



PRESS RELEASE

PAKISTAN AFGHANISTAN JOINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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Border on both sides must remain open for trade and Pedestrian Traffic: PAJCCI urges Governments of Pakistan & Afghanistan

Due to closure of Chaman border for more than a month, we are facing the loss of 100 Mn PKR every day. This is the time to trade with Afghanistan by keeping borders open especially for trade, people movement and humanitarian assistance, stated Zubair Motiwala.

Chairman PAJCCI strongly urged both the Governments to remove procedural obstacles for trade and people movement. The closure is badly affecting SME and individual traders from both sides thereby rising the food prices and inflation. It is time that both sides should take advantage of fresh fruit and vegetable season in Afghanistan which is being wasted due to closure. By keeping borders open for trade Pakistan will have continuous supply of fresh food items which will reduce prices in local market and bring relief to common man, whereas Afghanistan will earn much needed financial support.

Business community is already facing multiple issues as border closures not only impacting trade with Afghanistan but transit trade with CARs, inflation, depreciation of PKR, taxation, increasing fuel & logistics costs. At the least Government should take measures immediately to support in border trade with Afghanistan to avoid past mistakes and missing the opportunity to develop sustainable relationship while keeping a major supply route operating in the future.

On 18th October 2021, Home & Tribal Affairs Department of Baluchistan Government formed high powered committee comprising senior security, home department officials, customs and NADRA to address the issues regarding border closure and cross border movement, developing proper mechanism for pedestrians movement, facilitation of Visa/Passport holders and matters related to transit trade with Afghanistan.

The high level Pakistan Delegation led by Honorable Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Minister of Foreign Affairs on 21st October 2021 to Afghanistan also created hope that both sides will settle multiple issues and continue to trade and work together for economic and social stability in the region especially on Pak-Af border region.

However, the results expected of the committee and visit has so far not borne any fruit and situation remains stagnant. Motiwala urged Government of Pakistan to devise long-term economic blueprint for Afghanistan keeping in view its strategic importance for Pakistan trade and transit requirements.

Motiwala also his counterpart Khan Jan Alokozai and Afghan Chapter Leader to use his good offices in working with Afghan government to resolve all issues with priority of border opening and trade movement which if resolved will automatically bring down hardship of the people. This is the season for Afghan exports, especially closure of Chaman border has increased afflictions for border based traders and farmers significantly and further delay can deprive them of basic necessities to survive approaching winters.