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SUPREME COURT OF PAKISTAN

PRESS RELEASE

NJPMC MOVES FROM REFORM TO RECOGNITION: CONFERS COMMENDATION FOR JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE ON TOP- PERFORMING JUDGES OF DISTRICT JUDICIARY

Islamabad, September 12, 2026 – The National Judicial Wellbeing Conference, “From Reform to Recognition: Building a Responsive District Judiciary,” was held today at the Supreme Court of Pakistan under the auspices of the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee (NJPMC), with a central focus on judicial wellbeing, institutional support and recognition of performance across the District Judiciary.

The Conference was attended by the Hon’ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, Hon’ble Judges of the Supreme Court and the Federal Shariat Court, Hon’ble Chief Justices of all the Provincial High Courts and Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Court, District and Sessions Judges, top-performing judicial officers from the district judiciaries of all provinces, Islamabad Capital Territory, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, members of the Bar and justice sector stakeholders.

In his inaugural address, the Hon’ble Chief Justice of Pakistan described the District Judiciary as the backbone of the justice system and the first formal forum where citizens experience justice, observing that public confidence in the justice system is largely shaped at this level. His Lordship emphasized that a responsive justice system requires not only efficient courts, but also well-supported, professionally equipped and institutionally valued judicial officers.

The Hon’ble Chief Justice recalled that, soon after assuming the highest judicial office, he visited some of the farthest and underserved districts and observed gaps between institutional arrangements and the practical needs of judges, lawyers, litigants and court users. These visits informed a series of reforms aimed at improving judicial working conditions, professional resources, court infrastructure, public facilitation and institutional support at the district level.

The reform programme includes the solarisation of court complexes, establishment and strengthening of e-libraries, provision of internet facilities and clean drinking water, and establishment of Women Facilitation Centres. These projects have been successfully completed across Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and the Islamabad Capital Territory.

In Balochistan, the projects have been completed in 18 districts. Implementation in the remaining districts has faced logistical challenges owing to difficult terrain and the prevailing law-and-order situation; however, work is underway and is expected to be completed shortly.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice further highlighted that 2026–27 has been earmarked for the Gender-Responsive Justice Initiative, with particular focus on women litigants. Women Facilitation Centres are being developed to provide essential services and support under one roof, with emphasis on dignity, privacy, safety, accessibility and a more responsive court environment. The initiative also includes standardized designs for such Centres through a nationwide architectural design competition undertaken in collaboration with the Institute of Architects Pakistan.

The NJPMC appreciated the substantial progress made by the District Judiciary in time-bound disposal, reduction of pendency and performance of Model Criminal and Civil Courts. From September 2025 to July 2026, more than 1.46 million time-bound cases were decided, while Model Criminal and Civil Courts disposed of over 133,000 cases, reflecting sustained institutional effort and commitment at the district level.

The NJPMC also approved health insurance coverage for judges and staff of the District Judiciary, reinforcing its broader focus on judicial wellbeing, welfare and institutional support.

The Supreme Court has also expanded opportunities for professional development through international judicial cooperation. Under MoUs with the Constitutional Court of Türkiye and the Supreme People's Court of China, 10 judges of the District Judiciary have visited Türkiye and 11 China for training programmes and seminars. A further two judges are scheduled to visit Türkiye next month, while 25 top-performing judges from all High Courts, including AJ&K and Gilgit-Baltistan, will visit China in November. The process for similar MoUs with the Supreme Courts of Azerbaijan, Russia and South Korea, and the Court of Cassation of Türkiye, is also underway.

In keeping with the Conference theme, the Hon'ble Chief Justices of all High Courts, along with the Hon'ble Chief Justice of the Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Court, addressed the participants and highlighted measures undertaken in their respective jurisdictions for judicial wellbeing, institutional strengthening, digitization, accountability and transparency, improved court administration, case-flow management, and welfare, professional support and service benefits of judicial officers and staff.

The deliberations underscored that judicial reform must also recognize the human dimension of justice delivery, including the wellbeing, professional dignity, working environment and institutional support of judicial officers. The Conference linked performance with recognition, reinforcing that sustainable improvements in justice delivery depend on both measurable outcomes and the wellbeing of those entrusted with administering justice.

At the conclusion of the Conference, Commendations for Judicial Excellence were conferred on top-performing judicial officers in recognition of their exceptional judicial services and contribution to timely, efficient and responsive justice delivery.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice reiterated that the District Judiciary will remain a central priority of the judicial reform agenda, with continued focus on judicial wellbeing, professional support, time-bound adjudication, improved infrastructure, technology-enabled services, institutional accountability and citizen-centric public facilitation.

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