

MESSAGE FROM HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF PAKISTAN

On the “**International Labour Day**”

May 01, 2026

International Labour Day invites us not only to honour the contributions of workers, but to reflect on the quality of justice and protection available to those who sustain our economy. The strength of a nation is measured not merely by its growth, but by the dignity it affords to its workforce. Across Pakistan, millions of men and women labour with perseverance and skill, and their efforts deserve both recognition and meaningful legal protection.

Our constitutional framework places the dignity of labour at the heart of governance. The guarantees of fair wages, humane working conditions, and social justice are embedded within it as binding commitments. These are not abstract ideals - they are enforceable entitlements that must translate into real safeguards for workers across all sectors.

The judiciary has a central role in ensuring that these protections are not diluted in practice. By interpreting labour laws in a purposive and rights-oriented manner, the courts have contributed to addressing imbalances in the workplace and curbing exploitative practices. The task, however, remains ongoing, particularly as new forms of employment and economic organization continue to emerge.

In the present context, labour justice must respond to changing realities, including the expansion of informal work, evolving employer-employee relationships, and the growing presence of digital and platform-based employment. Judicial and institutional responses must therefore be adaptive, efficient, and grounded in an understanding of these shifting dynamics.

On this occasion, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthening access to justice in labour matters, promoting timely dispute resolution, and reinforcing protections against forced labour, child labour, and unsafe working environments. A fair and humane labour regime is indispensable to the broader promise of constitutionalism and the rule of law.

May this day serve as a renewed commitment to building a system where every worker is treated with dignity, protected by law, and enabled to contribute to a more just and inclusive society.

(Justice Yahya Afridi)
Chief Justice of Pakistan