

UBG backs PBG in KCCI polls against BMG-supported panel

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KARACHI: United Business Group (UBG) of FPCCI led by S.M Munir on Friday formally announced its support to Patriot Businessmen Group (PBG) in the elections of Karachi Chambers of Commerce and Industry's (KCCI) in the elections to be held on September 15 after much delay.

The support to PBG was announced at a joint press conference that saw overwhelming participation from the businessmen and media at a hotel, here.

Patriot Businessmen Group (PBG) will contest against the panel that is being backed by Businessman Group (BMG) of Siraj Kassam Teli and that has been in power in KCCI for the last over one decade due to absence of elections in the apex trade body of Karachi.

The UBG Sindh Zone chairman Khalid Tawwab said his group has reached an agreement with the PBG to support each other in both KCCI and Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) elections.

"We conducted a series of meetings with Yahya Polani, Aqil Karim Dhedi, and Maqsood Ismail recently and finally decided to support their group in the forthcoming KCCI elections," he said, adding that PBG came up with young, dynamic and educated candidates who would serve business community of this city amicably. He said the KCCI's elections are being held after 12 years and "this augurs well" for the business community, their issues would be resolved and the country's economy would be put on right track.

Yahya Polani on this occasion criticised rival group's head Siraj Kassam Teli saying he remained in power for the last many years but did nothing for the well-being of business community.

Polani accused of reacting as dictator in KCCI instead of working as business leader for the welfare of members. He further alleged that Teli imposed ban on entry of various members in KCCI building and has suspended membership of those who opposed his policies.

Yahya said his group would hold another presser at Karachi Press Club on Monday where he would elaborate everything pertaining to KCCI.

"Muhammad Afzal Chamdia has been named as our candidate for the presidential slot of the KCCI," he said, adding that Amjad M Ashraf Chamdia, Ozair Khurshid Allahwala, Ehtisham Rais, Muhammad Irfan, Akhtar Ismail, Muhammad Ather Shekhani, Muhammad Shabbir, Muhammad Farhan Ahmedani, Yousuf Yaqoob Prince, Muhammad Shahid Sabir, Muzammil Rauf Chappal, Khawar Roorani, Muhammad Imran Iqbal Gigi, and Muhammad Hanif Sarwar Paracha would contest for other seats in the elections.

Highlighting the points of the Patriot Businessmen Group, the officials said the group aims to generate an open and transparent process of all the export inquiries and all inquiries would be posted on the website without discrimination and without giving preferential treatment to anyone.

He said availability of information to members for developing business linkages locally, especially important for SMEs. He announced holding an exhibition with specific focus on exports of locally manufactured products, where foreign buyers and delegations from international chambers would be invited to give boost to exports.

His PBG would attract Chinese investors to launch joint ventures with Karachi-based counterparts and assist Chinese investors in coordinating with relevant business counterparts based in Karachi; would establish collaboration with Chamber of Commerce of Cities in China, such as Shanghai. He announced a Targeted Focus Group in collaboration with various Chinese Chambers of Commerce for targeted sectors such as Transport & Logistics, Engineering & Manufacturing, Construction & Property, Financial Services, SMEs, etc; to establish a KCCI coordination office in a key city of China, such as Shanghai; to start Chinese language courses through collaboration; to provide translators to businessmen of Karachi and China for better coordination; to collaborate with other local and international chambers for trade facilitation; to form Joint Business Council in collaboration with local & international chambers; collaborate with credit rating agencies; bridge between government and business Utility Problems Facilitation Cell to resolve utilities problems faced by members through data compilation and jointly resolving the issues with relevant departments.

Polani said that PBG has proposed to have at least one member of Chamber of Commerce on the board of Sui Southern Gas, Karachi Water & Sewerage Board and K-Electric to resolve issues of the business community which have not been addressed for several years. He pledged initiative for development of Industrial Parks on public & private partnership basis; presentation of Policy Statements for International Trade with respect to Duties, Taxes, SROs, etc; Shadow Budgets after comprehensive consultation with all Karachi-based key businessmen; aggressive lobbying with federal & provincial governments to ensure that the demands of the business community of Karachi are duly met.