

يسم الله رحمن الرحيم-

Bismillah i Rehman i Rahim

Dear Members and Distinguished Guests,

! اسلامُ عليكم

Assalam o Alaykum

First of all, I would like to praise and thanks the Almighty Allah who has created all of us. The one who has given us health, livelihood, and granted us with so many of his blessings. Highly thankful to Almighty Allah who blessed myself and my team with steadfastness and success.

I would like to thank my group leaders who had the confidence in myself and my team to be capable of shouldering this responsibility. Alhamdulillah it has been done with complete due diligence. I am thankful to all the members who were there in support, every step of the way. Be it all those Managing Committee members or my fellow office bearers and all those members who were on call for all REAP matters.

Time is of the essence hence unable to call all the names which I would like to do, but regardless of time being a constraint, I will not miss the names of these few as it would surely be not fair. These friends never made me pessimistic rather I would go as far to say that they were with me 25/8. Whether they were within the country or travelling abroad they were helping me with the REAP's work and participating with full eager and determination.

Managing committee, especially, Mr. Anwer Mian Noor, Sheraz Sheikh, Mahesh Raja, Subhan Malik, Safder Mekhri and Ali Hussam,

Non-MC Members, Mahboob Paracha, Samiullah Naeem, Shahid Tarar, Faizaan Ghori, Muhammad Raza Amjad, Javad Jilani, Rafique Suleman, Ali Narang, Asif Ali Sheikh, Rasheed Jan Mohammad, Faisal Anis, Kazim Khandwala, Omer Hayat, Fuad Garib, Shahid Tawawalla, Irfan Ahmed Sheikh, Abdullah Hashwani, Haseeb Ali khan, and of-course, our group leaders, Abdul Rahim Jano, Amjad Sahib, Shehzad Ali Malik Sahib, Pir Nazim Sahib and most of it the Advisor to PM on Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Mahmood Moulvi Sahib , who were always ready to take out time from the very busy schedule. I don't recall any instance when I tried to contact them and they didn't respond.

I would like to also bring up name of my very good friend Tekamal sahib. I am trying to copy him. Whenever I meet him, I am always in perseverance to prove myself better than our earlier meeting.

We have one friend Mr. Qamar Raza Shaukat who kept giving us direct and indirect good suggestions for Reap. Mr. Chela Ram was also always ready give his suggestions. These all are true assets of REAP.

I would like to thank members of election commission Anis Majeed, Wajid Mumtaz Paracha, Muhammad Bashir who carried out the process of election very well.

WE TOOK CHARGE OF OFFICE IN COVID TIMES

Last year was also succumbed to COVID and REAP activities were affected. Just like the rest of the world, it took us few months to understand the situation which is termed the 'NEW NORMAL' We had to take into consideration the safety of lives of ourselves and our REAP staff and simultaneously carry our daily REAP activities. The world was closed. So was our country, which opened up with smart lock downs. Finally, we managed to mitigate and combat the problems that came into place due to lockdowns.

We did not lock ourselves at home or closed our Association office. Mode of working changed. Thanks to science and technology that gave us working inventions like Microsoft Teams and Zoom etc. enabling us to work under the 'New Normal'. We learnt to walk and ended up running fast in the working direction.

- In the history of REAP we managed to conduct the greatest number of MC meetings.
- We conducted all our sub- committee meetings over ZOOM.
- We conducted dozens of meetings to discuss with ministry of commerce the recommendations in an effort to boost our rice exports.
- Various other meetings were conducted to discuss solutions to our daily problems.
- With our ministry of commerce starting from advisor to PM, Secretary of commerce and IPO and all the concerned departments we had several virtual zoom meetings

HONOURABLE PRIMINISTER KEEPING AN EYE ON AGRI -SECTOR AND EXPORTS

- Reap has been honored to meet thrice the Honorable prime minister. In two instances when he invited big associations in Islamabad and in the final meet up, that was the meeting of National Export Development Board which was being led by the Prime Minister himself where the main focal point was rice exports.
- Reap was included in two delegations with the Prime minister. We were in Colombo and Tashkent with him. Due to prior commitments, I was unable to visit Tashkent but REAP was presented through our Vice chairman and other three members which gave us a chance to interact with others

G.I. CASE

- The case of G.I was a very big challenge for us. We took this challenge and decided that along with our government we will also fight this war against INDIA. REAP members contributed PKR 18 million plus funds and filed on-time opposition.

The amount collected was not enough to work on this high-profile case. This is the first time that REAP was granted PKR 39.8 million from EDF. This fund has been credited into joint account of TDAP/REAP. Part of the expenses we have done on this case from our own pockets has been received in our accounts.

There is still some time for finalization of this case, we are working in coordination with government of Pakistan and rest assured we are on the right path. INSHALLAH we will hear good news anytime soon.

In this constant struggle laudable efforts are done by convener Samiullah and Deputy convener Shahid Tarar. The amount of effort put by them cannot be put in words. REAP and its members should always remain indebted to them for the time and resources devoted by them on this case. Mr. Faizan Ghori and Mr. Raza Amjad both are also part of the core committee, but Mr. Samiullah and Mr. Shahid Tarar played the roles of soldier, colonel and General all by themselves. We need to bring on record the efforts from our staff Mr. Danish, who worked with devotion. Whenever needed Mr. Shahzad Malik and Mr. Safder Mekhri were ready for their suggestions.

In GI case we should never forget Zahid Khawaja because he has set the fundamentals.

- As I said earlier that this case will be going on for some time, and we might face more challenges related to this. We were advised that India has registered its basmati 'AS A TRADEMARK' in Sri Lanka, we have forwarded this information to ministry of commerce and Mission in Colombo.

OUR TRADE MISSIONS

- We at REAP, along with all our Trade investment counselors/Missions have to be alert all the time on GI matter.
- As I already informed that we have conducted several meetings with Ministry of Commerce. I am pleased to inform that our officers and Advisor to PM on Commerce were very helpful. They were found to be attending our calls and ready to solve the problems whenever we contacted them. Similarly Trade & investment counselors, wherever they were in touch, are very helpful. They were proactive most of the time. On various occasions they arranged webinars for us in which our members participated. In this Iran, Poland, U.S of America, Saudi Arabia and Kenya are included.

VIRTUAL RICE EXPO

- We learned how to work during this COVID times. Thought process was on. We wanted to do something different. Only youngsters can do, new or different (vakhra) type of work. We formed

a group and put the cream of our accomplished youngsters in it and informed them to start brainstorming on an innovative idea. I personally requested Mr. Rasheed Jan Mohammad to request 'Ms. Farhat' to join this group and bring her experience of organizing oil conferences. After brainstorming of ideas by Farhat, Faisal Anis, Kazim Khandwala, Waqas, Abdul Wahid Mianoor, Muhammad Raza, (Faisal Jahangir is also young), Nauman Arif, we all reached to a conclusion to arrange a virtual rice expo.

It was decided to be led by Faisal Anis and He was surely capable and this now has been written in the history of REAP. In this "first ever rice virtual expo" There were visitors from 78 countries with a total footfall of 6348. This was done solely by REAP, and no Govt. funding was involved.

Now this would a regular feature in our upcoming years. The same way people use to mark TRT dates, we will see that people shall mark REAP Virtual Rice Conference as a reminder in their calendars.

OUR MEETINGS WITH MINCOM WERE FRUITFUL

- We, REAP with the help of (ITC and TDAP) organized 6 pesticide awareness farmer workshops. Commendable efforts were from convenor, deputy convenor, Faizan Ghori, Omer Hayat, and members of committee Ali Narang and Shahid Tawawalla.
- Mincom is working with ITC jointly for the Pesticide mapping.
- One testing lab is being upgraded for the needs of MRL and other tests.
- Our request for dedicated quarantine areas in port area have been accepted by Ministry of National Food & Research and Ministry of Maritime Affairs. We shall see work on this project to start any time soon.

OUR MEETING WITH HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER CHARING THE NEDB.

- We placed three major demands/proposals.
 1. **To give rice a designation of being an 'Industry'**.

All the stakeholders had been consulted and after mutual agreement now this case is with ministry of industry. INSHALLAH a notification in this regard shall be issued in a few days.

2. **Subsidized 'Farm mechanization'**

a pilot project on 300,000-acre land in Punjab and 100,000-acre land in Sindh should be made in which farmers to be given subsidy on mechanization. It was agreed and now this proposal has to be given a final shape jointly by REAP/MNFSR/MINICOM

3. Helping on Logistics:

Our biggest current challenge is of logistics that needs an immediate solution. Not only freights have been increased but we don't get space for containers. Honorable prime minister agreed on this and MOMA has activated PNSC. Our exporters now with the help of PNSC can do freight chartering. PNSC is now helping exporters in this regard.

Our demand was, and we still wish that PNSC introduces and runs a breakbulk service operating on 2-3 routes. Minimum cargo acceptance on this service should be of 1000 tons and maximum should be of 3000 tons. If by doing so PNSC has to bear some loss than MINICOM should pump in the funds. This is the only way we can export out left over cargo and compete with India. I am hopeful that upcoming team will take up this demand and move forward with it.

Last year was a COVID year, 2020 also succumbed to COVID times. The rise in freights. The dumping of cheap Indian rice in world markets. Our cost of production being high and luckily that we had a very good crop last year. For all these reasons this is the first time that we are leaving behind rice stocks that could not be exported. We need Government's help. We have achieved the 2 billion marks of rice exports, and are maintaining this without any help and this is the first time we are in need of help. If rest of the trade/industry can be helped by government in a direct or indirect manner than why not this 2-billion-dollar export industry or about 6-billion-dollar overall industry? In which workforce of 8,000,000 is employed during the season.

- We took the advantage of our relations with IPO, with whom we have developed a kind of partnership, as working on GI case jointly. We got them interacted with our members by arranging two sessions with them.
- (i) In order to understand GI tagging
 - (ii) Another webinar to understand law of trademark. Our members still are facing problems in this matter. Many of their questions are still unanswered. We have requested to answer all those questions that have been raised by our members and also to arrange one more session.
- Russia ban has been lifted. One more market has been again opened. New mills are being registered.
 - We should get good news soon on Mexico
 - Issue of WHT on rice has been solved. The anomaly has been removed.

- We managed to arrange two export trophy awards this year.
 - In Lahore Honorable Governor sahib encouraged exporters. Our convener Pir Nazim sahib put in a lot of effort in this regard.
 - And the function in Karachi was a memorable one due the presence of the Honorable President and this could only be done by Mr. Abdul Rahim Jano.
- This year again, REAP diary was published and distributed among all dignitaries and missions.
- Various meetings were held with BERNAS and on demand of all members a webinar session with them is going to be held on 12th October 2021. All members should get themselves registered.
- Like it happens every year, all our Karachi rice exporters, (who use Sui gas) face difficulties. From October till March due to pressure drops and shut down of gas disturbs the production. We did our utmost effort and in the last meeting that was held with Sui southern they assured us that our exporters INSHALLAH will not face any problems during season.
- The biggest gain we could see was in PUNJAB. We were properly responded and listened to. From seed development to harvesting all of this wants to be brought to the mark of world standards. INSHALLAH soon we will see the installation of new Controlled Environment facility (phytotron) in Kala shah Kaku. This will help in seed developments.

The way they are giving subsidy on Farm Mechanization Machinery (though we have our reservation on their procedure) but still we believe that this revolution soon can be seen. We INSHALLAH, will see good seeds, low cost and high yielding crops. Our Crop size will increase. and our cost of production will reduce, only than we shall manage to compete. Very soon in the near future we should see our dream of doubling our crop and more than doubling our exports come true.

THINGS WE COULD NOT DO

1. With Iran there still no solution to payment mechanism. However, there is a proposal being worked in ministry of Commerce to streamline the mechanism for exports to CIS and Afghanistan. We believe that this might boost our trade with neighboring countries.
2. Our exporter's millions of dollars are stuck in Beirut in which several meetings were held with State Bank of Pakistan and Ministry of Commerce.

Both these issues need continued efforts.

SOME REALITIES

We have such big volume of exports, hundreds of mills and we pay PKR, 25000 renewal fee per year. (This only after an increment of PKR 5,000). Difference of opinion is the right of every member but majority always rule. In our EOGBM only four members opposed on increment.

The fee increment has been endorsed by D.G.T.O.

I fail to understand how can an association can run with low budget which has three offices, members all over Pakistan, has exports of billions of dollars, working as an Industry with 8 million people in the value chain. Whereas, Membership enrollment is not mandatory.

Members are ready to contribute a REAP Lunch/Dinner but on the other hand cannot agree to such minimum fee increment. Can anyone guide us how to run an association like this?

Either we make mandatory enrollment of membership so that our number of members increase (which is not in our control) or we increase the fees. We cannot reduce our expenses. Maybe to some extent or may be cap it for a year or so.

Our group leaders and all members should ponder on this subject as serious thought has not been put into it. As on today this issue is being handled only on ad-hoc basis.

I have tried to cover one year. It was not a work of one year, but it was of 365 days, rather 8760 hours or 325,600 minutes. So wasn't possible to cover every moment.

Many of the members were in cooperation with me. Managing committee was supposed to be with me but it was not the duty of non-MC members. The Sub Committee had the job which was assigned to them, but they never turned their back.

All members should be obliged to those members who worked for REAP. These didn't sit aside and gossip or criticize - they worked selflessly. Mr. Faisal Anis worked on power point presentations even up to 2 AM jointly for us. Association can only be run if there are dedicated workers present. We need this hard-working dedicated breed as we have lot of work to do.

We are now hopeful that follow up should be done to our work as that is only what is required and more efforts should be put in for the pending work. There could be new challenges coming with the flow of work.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW TEAM

I would like to congratulate the upcoming new team from the bottom of my heart. We have Ali Hassam and Anwer main Noor type, young, energetic and experienced. We also have Fuad Garib and Asif sheikh. We have diamonds like Ali Narang and others too. I have learnt a lot from them.

كچھ تو بھرم رپے كه ہم بهی كبھی ساتھ رپے
ہم تحفتا ”ایك دوسرے كی عادات ركھ لیتے ہیں۔

Kuch tou bharam rahey ke hum bhi kabhi sath rahey

Hum tohfatan ak dosrey ke adaat rakh lety hain

I have full belief that INSHALLAH, the new team will continue with the good work and next year would bring more good news for REAP and will present us with another report of achievements.

In the end would like to thank all of REAP staff members. Secretary General Mr. Kashif-ur-Rehman, Account officer Mr. Kaleem Ullah and other in H.O and Secretary Mr. Altaf Hussein Sheikh, Assistant Secretary Arif Ali Khan, Shehzad Khan, Muhammad Anis, Muhammad Imran, Sheikh Muhammad Tariq, Muhammad Kashif and Muhammad Zubair, in Karachi office, who in every instance gave their full support and assistance.

THANK YOU!

PAKISTAN ZINDABAD!