities; however, the issues primarily originated from the courier companies' side. He,

	therefore, suggested that it was necessary to invite courier companies to a meeting to discuss and resolve the matter.
Participants	The President, Mr. Akmal Javaid, Mr. Imran Ali Rana, Malik Naseer Ahmed, Mr. Sohail Masood and the Secretary General.
Approval	Approved.

15. Point discussed.	Approval of Report of Seminar on Rebuilding Beauty Exports in the Digital Era held on January 27, 2026.
Discussion:	
Miss Hina, Secretary of the Committee, briefed that a seminar was organized to address the declining export trends in Sialkot's beauty tools sector and to provide women entrepreneurs and exporters with practical strategies for leveraging digital tools, e-commerce, and modern marketing to regain competitiveness in global markets. She stated that there was good participation from the members, and several senior members also attended the seminar.	
Participants	The President and Miss Hina.
Approval	Approved.

16. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Cyber Crime/ Chamber Automation held on February 04, 2026.
Discussion:	
Mr. Salman Mir, Secretary of the Committee, briefed the house and informed that this was the first meeting of the Committee in which the following points were discussed:	
1. Complaints regarding cybercrime had been received from members. It was proposed that a liaison be developed with the recently established FIA Office in Sialkot to facilitate members in lodging and pursuing their complaints. 2. It was further proposed to organize awareness seminars in collaboration with the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA). The first seminar was planned to be organized after Ramzan to educate members about cyber security, online fraud prevention, and the procedure for lodging cybercrime complaints.	
Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad informed the house that the FIA Office in Sialkot did not deal with cybercrime cases, and matters were handled by the FIA Cyber Crime Wing Office in Gujranwala. He suggested that a focal person from the Gujranwala office should be nominated so that complaints could be forwarded directly to him/her with the consent of the concerned members.	
Mr. Salman Mir replied that a focal person had already been nominated earlier, however, he had now been transferred to Islamabad.	
Mr. Salman Mir further informed that matters relating to Chamber automation were also discussed in the meeting.	
The President informed the house that there were approximately 100,000 membership files, out of which 11,000 files had been scanned and their basic data had been maintained in digital (soft) form. He added that the physical (hard) files would eventually be destroyed.	
Participants	The President, Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad and Mr. Salman Mir.
Approval	Approved.

17. Point discussed.	Approval of report on Visit of Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan held on February 09, 2026.
<u>Discussion:</u>	
The President informed the House that Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan had visited the Chamber and briefed about the welfare projects being undertaken by her organization. He stated that after the meeting, the members along with him visited her welfare facility, "Maskan Old Age Home." The President further shared that the Chamber had donated Rs. 500,000/- to support the said welfare initiative. He also informed that he had visited the welfare hospitals established by her organization at Kube Chak and near Puli Top Khana, where various healthcare services were being provided for the local community.	
Participants	The President
Approval	Approved.

18. Point discussed.	Approval of report of seminar on Business to Consumer E-Commerce Export held on February 09, 2026.
Approval	Approved.

19. Point discussed.	Approval of report of seminar on Export Facilitation Scheme held on February 10, 2026.
<u>Discussion:</u>	
Mr. Jamshaid Murtaza Badar informed that Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad chaired the meeting. Ms. Jaweria Shahid delivered a detailed presentation on the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), covering both regulatory objectives and practical implementation. Key points discussed included the following:- • All materials declared in an EFS application must remain at the declared premises. Removing them without prior written permission is considered a serious violation. Several cases cited showed inspections often found incomplete or missing records, highlighting the importance of proper documentation. • If materials needed to be moved to a vending facility, authorities must be notified in writing in advance. Unauthorized movement during inspection could lead to compliance issues. • The utilization period must be strictly followed. Extension requests should be submitted at least one month in advance, as the approval process involves review by headquarters and a high-level committee formed for extension approvals. • Accurate record-keeping, timely reporting, and transparent communication with authorities ensure smoother compliance and faster processing of extension requests under EFS. The President asked whether the session had been recoded or not because he had said that informative session should be uploaded for the information of Members. Mr. Jamshaid Murtaza Badar replied that the material was available in form of presentation. He said that video recording was not available. The President emphasized that the program was a public awareness initiative, not confidential, and should be uploaded on YouTube. He noted that he had previously instructed that all such programs be shared on social media in video format. Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad said that according to the presentation, he observed	

that the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS) contain strict rules and rigorous implementation. The members who had gotten EFS facility must comply with multiple requirements. Even the vendors who were linked with them must have a valid NTN and proper documentation, with non-compliance resulting in penalties, including facility sealing. He endorsed the President's suggestion to upload the session on YouTube for the benefit of members.

The President reiterated that the session should be uploaded.

The Secretary General responded that all sessions had been uploaded previously, but he was unsure why this one was not.

Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad recommended establishing a practice to ensure that future sessions were uploaded.

The President remarked that he had advised that if the appointed staff lacked video editing capability, the task could be outsourced.

The Secretary General responded that the concerned staff had been requested to make an attempt first. The President expressed annoyance, questioning why the session had not yet been uploaded.

The Secretary General instructed the IT Department to ensure that all important seminars held in the Chamber were uploaded without fail on YouTube and shared with members.

Participants	The President. The SVP, Secretary General and Mr. Jamshaid Murtaza Badar.
Approval	Approved.

20. Point discussed.	Approval of report of meeting on visit of Civil Officers 8 th Professional Planning and Management Course held on February 11, 2026.
Approval	Approved.

21. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Military Uniform and Badges held on February 11, 2026.
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Discussion

Sheikh Atiq-ur-Rehman, Chairman of the Committee, stated that this was the first meeting of the Committee, during which members discussed and decided about the objectives and targets for the year 2025–2026, including the Exhibitions of the Badges & Military Uniforms Sector.

The Committee recommended the following:

- Submission of formal requests to TDAP and DEPO regarding participation in three key exhibitions: IDEX (Dubai), IWA (Germany), and LAAD (Latin America).
- Conducting a Zoom meeting with the TDAP Product Officer responsible for the military and badges sectors to discuss exhibition inclusion and potential support.
- Forwarding a formal request to Mr. Qaisar Baig to arrange a trade delegation to South or Latin America to explore business opportunities and promote exports in the military sector.

The President asked whether it would be possible for Mr. Atiq-ur-Rehman to select a delegation comprising members related to his committee, while Mr. Qaiser Baig

would only coordinate with TDAP for final approval.

The Secretary General replied that there would be no issue in this arrangement.

Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad asked Mr. Atiq-ur-Rehman which country had been proposed for sending the delegation.

Mr. Atiq-ur-Rehman replied that the delegation was planned for Brazil.

Mr. Murad observed that if the visa process for Brazil was not easy, TDAP could be requested to provide recommendations. In this regard, it would be necessary to take Mr. Qaiser Baig on board to coordinate with TDAP for obtaining the invitation letter and for the involvement of the Pakistan Embassy in Brazil.

The President approved the proposal and directed Mr. Atiq-ur-Rehman to prepare and lead the delegation to Brazil, assuring full support from the Chamber, in this regard.

Mr. Lahshan Khilji requested the President to increase the number of seats for SMEs in the trade delegation from one (1) to two (2) or three (3). The President responded positively to this request.

Mr. Atiq-ur-Rehman further requested that TDAP be approached to include the IWA Exhibition in the next year’s calendar. The President assigned Mr. Umair Nisar to follow up on this matter.

Participants	The President, Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad, Sheikh Atiq Ur Rehman, Mr. Lahshan Khilji and the Secretary General.
Approval	Approved.

22. Point discussed.	Approval of Report of Seminar on AI for Export Sales & Marketing held on February 11, 2026.
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<u>Discussion:</u>
Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad informed the participants that the program had been organized by a Government Department under an initiative of the Prime Minister. He stated that the role of the Chamber was limited to circulating the invitation among its members to encourage their participation. He added that the seminar mainly shared basic information about AI tools, highlighting how artificial intelligence could assist in searching for products, understanding compliance requirements of different countries, and other related matters. The Secretary General inquired about the practical role of AI in business activities. In response, Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad explained that AI could provide comprehensive information with a single click on the same platform. For example, if one searched for buyers of surgical instruments, the system could generate details such as customer profiles, consumption patterns, addresses, and other relevant information. Mr. Salman Sheikh suggested that the SME Committee should establish contact with the team that organized the seminar in order to obtain maximum information for the benefit of SMEs. He remarked that the team possessed concrete data and insights that could help enhance exports even with limited financial resources. Mr. Lahshan Khilji, Chairman of the SME Committee, stated that the team which organized the seminar had only provided basic information. He added that the seminars conducted by his committee went further by introducing practical AI tools

	and guiding participants on drafting communications and identifying potential customers. He informed the meeting that the Committee was already working, in this direction.
Participants	The President, Mr. Muhammad Murad Arhsad, Mr. Salman Sheikh, Mr. Lahshan Khilji and The Secretary General.
Approval	Approved.

23. Point discussed.	Approval of report of meeting on visit of Lt. Gen. Syed Tariq Nadeem Gilani held on February 12, 2026.
<u>Discussion</u> The President said that Lt. Gen. Syed Tariq Nadeem Gilani, Chairman of the Cottage Trust, who is also his elder brother, visited this Chamber. He informed the meeting that the Trust was running three educational institutions providing quality education from Playgroup to Intermediate level at Takhat Pari, Jawa, and Sheikh Chogani, where technical education was also being provided. Muhammad Iqbal Asad stated that his company sponsors deserving students every year for MBBS and Engineering education, particularly those who were unable to afford the tuition fees. He said that he would be willing to play his role in supporting such initiatives. The President requested Mr. Iqbal Asad to visit the institutions to observe their work and facilities. Muhammad Murad Arshad shared that an organization named Babul in Sialkot was also helping deserving students who secured 80% or above marks in their examinations. He requested Mr. Iqbal Asad that he would arrange a meeting with the organization so that possible collaboration could be explored.	
Participants	The President, Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad and Mr. Muhammad Iqbal Asad.
Approval	Approved.

24. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Gloves & Footwear Industry held on February 12, 2026.
<u>Discussion:</u> Mr. Sohail Masood stated that it was a very good and informative meeting. He informed that since the Glove Committee had been merged with the Shoes Industry Committee, Mr. Majid Raza Bhutta was invited and attended the meeting accordingly. Mr. Sohail Masood further shared that Mr. Haroon Kabir, Mr. Fouzan Mahmood from SMEDA, Mr. Atif from Tannery Zone, and Haji Tariq Hussain, Chairman Departmental Committee on Shipping, were also invited in order to discuss the issues faced by the industry, as well as, the services offered by their respective organizations. Mr. Haroon Kabir shared his expertise regarding CE compliance and certification requirements. Mr. Fouzan Mahmood informed the participants about the services being offered by SMEDA to SMEs, including Certification Support, International Accreditation, Quality Improvement Programs, Industrial Stitching Units (ISUs) – Phase II, and the Prime Minister’s Export Assistance Program for SMEs. Haji Tariq guided the members on customs-related matters, particularly with regard to the procedures for sample shipments. Mr. Atif attended the meeting through Zoom and shared information regarding the Tannery Zone and its facilities. Mr. Sohail Masood also informed that around 300 students were currently undergoing	

a six-month training course on the gloves manufacturing process at LPDI under a program of NAVTTC. He mentioned that he was also overseeing this project. He further stated that the training course would be completed in April and the next challenge would be to engage and place these trained students in the industry so that they could practically contribute to the manufacturing process. Mr. Majid Raza Bhutta also shared information regarding the manufacturing of soles, stating that their company was producing CE-approved soles and offering this service to the industry.

Mr. Sohail Masood highlighted that CE-approved soles were required for the manufacturing of motorbike shoes and other protective footwear. However, he pointed out that unfortunately there was no certified testing body available in Sialkot.

Mr. Sohail Masood also requested the President to take up the matter of CE certification facilities with the concerned authorities. He informed that a case for establishing a laboratory, in this regard, was already under process.

The President stated that the Punjab Government had allocated Rs. 1.75 billion for the Testing Lab project planned to be established in the Export Processing Zone (EPZ). He requested Mr. Umair Nisar to obtain the latest update on the matter.

Mr. Umair Nisar replied that the DFA (Development Funding Agreement) was currently in the signing process.

Mr. Salman Sheikh emphasized that the proper procedural system should be followed in the manufacturing of goods.

Sheikh Atiq-ur-Rehman requested that there should be proper follow-up on the matter.

The President further informed that he had visited Lahore and held a meeting at the office of the Urban Unit, which was the executing agency of the Government of Punjab for the said project. He stated that a presentation was delivered during the meeting, wherein it was explained that the funds had already been approved and transferred to the Urban Unit. However, for the next stage of implementation, the Urban Unit was required to sign a Trust Fund Agreement with United Nations Industrial Development Organization, which was presently under process.

Participants	The President, Mr. Salman Sheikh, Sheikh Atiq-ur-Rehman, Mr. Sohail Masood and Mr. Umair Nisar
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Approval	Approved.
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25. Point discussed.	Approval of report of seminar on Digital Export Acceleration B2B, Meta Ads & Social Media Marketing for Global Business Growth held on February 16, 2026.
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Discussion:

Mr. Lahshan Khilji said that the seminar was organized on Digital Export Acceleration, B2B, Meta Ads, and Social Media Marketing for Global Business Growth. He stated that the participants were guided on how businesses could transition from B2C to B2B models in order to achieve more sustainable growth in international markets. He further explained that the members were advised to carefully evaluate the potential return on investment (ROI) before making any investment in B2C marketing campaigns. The session also highlighted the effective use of Meta Ads and social media platforms.

Participants	The President, Mr. Lahshan Khilji.
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Approval	Approved.
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26. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Visa/International Trade Disputes held on February 18, 2026.
<u>Discussion:</u>	
Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad said that the meeting had been convened to deliberate upon the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the issuance of Visa Recommender Letters (VRLs) to Chamber members. He said that a detailed discussion was held on the matter and the recommendations had been duly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Mr. Murad further informed that a number of SMEs engaged in B2C business had applied for visa recommendatory letters in order to attend the FIBO Exhibition as visitors. These letters were issued by the Chamber after due consideration. He added that he had personally guided the applicants regarding the required documentation and application procedure. He expressed gratitude that, by the grace of God, most of the applicants successfully obtained their visas. He further stated that one of the reasons for the positive outcome was the recent visit of the Ambassador of Germany, which had contributed to strengthening relations. Mr. Murad also informed that some Ambassadors were planning to visit the Chamber after the month of Ramzan. Mr. Salman Sheikh inquired about the criteria and time period of membership for the issuance of a "To Whom It May Concern" letter to members. The Secretariat replied that members whose memberships had been duly approved in accordance with the Membership By-Laws and by the Executive Committee were eligible for the issuance of such a letter.	
Participants	Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad, Mr. Salman Sheikh and the Secretariat staff.
Approval	Approved.

27. Point discussed.	Approval of Report of Seminar on The Missing Link in Industry-Academia for Global Growth and Lessons from China held on February 18, 2026.
<u>Discussion:</u>	
Dr. Raza Ullah Shah informed the meeting that a professor from Sialkot, who has been working in China for the last ten years, was invited to share insights on how Chinese universities had progressed ahead of those in the United States. He highlighted that this advancement was largely due to strong industry - academia linkages, innovation, and a focus on applied research. He highlighted that although Sialkot was producing a limited range of sports goods, its exports were globally significant. However, the local industry lacked innovation, precision testing facilities, and adoption of advanced technologies. Unlike China, Pakistani universities were not aligned with the industrial needs of Sialkot, and their curricula had minimal focus on solving real industrial problems. It was proposed that universities should be actively involved in addressing industry challenges, particularly in the areas of testing and quality compliance. Universities possess extensive laboratory infrastructure and a large pool of qualified PhDs, which could be upgraded to serve industry requirements. This proposed model would offer a triangular benefit: - Industries would gain access to testing and compliance facilities, - Universities would generate revenue through laboratory services, and - Students would acquire practical skills through real industrial testing and exposure. The concept was also discussed with Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial	

Research, which could support the upgradation of university laboratories.

Additionally, a meeting was held with SMEDA focusing on carbon footprint assessment. SMEDA offered to calculate the carbon footprint of 30 selected industries to create awareness and build capacity for environmental compliance.

The matter was also taken up with the Higher Education Commission, which responded positively. It was hoped that a detailed discussion would be held after Ramadan, either through a visit by HEC officials to Sialkot or by a delegation visiting Islamabad.

The President stated that the committee headed by Dr. Raza Ullah Shah was working actively, and he himself had attended its meetings. He mentioned that he asked the guest speaker that although extensive discussion had taken place on industry-academia linkages, no tangible benefits or results had yet been achieved.

In response, the guest explained that industries in Pakistan did not sufficiently invest in such collaborations. He suggested that industries should adopt a serious approach and assign concrete projects to universities in order to achieve meaningful results. He further informed that in China, businessmen invest individually in research and development and their government also extended support. The Chinese government had developed a structured system to facilitate and promote industry-academia collaboration.

Dr. Raza Ullah Shah emphasized the urgent need to involve universities in research and innovation. He warned that failure to do so would result in long-term losses, as the younger generation would not be adequately prepared for future challenges. He suggested that industrial content should be incorporated into university curricula, including case studies of successful businessmen.

The President asked Dr. Raza Ullah Shah what steps he was taking in this regard, noting that curriculum changes fall under government jurisdiction.

Dr. Raza Ullah Shah replied that he had written to universities and the Higher Education Commission, which had responded positively, and expressed hope that a meeting would be held after Ramadan.

Mr. Kamal suggested that there was also a need to revise the university admission structure, in line with practices in developed countries, by assessing students' talent and aptitude rather than relying solely on passing marks.

Participants	The President, Dr. Raza Ullah Shah and Mr. Kamal.
Approval	Approved.

28. Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Construction/Renovation & Special Initiatives held on February 23, 2026
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<u>Discussion:</u>	
Mr. Salman Sheikh informed the participants that the President had constituted a Departmental Committee on Construction to deliberate upon and supervise matters relating to the construction and renovation works of the SCCI Building. He stated that the Executive Committee had already approved a budget of Rs. 40 million for the building works, and the Committee was currently working on the execution plan for the said activities. Mr. Salman Sheikh further apprised that the Committee had recommended that the renovation of Sheikh Muhammad Shafi Hall should be undertaken as the first priority. He explained that the hall served as the main face of the building, where most of the	

meetings and official events of the Chamber were held, and photographs of these meetings were frequently shared internationally. Therefore, upgrading the hall was considered essential to enhance the overall image of the Chamber.

He further informed that Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Chairman of the Committee, could not attend today's meeting due to prior engagements.

Mr. Salman Sheikh stated that two companies, namely M/s. Faisal Associates and M/s. Interieur by Hues by Reema Khan, had presented their proposals along with the estimated costs for the renovation work. After evaluation, the proposal of M/s. Interieur by Hues by Reema Khan, amounting to Rs. 13 million, was found to be the lowest and was accordingly approved by the Committee.

The President inquired about the nature of the work proposed under the project.

Mr. Salman Sheikh explained that the renovation would include development of feature walls, replacement of chairs, replacement of flooring, and other interior improvement works.

Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad requested that the presentation be displayed to give the participants a clearer idea of how the renovated hall would look.

Accordingly, Mr. Salman Sheikh presented the proposal through pictures explaining the proposed changes, section by section.

Sheikh Atiq ur Rehman suggested that the display installed outside the hall should also be upgraded.

Mr. Salman Sheikh replied that the said work was planned to be undertaken in the second phase, subject to approval of the House. He further added that the plan was to develop the display area as a "History Wall" of the Chamber highlighting its organizational legacy.

The President stated that Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Malik had been appointed as Chairman of the Committee because of his significant contribution to building development works during his tenure in the Chamber. He acknowledged that the Committee was performing good; however, he emphasized that the renovation work should commence only after the approval of the minutes by the Executive Committee, as starting work prior to such approval would be beyond the prescribed limits. He further stated that the Secretary General was also aware of his instructions that the work should begin only after formal approval from the Executive Committee.

Mr. Sohail Masood remarked that he had earlier requested Mr. Salman Sheikh to discuss the matter with the President. In response, Mr. Salman Sheikh clarified that he was not aware whether the Chairman of the Committee had discussed the matter with the President or not.

Sheikh Atiq ur Rehman further requested that a 3D design file of the proposed renovation be presented.

Mr. Salman Sheikh explained that a 3D design had not been prepared because it normally required two to three weeks to complete, whereas the Committee had a very limited timeframe and intended to complete the renovation work during Ramzan. He added that preparing a 3D model would also involve additional cost.

Mr. Mehtab Maqsood inquired whether the height of the main door would be increased to enhance the aesthetic view of the hall.

Mr. Salman Sheikh replied that it was not feasible, as there was a structural beam above the door which could not be removed or altered.	
Mr. Sohail Masood appreciated the President for nominating Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Malik as Chairman of the Committee, acknowledging his experience in construction-related matters.	
Mr. Mehtab Maqsood also raised a query regarding the colour of the main chairs and suggested that their colour should be changed.	
Participants	The President, Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad, Mr. Salman Sheikh, Mr. Sohail Masood, Sheikh Atiq-ur-Rehman and Mr. Mehtab Maqsood
Approval	Approved.

29 Point discussed.	Approval of minutes of meeting of the Departmental Committee on Membership/Bye-Laws scheduled to be held on February 23, 2026.
Discussion:	
Mr. Salman Sheikh inquired why the number of new memberships was lower as compared to the previous year.	
The Secretariat staff replied that the validity of the existing memberships was until March 31, 2026; therefore, the number of new memberships was currently low.	
Participants	Mr. Salman Sheikh.
Approval	Approved.

Any Other Point

30. The President informed the Executive Committee that during the current month he had received a number of invitations from different organizations requesting him to attend their respective events. He explained that most of these events were organized primarily for fundraising purposes to support the welfare activities of the respective organizations.

The President stated that he had personally contributed generous donations to several organizations. However, in the case of two particular events, he had planned to request the support and participation of the Executive Committee members in making contributions.

For the information of the members, the President shared the details of the donations that had already been extended to various organizations, which were as follows:

- **Anjuman-e-Mughlia,** Rs. 500,000
- **Ghurki Trust Lahore,** Rs. 500,000
- **Mashal-e-Rah,** Rs. 100,000
- **Maskan Old Age Home,** Rs. 500,000
- **Travel to Light,** Rs. 200,000
- **SOS Village,** Rs. 200,000
- **Seerat Study Center,** Rs. 200,000
- **Ghazali Education Trust** Rs. 500,000

The President further informed that a total amount of Rs. 700,000 had been donated to Cottage Trust, out of which Rs. 500,000 had been contributed by the President personally while Rs. 200,000 had been donated personally by the Senior Vice President (SVP).

The President also informed the members that the representatives of Akhuwat Trust had requested a donation as well. However, he suggested that after Ramzan, he along with members of the Executive Committee would visit the organization.

The President further stated that during fundraising programs organized by Cancer Care Hospital and Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital, he had announced contributions of Rs. 1,000,000 and Rs. 1,500,000 respectively.

Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad added that in a number of such programs he and the President had made donations from their personal resources, as the causes were noble. However, in certain programs such as those organized by Shaukat Khanum or Cancer Care etc., other institutions including SIAL, AIRSIAL, and Sialkot Dry Port Trust had announced large donations. In such circumstances, it became difficult for them to match those contributions personally. He further mentioned that in some cases the Office Bearers had been invited as the Chief Guest, which also generated expectations for a notable contribution.

The President therefore requested the Executive Committee members to extend their support through donations for Cancer Care Hospital and Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital.

Mr. Muhammad Murad Arshad further informed that Diya Foundation had also approached the Chamber for support, mentioning that the organization was doing commendable work and was highly deserving of assistance.

After discussion, the following donations were announced for Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital, Cancer Care Hospital and Diya Foundation.

For Shaukat Khanum & Cancer Care Hospital

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|--------------------------|---------------|
| • President, | Rs. 500,000 |
| • Senior Vice President, | Rs. 500,000 |
| • Vice President, | Rs. 100,000 |
| • Mr. Mehtab Maqsood, | Rs. 1,000,000 |
| • Mr. M. Iqbal Asad, | Rs. 100,000 |
| • Mr. Muhammad Abid, | Rs. 100,000 |
| • Mr. Haseeb Tahir, | Rs. 100,000 |
| • Sheikh Atiq-ur-Rehman, | Rs. 100,000 |

For Diya Foundation

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| • From Chamber Fund | Rs. 200,000 |
| • Senior Vice President | Rs. 200,000 |
| • Mr. Mehtab Maqsood | Rs. 1,000,000 |
| • Mr. Muhammad Iqbal Asad | Rs. 100,000 |
| • Sheikh Atiq-ur-Rehman | Rs. 100,000 |
| • Mr. Adnan Safdar | Rs. 100,000 |
| • Sheikh Aamer Mahmood | Rs. 200,000 |

The Meeting ended with a votes of thanks to the Chair.

Minutes approved by the President of Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry.