The Pakistan Business Council
FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH

PBC Activity Report

JANUARY TO MARCH 2023

This report summarizes the activities of the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) for the period January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023.

The major advocacy activities of the Pakistan Business Council and its internal workings for the quarter under review are summarized below:

Major Advocacy Activities & Events during the Quarter

PBC Delegation Calls on the Prime Minister of Pakistan:

A PBC delegation led by its Chairman, Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb met the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister, Governor SBP, Chairman FBR and senior civil servants to discuss the economy and propose ways to meet the challenges.

PBC Delegation Holds Meeting with the Governor State Bank of Pakistan:

A PBC delegation met the Governor SBP to discuss opportunities to manage the external account. The delegation was led by the PBC Chairman Mr. Muhammad Aurangzeb and comprised of senior directors of the PBC.

Visit of Mr. Ashfaq Tola, State Minister for Revenue to the PBC:

Mr. Ashfaq Tola, State Minister for Revenue along with other members of the Reforms and Resource Mobilization Commission (RRMC) visited the PBC to hold a discussion on broadening of the tax base and the likely measures to be incorporated in the Finance Bill 2023 for the same.

Launch of the PBC's Study on Agriculture: As part of its "Grow More/Grow Better" thrust:

PBC's study on the state of Pakistan's agriculture was launched at the Agri Connections 2023 Conference organized by the Pakistan Agriculture Coalition.

Visit of the Regional Head Financial Markets SCB to the PBC:

Mr. Mark Price, Regional Head, Financial Markets Africa and the Middle East visited the PBC to discuss the economy.

Visit of the UK Trade Envoy to the PBC:

The UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy for Pakistan, Mark Eastwood MP, along with Sarah Mooney, the Deputy High Commissioner Karachi visited the PBC.

Visit of the ADB Country Head and his Team to the PBC:

Mr. Yong Dae Kim, Country Head, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and senior members of the ADB in Pakistan visited the PBC. The discussions centered around Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in areas of infrastructure development.

Visit of FCDO Advisor to the PBC:

The UK Foreign & Commonwealth Development Office's Private Sector Advisor visited the PBC to meet the CEO.

Visit of US Treasury Attaché to the PBC:

US Treasury Attaché visited the PBC to exchange views on the economy.

Visit of German Emirati Joint Council for Industry and Commerce:

A delegation from the German Emirati Joint Council for Industry and Commerce visited the PBC to discuss the economy.

Engaging with the FBR on proposed SRO 299(I)/2023 Ultimate Beneficial Ownership:

The PBC is actively lobbying for the withdrawal of proposed SRO 299(I)/2023 which requires the disclosure of Ultimate Beneficial Ownership (UBO) to the FBR in another format in addition to the requirements under the Company Ordinance 2017. PBC has requested the FBR to withdraw the proposed SRO 299(I)/2023 and to link its data with the SECP & the SBP who already have the requested information.

Ceo's Participation in Meetings & Webinars:

The PBC CEO participated in the following meetings, webinars to promote the PBC's agenda:

Met Nick O'Donohoe, CEO of the BII (British International Investment (formerly: CDC-Commonwealth Development Corporation) and his delegation at a lunch to discuss the economy and the potential for investment in Pakistan.

Participated as a panelist on a ESG Consultation Seminar organized by the Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP).

Spoke at a roundtable organized by ReMIT (Revenue Mobilization for Investment and Trade). A UK FCDO funded Programme. CEO shared his views on the challenges and opportunities to improve the investment climate

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Spoke at the consultative session on the proposed "**Invest Pakistan**" organized by the Board of Investment.

Met Zeeshan Shaikh, Country Head IFC to discuss investment by Saudi and GCC investors in Pakistan.

Met Sarah Mooney, British Deputy High Commissioner and her team to discuss challenges and opportunities in Pakistan.

Met Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms and discussed obstacles to trade and investment.

Attended a webinar on restructuring of sovereign debt organized by Harvard University.

Attended the annual exhibition of the Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers Association and participated as a panelist on a discussion on Make-in-Pakistan

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Met Elizabeth Horst of the US State Department at the invitation of the US Ambassador to Pakistan to discuss key reform recommendations.

Attended a webinar with the US State Department's US-Pakistan Women's Council to discuss collaboration on women's empowerment.

Attended the launch of K-Electric's Investment Plan for 2024-2030.

Attended a dinner hosted in honor of the EU Ambassador to Pakistan

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Attended a meeting with Cristen Bauer of the Commercial Law Development Program of the US Department of Commerce on alternative dispute resolution.

Attended a meeting of Air Quality Asia on tackling Lahore's air quality challenges.

Met Dr Murtaza Syed, former Acting Governor State Bank of Pakistan to discuss the economic challenges.

Met Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, former Federal Minister of Finance to discuss challenges and opportunities for reforms.

Met Mr. Alexis Chahtahtinsky, Consul General of France and Mr. Laurent Chopiton, Head of the Economic Department, French Embassy, Islamabad to discuss the economy.

Met Mr. Wille Eerola of the Finland Pakistan Business Council and his delegation and discussed investment opportunities.

Meetings by Resident Director Islamabad

S.No	Name of Person Visited	Purpose	
1	Mr. Shahrukh Ali Khan DG KP Food Safety & Halal Food Authority, Peshawar	Apprised the DG regarding PBC's stance in National Standards Steering Committee on the implementation of CCI decision.	
2	Dr. Abdul Sattar Shah Director (Tech) KP FS&HFA, Peshawar	Courtesy call.	
3	Mr. Zulfiqar Ali DG (Policy, Reforms and Legal) Board of Investment	Apprised regarding the PFA Bill passed by the Punjab Assembly.	
4	Mr. Ashfaque Memon Joint Technical Adviser, Ministry of Science & Technology	Requested an early meeting of the National Standards Steering Committee	
5	Mr. Nadeem Bashir DG Investment Promotion Board of Investment	Followed up regarding the creation of a Invest Pakistan front office, proposed by BoI. He requested help from PBC to identify private sector projects for investment to place on BoI’s website.	
6	Mr. Jamil Qureshi EDG Board of Investment	Courtesy call.	
7	Mr. Azeem Niazi and Mr. Ahmed Ali, Bayer	Discussion on current policy challenges for the seed sector.	

S.No	Name of Person Visited	Purpose	
8	Mr. Jalal Hassan CEO PBIT Mr. Sohail Qadri Director Coordination PBIT	Updated regarding ongoing work by Punjab Board of investment and Trade. • USAID funded investment strategy for Punjab • World Bank project on solarization. • New SEZ for Askar. • IPCC being formed for World Investment Promotion Agency. • Lahore/California sister cities. • Working groups formed for promoting Packaging and Logistics as industries.	
9	FoodExpo+ by the Punjab Food Authority	Panelist on regulatory climate of the Food sector	
10	Mr. Ahmed Zafar Chief Strategy Officer TCS	Progress update on transit trade with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan	
11	NSSC Meeting, PSQCA Karachi	Won agreement to allow provinces to register food products, and paused QR coding by PFA.	
12	Mr. Khalil Sattar CEO K&N's	Discussed potential for GMO Soybean sowing in Pakistan.	
13	Consultation on Asaan Karobar Bill by Board of Investment	Panelist for commenting on the contours of the Asaan Karobar Bill	

S.No	Name of Person Visited	Purpose	
14	Mr. Mukarram Jah Ansari Member Customs (Ops) FBR	Spoke on Trade with Uzbekistan; Review of EFS Proposals given to FBR; Shared PBC's position paper on developing a Minimum Consensus between Political Parties.	
15	Mr. Khashih ur Rehman EDG Board of Investment	Shared PBC's position paper on developing a Minimum Consensus between Political Parties.	

INTERNAL WORKINGS OF THE PBC

44th Audit Committee Meeting:

The 44th Meeting of the PBC Audit Committee was held on March 14th, 2023 at the PBC. The Audit Committee reviewed the Half-Yearly Accounts for the period ended December 31st, 2022.

86th PBC Board of Directors Meeting:

The 86th PBC Board of Directors Meeting was held on March 14th, 2023 at the PBC. In addition to approving the Half-Yearly Accounts for the period ended December 31st, 2022 as recommended by the Audit Committee, the Board reviewed the general economic conditions of the country and the PBC's role.

Press Coverage

BUSINESS RECORDER
PAKISTAN'S PREMIER FINANCIAL DAILY

MARCH 22ND, 2023

'Pakistan is running out of time,' warns PBC as IMF programme hangs in balance

"As stakeholders contest short-term power, Pakistan's long-term future is in jeopardy," said the PBC in a tweet on Wednesday.

"Drip feed and hope will not suffice. Without IMF's programme and debt re-profiling, help from friendly nations is not forthcoming."

"Pakistan is running out of time," it added.
The statement comes as Pakistan reels from one of its worst economic crises in history. The South Asian country has been faced with a barrage of woes with a perceived default risk and downgrade by international ratings agencies reflecting the state of the economy that has also had to bear major political turmoil and frequent change in key leadership.

Pakistan remains in talks with the international lender for the resumption of the IMF's Extended Fund Facility (EFF), which has been stalled since last year.

The bailout programme's revival has been deemed crucial to stabilise the economy that has been hit by a severe dollar shortage in recent months with reserves held by the central bank treading at critically low levels.

Last month, PBC had underscored the need to secure IMF support as well as maintain a narrow exchange rate, stem losses, cut expenditure and reduce the use of imported fuel for energy to put the country on a sounder base in the medium to longer term for economic stability.

Its CEO Ehsan Malik also forwarded suggestions to Federal Finance Minster Ishaq Dar that he said could be implemented quickly to enhance tax revenue from the un-taxed and under taxed sectors of the economy and to economize public expenditure to manage fiscal account.

PBC's latest warning comes after Bloomberg economists also warned that the country could be heading towards default if funding from the IMF is not secured.

"Pakistan is careening toward a potential default as soon as June unless it secures aid from the IMF," wrote Bloomberg economists Ankur Shukla and Abhishek Gupta.

"Our base case is that the IMF will deliver the remaining $2.6 billion in aid under the current bailout program by June – helping Pakistan wiggle through the immediate crisis – as the country has fulfilled most of the IMF's conditions."

"If the aid does not arrive, though, we think China will help plug the gap to head off a default," they added.

THE NATION

MARCH 26TH 2023.

Pakistan needs diversification of products to boost meat exports

ISLAMABAD-Pakistan has the potential to massively enhance its meat exports with diversification into the boneless and frozen category with a particular focus on gaining access to the Chinese market, WealthPK reported.

Data from the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) shows that the exports of bovine meat reached $24.8 million during February 2023 against $24.3 million during the same period of 2022, showing a growth of 2%.

According to a report published by TDAP, Pakistan's export-oriented meat processors have a significant opportunity to tap into the Chinese market, which is the largest importer of frozen beef.

To capitalise on this thriving market, Pakistani meat processors need to diversify into other meat segments, particularly frozen, boneless beef.

The TDAP report stated that diversifying away from fresh carcasses is essential to gain a foothold in the Chinese market, as the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement-II (CPFTA-II) does not grant concessions for fresh or chilled bovine carcasses, which are subject to a prohibitive 20% tariff.

The report said Pakistani bovine meat processors enjoy duty-free access to all other market segments, including frozen bovine meat products, fresh boneless meat, and fresh bovine cuts with bone in. This provides Pakistan with a significant advantage over other major beef exporters, it added.

The report pointed out that to penetrate the promising Chinese market, meat processors must devote significant efforts and resources to comply with the strict phytosanitary standards imposed by Chinese authorities.

Furthermore, the need to shift towards the frozen beef market segment is also crucial to expand to other major markets in Asia, including Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam, where similar consumption patterns are observed, the report said.

Meat exports from Pakistan are largely concentrated in the fresh or chilled market segment, specifically in the carcasses and half carcasses category, with most exports going to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Pakistan Business Council (PBC) has explored the potential of Pakistan's bovine meat sector for the export market, highlighting that the industry presents an opportunity for growth, but is currently hindered by a lack of traceability of cattle stock, the presence of foot and mouth diseases (FMD), outdated methods and technologies used in aggregating, transporting, and slaughtering animals, and the lack of capacity to produce frozen de-boned beef cuts for international markets.

The PBC highlighted that Pakistan has a significant opportunity to diversify its exports and improve its economy, given its existing agrarian base and the involvement of around 12.5 million families in cattle-rearing activities.

However, there is limited focus by livestock farmers to rear animals exclusively for meat production, with older animals that no longer produce sufficient milk typically sold for meat.

According to the PBC, yield gap for buffalo meat produced in Pakistan, when compared to the top three best meat-producing countries (Australia, US, and Brazil), is around 35%, with the low yield being driven by the unattractive domestic market for beef.

The PBC mentioned that the three largest meat exporting countries, including Australia, Brazil, and India, export frozen beef, which is considered lower quality and cheaper, but has a longer shelf life and can be transported by sea to far markets, improving marketability and providing better returns. To compete in the international market for frozen beef, Pakistan must comply with the quality and phytosanitary standards of importing countries.

The FMD in Pakistan currently limits access to most global markets, but the government is undertaking vaccination programs and making an animal quarantine zone in Cholistan to address the issue.

THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

MARCH 24TH, 2023

Low horsepower tractors hurt agriculture

PBC report underlines need for using better machinery for sustainable growth

LAHORE: A widespread issue across Pakistan's agriculture sector is the locally built low-powered tractors, revealed a report titled State of Pakistan's Agriculture, which was launched by the Pakistan Business Council (PBC).

Tractor industry had been given protection from imports a few decades ago in order to support the local manufacturers and promote the production of tractors.

"Despite decades of protection and the government's direct support to farmers for the purchase of these tractors, Pakistan's most common tractors operate in the range of 50 horsepower," stated the report.
The low horsepower tractors can typically plough soil to a maximum of about 18 inches.

"This means that on most farms in Pakistan, soil compaction is usually found at a depth of 15 to 18 inches. This is called 'hard pan' which must be broken for the cotton plant to grow sustainably," explained the report.

The cotton plant sets its roots far deeper reaching over four feet and is best watered through its roots by using the water retained by the soil it grows in.

Hard pan means that the roots of a typical cotton plant are found to turn at right angle at the depth of around 18 inches, sometimes even less.

"Natural need of the cotton plant is not being met because of the inadequate farm machinery being used through seasons. This means that, instead of watering the cotton plant through the soil, excessive surface watering is commonly practiced in Pakistan," stated the report.

The inappropriate watering provides a home to insects and leads to a higher use of insecticides, resulting in lack of compliance with the global sustainability standards.

"If the correct farm machinery is used, less surface water will mean less insects, less insecticide sprays, and greater sustainability," the report added.

DAWN

DAWN MARCH 17TH, 2023

Fix agriculture to get rid of external deficit: Salim

KARACHI: Former central bank governor Syed Salim Raza said on Thursday fixing the agriculture sector can eliminate the food trade deficit in three years and lead to a production surplus in the subsequent three years.

In his keynote address at a conference organised by the Pakistan Agricultural Coalition (PAC), Mr Raza said developing the agriculture sector is the only way to rid the country of its perennial external deficit and increase dollar earnings in the long run. “[Agriculture] is all that we have,” he said in an implicit reference to the sector’s relatively less dependence on imported raw materials and high export potential.

According to the State of Pakistan’s Agriculture 2023 report that the PAC and the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) released on Thursday, 80 per cent of Pakistani farms lack direct access to bank credit. Moreover, at least 75pc of credit demand for crops isn’t being met through banking credit.

The study referred to a survey conducted by Karandaaz that showed two-thirds of the farmers said the reason for not borrowing directly from the banking sector was either complex documentation requirements or a lack of knowledge about getting a bank loan.

As a result, two-thirds of the farmers borrow informally from family, friends, money lenders or loan sharks. Some 14pc of them borrow from Zarai Taraqiati Bank Ltd, 12pc from microfinance banks and only 4pc from commercial banks, which cater mainly to larger farmers.

Using a simplified method to assess credit demand by farms, the PAC study came up with a figure of Rs2.6 trillion for 2019-20 for the five major field crops only. In contrast, the actual disbursement was just Rs638bn for all crops in the same year.

The breakdown of the credit demand estimate by farm size showed a demand of Rs338bn for farms above 50 acres, which is comparable to the Rs384bn figure for the actual disbursement to the farms of this category in 2019-20. However, estimated credit demand for farms of 12.50-50 acres was Rs843bn versus only Rs73bn that was actually disbursed.

Credit demand for farms below 12.5 acres was Rs1.45tr, which was eight times the Rs181bn that banks actually disbursed to smallholder farmers. “The smallholder farmers are the ones beholden to the middlemen,” it said. Speaking on the occasion, PAC CEO Arif Nadeem said economic growth targets must include 4pc real GDP growth in agriculture.

Pakistan Today Profit

MARCH 6TH, 2023

BOI to introduce Asaan Karobar Bill in parliament

ISLAMABAD: A year after the launch of the Asaan Karobar Programme to promote ease of doing business (EODB) in the country, the Board of Investment (BOI) has completed the draft bill of the programme to be presented in the parliament by the end of this month.

In March 2022, President Arif Alvi formally launched the Asaan Karobar Programme as part of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Development Policy to lessen the compliance burden on businesses, particularly for SMEs.

Former Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan had desired BOI to undertake regulatory reforms and guillotine procedures in line with international best practices to identify regulatory obstacles at all three tiers of government, i.e. federal, provincial and local government, for the elimination, simplification and modernisation of regulations.

Following the former chief executive's wish, BOI was in consultation with different stakeholders to reform and remove technical and legal bottlenecks in doing business in the country.

Officials privy to the matter state that by the end of January of this year, at least four rounds of regulatory reforms and guillotine have been launched and around 270 reform proposals have been taken up with federal and provincial departments. More so, 137 reforms have already been implemented as well.

During a consultative workshop held on Monday, the concerned stakeholders have agreed to initiate the legislative process to introduce the Asaan Karobar Bill in the parliament at the earliest.

The decision was taken in the workshop, in the presence of over 80 participants including representatives from public & private sector, all the provincial governments, AJK, G-B, Finance Division, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), Pakistan Single Window (PSW), Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Pakistan Business Council (PBC), KP-BOI, AJK-BOI, academia, etc.

While addressing the concluding session, Ambreen Iftikhar, Additional Secretary at the BOI, said that the valuable discussion between the stakeholders would be incorporated in the final draft of the Asaan Karobaar Bill. She also said that BOI was fully aware of the problems faced by different investors in initiating their businesses and in this regard valuable input was given during the consultative workshop. The Bill would ensure protection and promotion of small business owners to run their businesses with ease and comfort. She also stressed upon the effective implementation of the Bill, after it is passed by the parliament.

However, the Bill has challenges as well. According to the officials, the challenges confronting the Asaan Karobar Bill include limited access to finances, lack of skilled labor, poor infrastructure, and a volatile business environment. The proposed Bill will be introduced in the Parliament by the end of this month after incorporating the relevant suggestions of the participants.

As per the documents, the private sector, business associations, and chambers of commerce and industry are all actively involved in the identification of hindering regulations. The proposals received are examined and then the important ones are shared with the concerned departments & agencies in the public sector. The relevant departments also carry out their own impact analysis, and then implement reforms by making suitable regulatory changes to eliminate, reduce or simplify the regulatory difficulties.

The initiative is the first of its kind partnership between the public and private sector to simplify the regulatory landscape and create a friendly environment to support the growth of businesses, particularly SMEs.

BUSINESS RECORDER
PAKISTAN'S PREMIER FINANCIAL DAILY

MARCH 22ND, 2023

Lack of good seeds behind stagnant cotton output, says report

LAHORE: The major reason for stagnant yields and falling area under cotton in Pakistan is the lack of good quality seeds as average cotton seed available hovers in the vicinity of having 44 percent germination.

"This means 44 out of every 100 seeds sprout, all others are duds. The result is that farmers typically apply 16kg of seed per acre which have uneven germination across a field. With good quality seed, only 8kg per acre would be required," stated the State of Pakistan's Agriculture Report 2023 launched by Pakistan Business Council on Thursday.

The report stated that Pakistan's cotton production has declined over the years with an average of 10 to 12 million bales per annum produced in the last two decades but falling precipitously in the last few years.

"China and Australia are major cotton producing countries that cultivate irrigated cotton like Pakistan. Their average productivity per acre has continued to rise over the years (barring years of drought) while Pakistan's yields have remained constant at around 1 bale per acre with a fall in recent years," stated the report.

The report mentions that yield gains in China and Australia were mainly led by the adoption of improved seeds following by improved farming techniques, seedling transplantation, better crop management strategies to combat disease, more suitable irrigation, stronger fertilizer application, and the adoption of genetically modified (GM) technology traits in seeds for pest and weed control.

In the last 20 years, India's cotton production has more than doubled. In the first few years of the 21st century, India's cotton production hovered between 14 and 16 million bales while Pakistan's cotton production ranged between 11 and 14 million bales. This was the period in which Bt cotton had been introduced in Pakistan but without a robust seed industry. Yields rose sharply.

In the subsequent decade, Pakistan's cotton production continued to stagnate within this range, India's cotton production skyrocketed to almost 40 million bales as early as 2013.

"Poor quality seed means low germination levels leading to higher seed cost per acre and more labour cost. It means low yields which lead to low earnings. It also means a higher susceptibility of the crop to climatic effects, and disease and pest attacks, inability to compete against weeds, and poor uptake of nutrients," stated the report. Moreover, Bt cotton was brought to Pakistan through irregular channels without any formal stewardship, which is why, although most of Pakistan's cotton has transgenic technology, its effectiveness remains questionable.

"All these factors culminate in sub-par cotton yields. The small farmer is the biggest sufferer from poor quality seed," reasoned the report.

DAWN

MARCH 13RD, 2023

Beset with formidable challenges

Leading international development economists and social scientists have long maintained that the rarest of rare useful ideas has a life span of no more than 40-50 years.

Perhaps presently, this is best demonstrated by a faltering global financialisation designed to counter the first bout of international stagflation in the early 1970s.

However, conventional wisdom seems to be fast losing its relevance while facing yet another stagflation. And the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) set of standard reforms and their timelines, in the opinion of many, need to be seriously reviewed.

Keeping in view the ongoing challenges and uncertain environment, the IMF has temporarily increased the limits of its members' annual and cumulative access to the Fund's resources in the General Resources Account (GRA), according to an announcement made on March 6. Thus the Fund would provide member countries — particularly emerging markets and developing economies facing increased financial pressures and vulnerabilities — access to higher financial support from GRA.

The Fund must show some elasticity to prevent the country's economic crisis from getting out of hand

Islamabad also needs to rethink its policies. No serious effort has been made to shake off the economy's crutches and stand on its own feet. The federal government's external debt has shot up by 38 per cent and domestic loans by 25pc in the past 12 months. The interest payments as a ratio of revenue, the worst in the region after Sri Lanka, at 42pc, will jump up to 54pc by the end of June.

Instead of putting their own house in order, policymakers have tried to secure a more accommodative IMF programme to make them less painful and more palatable for the domestic constituency.

On the other hand, the IMF's increasing micromanaging of the economy and its fallout are seen to be too severe by government, industry representatives and citizens alike. For example, while Pakistan is faced with the risk of default, the international lender has been reported to have ruled out foreign debt restructuring.

According to IMF resident representative in Islamabad Esther Perez Ruiz, Pakistan has also to give an assurance that its balance of payments deficit is fully financed for the remaining period of the IMF programme. There are doubts that indicated funding may not come from friendly countries, reportedly suffering from debt fatigue and owing to the country's worsening crisis.

China seems to be helping Pakistan avoid a debt default for a while. Beijing has committed $2 billion, of which $1.2bn has been received by the central bank.

Earlier, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar told a news conference that the IMF is now helping Pakistan fill a $5bn to $7bn external financing gap for the current fiscal, as the government had completed all the prior actions required for an IMF staff level agreement. Despite experiencing hiccups, the ongoing 23rd IMF programme is likely to be the second one to be fully implemented in the coming weeks.

Historically, of the previous 22 agreements signed with IMF, only one was fully implemented, and that too, with the Fund's liberal waivers.

Pakistan was then nicknamed a one-tranche country by some observers. Nonetheless, the agreements were terminated in a cordial manner under the prescribed procedure.

Pakistani policymakers have encountered mounting domestic pressures to undertake IMF reforms at a speedier pace and on a continuing basis to prevent the crisis from getting worse. And in the erratic execution of the ongoing programme and current difficult negotiations between the two sides, Islamabad's ties with the Fund seem to have come under undesirable strain.

Senior finance ministry officials are reported to be annoyed by 'maltreatment' by the IMF, whom they accuse of 'shifting goalposts' during staff-level negotiations. "We are members of the IMF, not beggars or else our membership be discarded, said a disgruntled senior official.

The current account has to be managed, otherwise, the country would be 'blackmailed,' says Mr Dar. He notes that the country has been spending, which it could not afford. It appears that his first priority is to reduce external sector vulnerabilities.

Mr Dar also strongly supported the State Bank's decision to issue a priority list to domestic banks for sanctioning dollars for import — the instructions that the IMF has asked the central bank to withdraw.

"Since only the formal sector borrows from banks, the policy rate hike would hurt it," says Pakistan Business Council CEO Ehsan Malik. He argues that the higher cost of borrowing will lead to loan defaults."Our inflation is supply-push and devaluation linked. The interest hike will not control it."

Independent analysts, as well as government officials, have raised from time to time issues such as one size does not fit all, the IMF should desist from micromanaging the borrower's economy, and the lender's programme should be updated. However, with Pakistan's continuing failure to bring about meaningful structural reforms, the IMF has responded with more strict terms and conditions.

However, to quote a US-based analyst, the IMF needs to develop more flexible strategies for borrowing countries that are most heavily dependent on the Fund. Pakistan is one of them.

The reported internal studies by IMF experts and experience gained in Fund's bailout programmes for countries such as Greece, Iceland and Argentina highlight that countries which need deeper reforms require a more flexible policy with a longer timeline, says Mayraj Fahim, a senior fellow at the international think tank, The City Mayors Foundation.

Some of the new IMF conditions, such as linking interest rates with headline inflation rates and the imposition of permanent debt surcharge on electricity, says an opinion piece, seem quite unreasonable. It is argued that the Fund must show some elasticity on these conditions to prevent the country's economic crisis from getting out of hand.

DAWN

MARCH 6TH, 2023

CORPORATE WINDOW: The powers of the elite

Amidst heated legal and political wranglings, Pakistan has been sinking deeper into economic quicksand every day. Backbreaking inflation and the fast-eroding currency value indicate the direction the country is headed.

Prime Minister Shehbaz's government seems lost, flip-flopping as if waiting for divine help without a structured viable plan. Suffering people watched on helplessly. However, the comportment of the business class, which enjoys more than its fair share in the nation's fortunes, is intriguing. Diverging in their view over the details, the class is unified in insulating themselves from the blame of making the crisis; instead, they project themselves as victims in double trouble.

"The diving economy has already mounted great stress on businesses. On top of this, the government and donors have been demanding a bigger chunk of our flesh. They abruptly withdrew concessions and hiked taxes. How is this fair? Such policies will hurt us but also uproot our workers and their dependents," commented a Karachi tycoon.

Sharing views on what led to the current impasse, the majority of businessmen approached blamed one or the other set of politicians, depending on their political bend. Others spoke against the bureaucracy and the judiciary. Some thought the media was the real culprit as it amplified problems. There were a few who suggested a martial option to fix the economy as they believed only a strong absolutist leader can deliver in a country as troubled as ours.

For some educated new-generation corporate leaders, the current crisis was inevitable as the archaic economic framework has been obstructing the natural growth pace based on the country's endowments and potential.

The evidence of colluding with regressive elements and the emergence of business empires over the past 40 years hold testimony to the fact that business houses are amongst the major beneficiaries of the fractured system

"Besides other factors, the current chaos signalled that the old structures are falling apart, offering a rare opportunity to build a new balanced, meritorious, impersonal and more resilient modern foundation of economic development. The framework based on the culture of extraction and patronage that has held Pakistan's growth potential hostage for decades is eroding. The current transformation process is painful but necessary," said a thinking head of the business community.

The trouble with this line of thinking was the presumption that the business community of Pakistan both wanted and needed the change. The evidence of colluding with regressive elements and the emergence of business empires over the past 40 years hold testimony to the fact that business houses are amongst the major beneficiaries of the fractured system.

The recent book of researcher Rosita Armytage, Big Capital in an Unequal World and the Micropolitics of Wealth in Pakistan, shed new light on the machinations of the elite nexus of which the business class is a leading component.

This intertwined exclusive class, leveraging elite schools and social clubs' networks, might have rendered the system hollow, but there is little historical evidence to prove the perception that they command decisive power in Pakistan. On the other hand, comparatively low-net-worth bureaucrats and military men are definitely more powerful and socially privileged.

Expanding on the theme, Saqib H Shirazi, President and CEO, Atlas Honda, who represented his class at multiple forums, said, "With the economy under unprecedented pressure, days of exemptions and subsidies are over. The disruption being caused must translate into the creation of a competitive environment, seen to be equitable and fair. Unfortunately, rather than internal, external stakeholders are now asking these questions, urging action and corrective policies."

His message on behalf of the corporate sector, represented by the Pakistan Business Council, Overseas Chamber of Commerce and Industry, American Business Council, to his own community and the policymakers was: "We call on all colleagues to judiciously pay their due share of taxes, contribute generously to corporate social responsibility projects and most importantly protect jobs and livelihoods.

"We demand that the government encourages competitiveness rather than extends protection. Currently, the formal segment contributes disproportionately to the domestic revenue base, albeit with a limited export focus. Exporters often end up paying only indirect taxes. The imbalance needs to be corrected."

"The formal sector (big or small) must be distinguished from other less productive fast-growing economic agents. Real estate, retail and transport sectors' contribution to revenue generation is less comparatively, but their influence has grown disproportionately in and outside the parliament.

"With a population of 230 million, agriculture remains the number one employer. The dream for every farmer is to have a retail source of income as a safety net and diversification. However, the country can't simply become a nation of shopkeepers going forward. Policies must foster a competitive manufacturing sector, a thriving IT environment and new economy job opportunities to sustain the country's population and, in the process, build up the state exchequer and foreign reserves."

Majyd Aziz, President, Global Compact Network Pakistan, agreed with the writer Rosita Armytage that the power of the close-knit nexus of the elite in the country has managed to tilt policies and resource allocations to suit their interests. "The top' one per cent group' has become a juggernaut, immune to hassles and difficulties that others face". He attributed the current crisis also to the 'Little Caesars' of Pakistan's business world.

DAWN

JANUARY 7TH, 2023

Pakistan Business Council asks govt to seek 'debt forgiveness'

KARACHI: Pakistan should seek forgiveness of principal and interest on the debt extended by China, the Paris Club and bilateral and multilateral lenders, said the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) on Friday.

In its detailed proposals for improving the country's external and fiscal accounts, the advocacy body of Pakistan's largest private-sector businesses said Islamabad should obtain professional advice from sovereign debt advisers on restructuring and extending the debt payment terms as well as the cost of servicing it.

It acknowledged that the ongoing loan programme by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) "will not be sufficient" to meet debt obligations unless the same are "significantly restructured". Short-term rollovers will not suffice, it said.

Pakistan's external debt servicing obligation for 2022-23 is $23bn. About $6bn has been repaid while $4bn has been rolled over, which leaves the country with a yet-to-be-funded gap of $13bn.

The PBC called for the renegotiation of the 7th National Finance Commission Award, which is the formula that allocates financial resources among the federal and provincial governments.

The current award tilts heavily towards the provinces, leaving the central government with little fiscal space after debt servicing and defence spending every year.

The estimated impact of several measures proposed by the PBC on the external account is between $15.7bn and $18.9bn. The likely benefit of the proposals for the fiscal account is to the tune of Rs1 trillion.

The PBC suggests the government should focus on increasing the export of services like IT because of the ongoing contraction in global demand for traditional goods such as textiles.

Offering rebates to IT developers will encourage them to remit foreign exchange earnings via official channels — a move that'll create additional inflows of about $2.5bn a year.

The PBC recommended that narrowing the spread between the informal and official dollar rates will stem the decline in remittances to the tune of $350 million a month or $4.2bn a year.

The government should revise the rates of return on dollar-denominated Naya Pakistan Certificates in line with interest rates globally to help retain current deposits and attract new deposits, it said.

The estimated net inflows under this head are $500m.

Expediting the sale of re-gasified liquefied natural gas (RLNG) power plants will generate $3bn. The PBC also called for limiting travel for Hajj, Umrah and pilgrimages to Iran, Iraq and Syria to save an estimated $1bn.

Moreover, non-resident Pakistanis should be made to use their foreign exchange savings abroad to buy air tickets, it noted.

The PBC called for barring non-tax filers from using Pakistan-issued credit cards to buy goods and services in a foreign currency.

The PBC urged the government to maximise the use of variable renewable energy — hydel, wind, solar and nuclear — as well as indigenous coal instead of imported fuels like furnace oil, RLNG and foreign coal.

"Complete reliance on indigenous sources would save $4.7bn annually, but result in a daily average shutdown of eight hours (with a seasonal variation of 4-10 hours)," it added.

The PBC recommended that the government should reduce the number of working days in a week to four with one-day work-from-home. This measure, along with early market closures, will cut down electricity demand by 10 per cent while curtailing petroleum demand by 10-12pc.

The central bank previously estimated an annual saving of $1.5bn-$2.7bn from such measures.

The PBC suggested the government should consider alternate-day use of even- and odd-numbered cars, but not motorcycles, to reduce fuel imports.

The PBC called for increasing the petroleum development levy on diesel to Rs50 per litre from Rs32.50 per litre to generate incremental Rs78bn in the next six months.

It also demanded a 10pc sales tax on petroleum products to raise Rs203bn in the remainder of 2022-23.

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MARCH 28TH, 2023

Repatriation of profits, dividends drops 80pc in July-Feb

KARACHI: The outflow of profits and dividends on foreign investments from Pakistan fell 80 percent to $225.1 million in eight months of the current fiscal year, the central bank data showed on Monday, with analysts attributing US dollar shortage to the decline.

Foreign investors including those of the stock market and multinational corporations doing business in Pakistan sent $4.9 million home in just one month of February. When compared to the $2.9 million that was repatriated a year earlier, the amount is larger.

Last week, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) lifted restrictions on the import of hundreds of items. When will they have priority to repatriate their profits and dividends? The question is on the minds of overseas investors.

The SBP's data showed that the profit repatriation on foreign direct investment dropped to $188.1 million in July-February FY2023 from $1.037 billion in the same period of the last fiscal year.

The outflow as payment against portfolio investment fell to $36.9 million, compared with $108.6 million in July-February FY2022.

"It is unfortunate that we have these capital controls in place. The reason is primarily the dollar shortage. However, these outflows should have been given priority," said Fahad Rauf, head of research at Ismail Iqbal Securities.

Pakistan already receives a minimal foreign investment, which creates more reliance on debt for external funding needs. It is extremely important for Pakistan to attract foreign investment for a sustainable external account, according to Rauf.

"These measures would discourage foreign investors, both existing and potential investors," he added. The oil and gas exploration sector sent home $87.5 million in repatriated earnings in July-February FY2023, compared with $108.6 million in the same period last year, according to the SBP figures.

The outflows from the power sector fell to $32.2 million from $124.9 million a year earlier. Profit outflows from the financial businesses declined to $18 million from $182 million.

The country faces acute shortage of foreign exchange and an International Monetary Fund deal is not in immediate sight. The forex reserves held by the central bank have stood at $4.6 billion—enough to cover only one month of imports.

Ehsan Malik, CEO of The Pakistan Business Council said the SBP had to limit outflows, be it through administrative control over imports or by delaying remittance of dividends, royalties and technical fee.

"This aside, a reason for reduced outflow of profit is that some companies are not declaring dividends. Once a dividend is declared, the parent records it as receivable at the PKR/$ rate on the date of declaration."

However, he added, as the remittance was delayed, it had to keep adjusting the amount receivable in dollar as the PKR kept slipping in value. "Beyond a few times, this becomes difficult to explain to analysts abroad. This is why companies are seeking permission to dollarise the declared dividends even if remittance is not immediately possible," he said.

It could, for example, be done by issuing a special series of Naya Pakistan Certificates. Another way would be for the SBP to allow the pending dividends to be treated as repatriable share capital, allowing parent companies to add to their investment in Pakistani subsidiaries or in other companies in the country, according to Malk.

He further said bulk of Pakistan's FDI didn't not generate significant export earnings. If it hadn't, there would have been a stronger argument for prioritising remittance of profits. Some however had begun to indigenise inputs to reduce imports, Malik added.

He was of the view that one way for such companies to demonstrate responsibility was to start measuring and reporting progress on their year-on-year improvement in impact on the external account. It would be direct and indirect imports plus profit, royalties and technical fee payable to parent/group companies less exports, Malik stated. “As more inputs are indigenised and exports grow, the negative impact on the external account would subside. Of course not all multinational corporations can do this.”

For the present, he continued, given a choice between receiving dividends on the one hand and their local subsidiaries being accorded priority to import inputs of that value on the other, most parent companies would opt for the latter.

Malik stated that returns on investment in Pakistan for most foreign investors had been good and they had learnt to ride the ups and downs of the country’s economy. “[However,] delays in remittances send a very negative signal to potential investors,” he said.

THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE

MARCH 28TH, 2023

Economic meltdown
MNCs' profit repatriation plunges 80%

They send to headquarters abroad just $225m as dollars become scarce

Profits sent by multinational companies (MNCs) to their headquarters abroad slumped by 80% to $225 million in the first eight months (Jul-Feb) of current fiscal year mainly due to the shortage of US dollars in the domestic economy.

MNCs had dispatched $1.15 billion to their headquarters in the same period of last year, reported the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Monday.

Businesses are facing financial constraints in the wake of economic crisis and political instability, which have forced some of the foreign companies to suspend business activities fully or partially. These companies include global airline Virgin Atlantic and logistics firm DHL.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), an association of global airlines, has reported that its member carriers are struggling to repatriate funds from Pakistan, which have accumulated to $290 million since January. In response to queries of The Express Tribune, Pakistan Business Council (PBC) CEO Ehsan Malik said "the country faces an acute shortage of foreign exchange while a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is not in sight."

"In these circumstances, the SBP has to limit the outflow, be it through administrative control over imports or by delaying remittances of dividends, royalties and technical fee. This is a reason for the slow outflow of profits."

Delay in remittances "sends a very negative signal to the potential (foreign) investors," he pointed out. Financial expert Adnan Agar was of the view that in addition to the slowdown in profit repatriation, Pakistan's faltering economy had badly impacted business activities, which kept earnings low. "This is also a key reason behind the lower repatriation."

He recalled that a number of foreign car manufac- turing firms had been lying closed since long due to a virtual ban on the import of auto parts. Moreover, a notable drop in demand for petroleum products and electricity has dented their sales.

Of the total profit repatriation of $225 million, Hong Kong-based MNCs repatriated $84.3 million to their headquar- ters, followed by Chinese firms that sent home $34.4 million. US firms dispatched profits and dividends amount- ing to $26.3 million.

UK-based companies repatriated $15.1 million while UAE-based business concerns sent home $11.5 million. Sector-wise, oil and gas exploration firms repatriated $87.5 million in profits and dividends to their home- land, followed by the mining and quarrying sector that sent $33.1 million. The power sector repatriated $32.2 million.

Remittance

$84.3m

was the amount Hong Kong-based MNCS repatriated to their headquarters in Jul-Feb FY23

Malik elaborated "once the dividend is declared, the parent company records it as receivable at the rupee- dollar exchange rate on the date of declaration."

However, if the remittances are delayed, the parent firm has to keep adjusting the amount receivable in dollar as the rupee continues to lose ground. It is dif- ficult to explain this continuous change in exchange rate to the analysts abroad.

"This is why companies are seeking permission to dollarise the declared dividends even if remittances are not immediately possible. It can be done by issuing a special series of Naya Pakistan Certificates," he suggested.

"Another way for the SBP is to allow the pending dividends to be treated as the 'repatriable' share of capital, which the parent companies will add to their invest- ment in Pakistani subsidiaries or inject into other companies in the country."

Malik said that the bulk of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Pakistan was not generating significant export earnings. "If it could, there would have been a stronger argument for prioritising repatriation of profits and dividends."

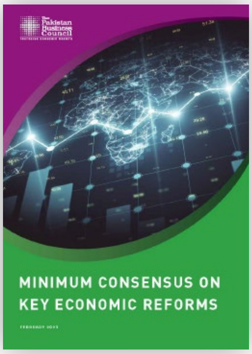
One way for such companies to demonstrate respon- sibility is to start reporting year-on-year improvement in the impact on external account. This will include direct and indirect imports plus profits, royalties and technical fee payable to the parent/ group companies less exports.

"As more inputs are indigenised and exports grow, the negative impact on the external account will subside. Of course, not all MNCs can do this," he said while suggesting a possible solution to the crisis.

When given a choice between receiving dividends and the local subsidiaries being accorded priority in the import of inputs, "I think most parent companies would opt for the latter," he said.

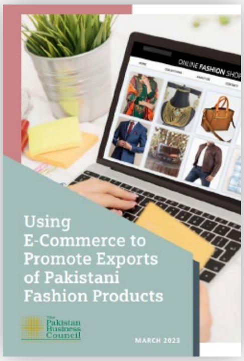
Publications During the Quarter

During the quarter, two publications were released by the PBC. This brings the total number of publications in the current year to seven.



Minimum Consensus on Key Economic Reforms

https://www.pbc.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/Minimum-Consensus-on-Key-Economic-Reforms.pdf



Using E-Commerce to Promote Exports of Pakistani Fashion Products

https://www.pbc.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/Using-E-Commerce-to-Promote-Exports-of-Pakistani-Fashion-Products.pdf

Membership:

The total strength of the PBC continues to be 98.

Twitter Highlights

PBC

66 TWEETS	229,100 IMPRESSIONS	777 NEW FOLLOWERS
11,177 TOTAL FOLLOWERS	35,500 impressions TOP TWEET	

Centre of Excellence in Responsible Business

Key Activities January to March 2023

Awareness

The first outreach initiative of The Pakistan Business Council (PBC) to build capacity and capability of businesses in Pakistan.

Vision:
Be a multi-sector business coalition, assisting Pakistani enterprises to pursue economic, social and environmental value creation in the short, medium and long term.

Functions:
CERB leverages best practices of global businesses, PBC Members and others in Pakistan to inculcate a change in mind-set among businesses including small and medium-sized enterprises. This will be supported through alliances with knowledge partners who have researched resources to contribute to its mission.

Introduction

CERB is a multi-sector business coalition assisting Pakistani enterprises in pursuing sustainable value creation in the short and long term.
As Pakistan's premier business body composed of the largest and most successful businesses in the country, the PBC recognized the need to share and spread the best practices on responsible business conduct. As an outreach initiative to grow the formal sector, the PBC established in 2016 a Center of Excellence in Responsible Business (CERB).

By focusing our research on the good practices of businesses in Pakistan, CERB highlights how practitioner companies can enable conditions which stimulate the economy while providing livelihood opportunities in a manner which is inclusive and uses resources sustainably.

In addition, CERB provides insight and advisory on key elements of responsible business, and provides a platform for companies to network, build capacity and collaborate with peer companies.

CERB's Key Activities January to March 2023

IFC-PBC Launched Climate2Equal Project

The Pakistan Business Council (PBC), in collaboration with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), launched the Climate2Equal project. This project aims to help companies connect the links between gender representation in business and climate action, and then through a year-long peer-learning collaboration, support companies in a call-to-action pledge. The two-day launch event featured a talk by the IFC's Gender and Climate Expert Franziska Deininger, then a panel discussion featuring local and international experts, followed by a half-day workshop for pledging companies. 11 companies have pledged to further the gender and climate agenda: Artistic Milliners, Bank Alfalah, Gul Ahmed Energy & Metro Wind, K-Electric Limited, H.Nizam Din & Sons, National Foods Limited, PTCL Group, TPL Corporation, The Coca-Cola Export Corporation, and DoctHERs/Naya Jeevan. Over 80 people attended the event on the first day, and representatives from 15 companies attended the Call-to-Action workshop on Day 2.

Informational session on Employee Volunteering with STEAM Pakistan

Through a partnership with Engro Corporation, STEAM Pakistan conducted an informational session for representatives from different companies to volunteer hours for their SAFEER programme. The programme encourages employees from various corporations to engage in meaningful community service with schools, where they talk about science, math, art, engineering and technology to inspire a new generation of young leaders and changemakers on STEAM fields. The initiative encouraged partnerships between STEAM Pakistan and Pakistan Cables, as well as with three other companies. The informational session tied well with CERB's flagship SDG Leadership Programme on Goal 4: "Quality Education" which is currently sponsored by Engro Corp.

Workshop on Setting Science-Based Targets with Packages Limited held in Lahore

CERB conducted a two-day workshop on science-based targets for companies when setting their goals for profit and operations. This workshop was conducted in collaboration with Packages Limited, sponsor for Goal 13 on the SDG Leadership Programme at their premises in Lahore. It was attended by 30+ executives, both external and internal to the company. The workshop marked the final engagement with Packages Limited for Goal 13 on the SDGLP.

The opening address was delivered by Dr. Fazilda Nabeel, a climate and water governance specialist with the Living Indus Trust, to develop the business case for climate action. This was followed by various modules by CERB experts regarding the impact of climate change, conducting GHG accounting at the organizational level, and reporting on climate-related disclosers. Wardah Zaman, Programme Manager at the Pakistan Environment Trust, also joined to deliver a module on the science-based targets initiative (SBTi) for corporates in Pakistan.

Workshop on Strategizing for Gender Diversity with MG Apparel held in Multan

A two-day workshop was conducted in collaboration with SDG 5 sponsor MG Apparel on gender equality. Over the two days, participants were taken through sessions on creating a company-wide strategy on gender equality and inclusive leadership, while delving deeper into discussions about the structural barriers that hold women back in the workplace. On the second day, two panel discussions with corporate leaders were held on discussing their companies' approach to gender diversity, as well as the experiences of female leaders across different industries.

The workshop was attended by representatives from Artistic Milliners, Fazal Group, and Gul Ahmed Textile Mills, as well as various partner companies and subsidiaries of the Mehmood Group in Multan, leading to an attendance of around 30 executives. The management at MG Apparel also provided a factory tour and guided tours of the historic city of Multan.

Webinar on Family Friendly Policies with UNICEF and UN Women

The Centre of Excellence in Responsible Business, UNICEF Pakistan and UN Women Pakistan held an insightful webinar on how companies can ensure women's participation in the workforce with family-friendly policies. The webinar was attended by around 70 participants from the corporate and development sectors.

The panelists were Chemba Raghavan (Senior Advisor Early Childhood Development, UNICEF HQ), Hassan Ali Abbasi (Partnerships and Communications, UN Women), Mita Gupta (Early Childhood Development Specialist, UNICEF ROSA) and Dr. Saba Shuja (ECD Manager, UNICEF). The discussion revolved around their expertise in gender-inclusive policies that intersect with family planning and childcare.

Informational Session on ESG with British International Investment

CERB held an awareness-raising session on ESG in a roundtable with Huma Yusuf, Director of Business Integrity at British International Investment (BII). In this session, she helped break down misconceptions and myths around ESG reporting and provided a comprehensive business case for what effective ESG risk management can do for the health of a business. The session was attended by 28 representatives from Pakistan Cables Limited, GSK, Sapphire Finishing Mills, Zero-point Partners, Artistic Milliners, Yunus Textile Mills Limited, the Swiss Business Council, and ASA Microfinance Bank.

Workshop on Preparing Women for Leadership with K-Electric

CERB held a two-day training for women in leadership in collaboration with SDG 5 sponsor K-Electric. Facilitated by risk & audit expert and leadership trainer Sharjeel Ahmad, the workshop helped participants understand the unique challenges of women in leadership, and how to develop a high-performing team through shared values and clearly-defined outcomes. The workshop also delved into introspective exercises for self-mastery.

Around 30 participants attended the workshop, represented by Artistic Milliners, KFC Pakistan, MG Apparel, JS Bank and Liberty Mills, as well as a team from K-Electric itself. A panel discussion with senior managers from different corporations also took place, tying into the theme of effective leadership.

Women of the World (WoW) Festival – Can Women Have It All? A baithak by CERB

CERB leadership conducted a baithak at the sixth Women of the World (WoW) Festival organized by the British Council Pakistan, OLOMOPOLO Media, and the Entrepreneurship and Community Development Institute (ECDI). The baithak was a free-of-cost and open discussion with mostly female community members on the kinds of policies that should be enacted in Pakistani workplaces, and the challenges of navigating barriers associated with mobility, childcare, cultural norms, and limited opportunities available for women.

CERB X The Coca Cola Company – Embrace Equity held in Lahore

CERB was invited by The Coca-Cola Company Pakistan, who also sponsors SDG 6: "Clean Water and Sanitation", on International Women's Day 2023 to discuss the disproportionate impact of climate change on Pakistan's women. Programme manager Rajaa Bokhari discussed the #Climate2Equal programme that is currently being conducted with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and met with other guests associated with organizations working on climate change and women's economic empowerment.

CERB X ACCA – ESG: Business Integration, Public Trust and Brand Asset

Nazish Shekha, Head of Research at CERB was on a panel titled "ESG: Business Integration, Public Trust and Brand Asset" conducted at the Pakistan Leadership Conversation 2023, organized by the ACCA and SEED Ventures. The panel comprised of Eqan Ali Khan (General Manager Strategy, Business Development & Innovation, Lucky Core Industries Limited); Mehvish Waliany (CFA, Chief Operating Officer, AlKaram Studio); Muhammad Shahzad (Finance Director and ESG Ambition Lead, Unilever Pakistan); Nadeem Rana (Partner, KPMG); and Sarwat Ahson (Executive Director, CFA Society Pakistan). The panel was moderated by Sadia Dada, Chief Marketing and Communication Officer at K-Electric. The panelists shared their ESG strategies and best practices that have emerged from advocacy for environment, social and governance measures.

Workshop on Corporate Sustainability Disclosures with Interloop Limited held in Lahore

CERB held a workshop in Lahore entitled "Corporate Sustainability Disclosures: Making the Journey" in collaboration with Interloop Limited, sponsor for SDG 12: "Responsible Consumption and Production". The workshop aimed to help private sector organizations set measurable goals for their ESG programme and develop mechanisms to document and archive them to gauge progress. Sustainability professionals from all over Pakistan gathered together to learn and refresh their knowledge on sustainability and how to progress towards ESG reporting.

The workshop was attended by 30+ participants across different industries, such as Pakistan Cables, EFU Insurance, HBL, JAZZ, among others. A panel was also held on the first day with experts in corporate sustainability from Interloop, ACCA Pakistan, Lucky Core Industries, and the Pakistan Textile Council. The workshop concluded with a tour of the Interloop factory premises in Lahore.

CERB is now on Instagram!

CERB launched its Instagram account as a way to document its engagements and events in video format, as well as engage with the wider community to meet its mandate for outreach. It can be found on **@cerb_pbc.**

CERB ON Twitter

96 TWEETS	92,400 IMPRESSIONS	118 NEW FOLLOWERS

601 TOTAL FOLLOWERS	7013 impressions TOP TWEET

About PBC

The PBC is a private sector business policy advocacy forum composed of Pakistan's largest businesses / groups including multinationals that have a significant investment in and a long-term commitment to the growth of Pakistan. Members turnover represents every ninth Rupee of Pakistan's GDP and together the members contribute 25% of tax revenues and 40% of exports. More information about the PBC, its members and its activities can be found on our website www.pbc.org.pk

The PBC Affiliates

The PBC Members and its Affiliates by Sector

PBC currently has 98 members 5 affiliates whose businesses cover nearly all sectors of the formal economy. The sector wise representation (in alphabetical order) is detailed below:

Sector	Member & Affiliate Companies
Large-Scale Manufacturing	
Agro Industries	2
Cement	2
Chemicals / Fertilizer	11
Energy	3
Engineering	13
Fast Moving Consumer Goods	19
Packaging Material	3
Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare	7
Sports Gear	1
Textiles	13
Total Members in Large-Scale Manufacturing	**74**
Services	
E-Commerce	1
Financial service	12
Hospitality	1
Insurance	2
Logistics / Courier	2
Real Estate Developers	1
Software	2
Telecommunication	2
Utilities	1
Total Members in the Services Sector	**24**
Conglomerates	**5**

32 MNC's from 14 Countries

USA

UK

UAE

Switzerland

Japan

Netherlands

France

Bahrain

South Korea

Hong Kong

Germany

China

Sweden

Turkey

The Pakistan Business Council

FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH

8th Floor, Dawood Center, M.T. Khan Road,
Karachi, Pakistan

T - +92 21 3563 0528 - 29
F - +92 21 3563 0530

www.pbc.org.pk