

PM&DC President Reviews MDCAT Arrangements with VCs, Provincial Health Authorities; Clarifies Question Paper Security Measures

Islamabad, September 18, 2026: President Pakistan Medical & Dental Council (PM&DC) Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj chaired a high-level meeting with Vice Chancellors of the universities conducting the Medical and Dental Colleges Admission Test (MDCAT) 2026 and relevant provincial health authorities to review final arrangements for the examination scheduled for September 20. The meeting reviewed examination security, centre preparedness, administrative arrangements, emergency response, candidate facilitation and measures to ensure the smooth, transparent and orderly conduct of MDCAT 2026.

It was reiterated that the Council has established the regulatory framework, examination standards and procedures for MDCAT, while the respective provincial authorities and designated universities are responsible for the on-ground conduct and administrative arrangements of the examination. The meeting also reviewed arrangements concerning the handling and collection of question papers after completion of the examination. **It was mutually decided during the meeting that the question papers may be retained by the respective universities after the examination to ensure the sanctity and transparency of the examination process.**

The Council further clarified that the measure does not constitute any unilateral intervention by PM&DC in the operational conduct of MDCAT by the provinces. Under the Pakistan Medical & Dental Council Act, 2022, the respective provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Islamabad Capital Territory conduct MDCAT, while PM&DC has a defined statutory role in prescribing and approving the examination framework, procedure and standards. The Council has also clarified that Section 9(2)(f) of the Act empowers it to make rules and regulations for the conduct of admissions and examinations to be conducted by each province, Islamabad Capital Territory and Gilgit-Baltistan. Furthermore, Section 13(c) provides for the formulation of the examination procedure and structure for MDCAT by the National Medical and Dental Academic Board for approval by the Council. At the same time, Section 17(1) provides that the respective provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Islamabad Capital Territory shall conduct MDCAT in accordance with the applicable policy and standards, on dates approved by PM&DC. Accordingly, the operational conduct of the examination remains with the respective authorities, while PM&DC performs its statutory regulatory and standard-setting functions.

The meeting was informed that the question-paper arrangements are intended to strengthen examination security and confidentiality, particularly in view of the scale of MDCAT 2026, which has 138,158 registered candidates and is being conducted at 34 cities and towns across Pakistan, along with one international centre in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. All concerned stakeholders were directed to maintain close coordination and ensure the highest standards of professionalism, efficiency, transparency and examination security.

The Council reiterated that candidates' legitimate concerns regarding any question can be addressed through the prescribed examination review and objection mechanism. The meeting concluded with a reaffirmation that all stakeholders would ensure that the examination is conducted in accordance with the applicable law, approved procedures and prescribed standards, with the objective of providing candidates with a secure, transparent, standardised and fair examination process.