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Pakistan to ink agreement for Chinese technology to produce vaccines

BEIJING - Ministry of National Food Security and Research Pakistan will sign an agreement with Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute of China for transfer of technology to produce local vaccines to protect animals against different diseases. While talking to INP here on Sunday Dr Johar Ali, a senior official Ministry of National Food Security said that Pakistan Agriculture Research Council will sign an agreement with Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute to transfer Chinese technology to Pakistan that will help to locally produce vaccines against animal diseases. Dr Johar Ali, was among the representatives from 100 countries and international organizations who took part in the 3rd Silk Road (Dunhuang) International Cultural Expo recently held in China's north Western Gansu province. Dr Johar Ali said that he negotiated with China's Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute for transfer of technology to locally produce vaccines against animals’ diseases and memorandum of understanding will be signed soon.

He said the locally produced vaccine would not only save the precious foreign exchange but it would also create job opportunities. He said the vaccine would be produced keeping in view our environment and requirement and it could be easily transported to the remote areas. To a question, Dr Johar Ali said that China imports meat from the USA, Brazil and several other countries and the Pakistani meat could capture the Chinese market if it is free from the mouth and foot disease. As Pakistan is China’s neighbour, its meat would be more economical due to low price and low transportation cost as compared to the world market. While pointing out the potential of the agriculture sector, he said the concerned departments should make all-out efforts to double agriculture production which could contribute up to 11 per cent to the GDP. He said that Pakistan is still far behind from the world in production of local technology and research and development in Agriculture Sector and even we have failed to produce local seeds. He proposed that more resources should be allocated for technology, research and education in the agriculture sector. About value addition in the agriculture products, he said, it would enhance revenues and create more job opportunities, adding we can bridge the gap between import and export.

While answering a question, he said Pakistan can benefit from the China's upcoming International Import Expo in Shanghai by increasing its agriculture exports to China. He further added that government should take step to decrease cost of production and increase quality of Agricultural products so that its prices remained competitive for exports. He said that the Chinese government could also extend a helping hand to increase our fish production by providing technology, equipment and training to our farmers. Dr. Abid Ali, an expert and Agricultural biotechnologist from Peshawar University, who was also part of Pakistan's delegation said that As Agriculture is backbone of Pakistan Economy, Agriculture Universities of Pakistan should increase cooperation with Chinese Universities to create better quality research to benefit our Agricultural sector. “We will be able to get useful input to further enhance cooperation between the two countries in the field of agriculture and animal sciences,” he added. He further added that government should take step to get modern agriculture machinery from China to boost agriculture production and industry.
Pakistan’s economy moving in right direction

NEW YORK - American businessmen have said that Pakistan’s business climate is moving in the right direction but the pace of economic reforms should be accelerated. They have expressed the commitment to push for improved economic engagement between the two countries aimed at resolving tensions and to achieve shared goals. The commitments were made during meetings between FPCCI’s delegation, led by its President Ghazanfar Bilour, and US businessmen that included Esperranza G Jelalian, president of US-Pakistan Business Council. American businessmen feel that investment climate is better than other regional countries but there is a room for further improvement, they said, adding that we support a broad-based bilateral relationship with Pakistan that promotes trade and investment which can help rapid development.

The US investors said that continued implementation of sound policies and necessary structural and financial reforms will boost the confidence of investors and create jobs resulting in improved economic growth. Many US companies want to operate in Pakistan to promote the bilateral economic and business relationship, they said. Speaking at the occasion, Ghazanfar Bilour said that we are in process of promoting a competitive market by enhancing the investment climate and regulatory environment. He said that strengthened intellectual property rights protection and enforcement will promote the interest of foreign investors in promising Pakistani market.

Ghazanfar Bilour highlighted the investment opportunities in Pakistan and invited the American business community to explore opportunities. We want America to boost private sector partnerships and stressed upon fair trade, open investment environment and transparent agreements, he demanded. Chairman Coordination FPCCI Malik Sohail said that Pakistan is spending billions of dollars on infrastructure development despite budgetary pressures and other challenges. Reliance on state-owned enterprises is being reduced while substantial improvements in access to health care as well as education reforms have been initiated which will improve overall situation, he said. Vice Presidents of FPCCI Karim Aziz Malik, trade minister Ali Tahir, former president ICCI Muzmil Hussain Sabri, Ayaz Malik, Akbar Khan, Ch Sajjad and Arslan Khokhar also attended the meetings.

Chinese Group offers to establish vocational university in Pakistan

BEIJING - China’s St Fulin Group has offered to set up a vocational university in Pakistan to meet the ever-increasing demand of the skilled labour for the projects being completed under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework. “At present, we are discussing the details with
the officials concerned in Pakistan and the embassy of Pakistan in Beijing and hoped for a positive response and cooperation,” Scarlet, CPO of St Fulin Group Monday said.

“China is the best in the vocational education in the world rather even in some areas it is better than Germany and Japan and we are ready to impart quality training to Pakistani students in their country,” she told APP in an interview. While acknowledging that Pakistan has good universities and other educational institutions, she stressed that the country needs more vocational training institutions to fulfill the requirement of the manufacturing sector, adding Pakistan is country of 200 million people and everyone cannot be provided white collar jobs. Scarlet said at present China is developing roads and communication infrastructure in Pakistan and there is a high demand of skilled workers for the projects being completed under the CPEC.

She informed that St Fulin Group, which has established a permanent office in Pakistan, is jointly working along with the Chinese education ministry and is affiliated with a number of vocational universities and institutes. The CPO said in the beginning, a two-member delegation is leaving for Pakistan and later other delegations would also join, adding, “We will have discussions with the concerned Pakistani officials and during the meetings, we will share our experience which China achieved in last 40 years because of its reforms and development strategy.” The delegation will have meetings with the officials responsible for setting up industrial parks and visit different universities to show what is happening in China and how Pakistan can learn from China to make it an industrial giant.

She said that her group is also willing to cooperate in water purification and bringing the CNG machinery and equipment into the Pakistani market as technology is vital for the progress and development of Pakistan. “Our group also intends to donate some training equipment and machinery to Pakistan and is looking forward to a positive response from Pakistani institutions which are interested to receive it,” she added. She said her company will work as a bridge to further promote cooperation between China and Pakistan in logistic, vocational training and cultural communication.

The Nation
October 4, 2018

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia agree to negotiate on proposed FTA

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) agreed on Wednesday to negotiate on proposed free trade agreement (FTA) for trade liberalisation and to increase the trade volume between the two brotherly countries. Pakistan offered Saudi Arabia to negotiate on free trade agreement (FTA) directly or to sign preferential trade agreement (PTA) first for providing mutual trade opportunity in each other's markets, said Secretary Commerce Muhammad Younas Dhaga in a briefing to Arab trade and investment delegation here. From Pakistani side, Secretary Commerce Muhammad Younas Dhaga headed the delegation which comprised of officials from Ministry and Board of Investment (BOI) whereas Adviser energy, industries and mining Ahmad Al–Ghamdi was heading the delegation from Saudi Arabia side. Both side discussed the comparative
advantages of FTA between the two countries and also to further negotiate on tariff lines for providing mutual opportunity in trade and investment. During the negotiation, Muhamamad Younas Dhaga said that Pakistan would give trade facilities to Saudi Arabia same as the country had offered to China in FTA and Indonesia in PTA for increasing trade volumes.

Secretary commerce said that that Pakistan wants to increase bilateral trade in the areas of textiles, leather, sports and medicine to increase access in Middle Eastern markets. He said that Saudi Arabia is member of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and “We are already engaged in negotiation with GCC including Bahrain to increase trade volume with these potential trading partners". Saudi Arabian adviser on energy, industries and mining, Ahmad Al–Ghamdi also agreed to initiate study and further negotiation of FTA between both the countries for trade liberalization. He said that Saudi Arabia is interested to increase trade with Pakistan in food items and chemicals. “We would negotiate on Pakistan's proposal on FTA and experts' studies are needed in this regard to further negotiate on FTA between the two nations” he said. After the meeting, Saudi Arab adviser on energy, industries and mining told APP that Saudi Arabia was interested to establish oil refinery in Gwadar and his delegation visited the proposed place to work on project. He informed that both of the countries would sign memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish oil refinery and mineral exploration in the current visit of Saudi delegation for enhancing cooperation. He said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have history of diplomatic and political relations, which need to convert into strong economic and trade bonds.

The Nation
October 4, 2018

Pakistan, Italy agree to extend timeline of PIDSA

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and Italy on Wednesday agreed to further extend the timeline of the Pak-Italian debt for Development Swap Agreement (PIDSA), till June 30, 2020 through exchange of letter (EoL), for the successful implementation of all the PIDSA operations including cancellation of the remaining debt amount. Pak-Italian debt for Development Swap Agreement (PIDSA) was signed between the Government of Italian Republic and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on November 4, 2006. The agreement meant for implementation of the development projects in the areas of agriculture, health, education, environment, basic infrastructure, rural development, micro credit and poverty alleviation. Under, the agreement, $26.52 million & Euro 58.74 million equivalent to Rs.8.27 billion of Pakistan’s debt owed to Italy was to be swapped for expenditure on selected development projects. The management committee (MC) of PIDSA is the highest decision-making forum for the implementation of PIDSA programme. Assisted by the Technical Support Unit (TSU), so far, a total of 35 projects have been completed, 10 projects are ongoing, 4 projects are still to be undertaken. To date, the government of the Italian Republic has cancelled debt amounting to Rs.6.41 billion (78%) over the total debt swap amount of Rs. 8.27 billion.
PFC delegation leaves for UK to explore new markets

LAHORE - A high level delegation of Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) left for UK on Wednesday on five-day tour to explore new markets and build connections with the British business community in furniture industry. The delegation, headed by its CE Mian M Kashif, would avail the opportunity to study about the latest trends of designing of products and modern technologies in their fields to better their trade to compete global markets. Talking to media prior to his departure to UK, Mian Kashif Ashfaq said this business tour would provide a chance to explore new avenues by sharing vision, expertise for formulation of future policies, economic studies, sectoral and project specific reports besides promotional efforts. The delegation would have one on one direct interaction with foreign business leaders, researchers and investors in UK, he said adding the tour would enable investors to identify potential organizations to partner and developing successful regional economic strategies and support regionally vital businesses. He was of the view that economic and trade relations between Pakistan and Europe possess great potential and there was dire need for Pakistani business community to focus on improving their competitiveness in the European market.

“Many furniture retailers in Pakistan prefer to import furniture from Italy and sell the products in local market, but Pakistani furniture industry is also equally enjoying superb potential to compete. PFC is playing a significant role in boosting furniture exports and local manufacturers should also join hands with the council to help it achieve its goals,” he added. Mian Kashif said a concerted action is being taken for holding exhibitions, websites, international trade fairs and in-depth market analyses,” he added. He said the establishment of joint ventures with foreign producers of woods for the provision of required machinery can bolster the quality of our furniture products and brings them at par with international standards. He Pakistan shows the best potential of increasing its exports to the EU among all countries benefitting from the GSP (Generalised Scheme of Preferences) Plus. He said Pakistan’s business community is not only targeting to step up exports to the EU, but is also striving to strengthen the partnership that will facilitate growth in trade with major partners such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Austria, Portugal, France and Italy. He said that furniture with calligraphic engraving had great demand in local and international markets, which seems to be the dominant one in Pakistan, therefore Pakistani craftsmen should focus on working in this particular area to earn the much-needed foreign exchange.

Investment opportunities in Gwadar highlighted

ISLAMABAD - Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Thursday said that there were enormous prospects for different countries to invest in Gwadar, adding that various projects were
being executed under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor initiative in the port city. He called upon envoys who met him here on Thursday that their countries should benefit from the opportunities for enhancing bilateral economic cooperation with Pakistan. During separate meetings with ambassadors of Romania, Qatar, France and High Commissioner of Australia, Sanjrani said that with improving security situation, investment opportunities had increased manifold in Pakistan, especially in Gwadar region. While speaking to Ambassador of France Marc Barety, the Chairman Senate said that Pakistan-France Friendship Group had been renewed in the Senate of Pakistan which would be beneficial for enhancing parliamentary ties between the two countries. He appreciated the French government for offering scholarships to Pakistani students in higher education and preservation of archaeological sites in Pakistan, especially the historic Mehrgarh; supporting water projects in different regions of the country and training police officials. Speaking to the Ambassador of Qatar Saqr Bin Mubarak Al-Mansouri, Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani said that there was good opportunity for Qatar to invest in infrastructure projects in Gwadar. He said that they were also looking for scholarships for Pakistani students in different educational institutions of Qatar in addition to job opportunities for Pakistanis as promised by Qatar govt.

He said that CPEC projects offered many investment opportunities and Pakistani government would facilitate the investors from Qatar to benefit from the potential of economic cooperation between the two countries. Talking to Romanian Ambassador Nicolae Goia, Sanjrani said that there was need to boost the parliamentary linkages between the two countries, adding: ‘we would be extending invitation to the chairman Senate of Romania to lead a parliamentary delegation to Pakistan’. In meeting with High Commissioner of Australia Margaret Adamson, the Chairman Senate said that economic cooperation between the two countries was below its potential and there was dire need to enhance it further. He said that exchange of parliamentary delegations would also steer the economic cooperation and those of the business delegations would help explore new avenues for increasing bilateral trade. Sanjrani asked the ambassadors to ensure participation of their parliamentary delegations in Asian Parliamentary Assembly’s Political Affairs Committee meeting being held at Gwadar in last week of October.

The Nation
October 10, 2018

Foreign furniture investors show keen interest in Interiors Pakistan exhibition

LAHORE - Over a score of foreign furniture manufacturers and investors have evinced keen interest in a 3-day 10th mega exhibition “Pakistan Interiors Exhibition 2018”, commencing from December 14 at Lahore Expo Centre. It was revealed here Monday by Chief Executive Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq while presiding over a board of directors meeting. The exhibition, being organised by the Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC), has garnered great interest among the people concerned and international market. The industry is rife with anticipation for various opportunities and ideas that the PFC will offer. Mian Kashif said that the PFC was on a mission and wanted to educate people about the value of owning fine hand-crafted furniture. “This time again, the PFC continues to expand its global footprint by welcoming visitors from different countries including China, Italy, Singapore, USA, Australia, Japan, Philippines, UK, Bulgaria, Denmark, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Vietnam. “Exhibitors will have an opportunity to meet
new buyers for networking and market expansion,” he added. He said that the exhibition would also provide the younger designers and architects with an opportunity to witness the market trends and display their own works alongside that of more established professionals. PFC CEO said that the show would offer a full range of furniture with extensive selections of modern and contemporary styles for dining, bedroom, living room, office, occasional, children, outdoor as well as furniture fittings and hardware.

“As we’re working, we’re always striving for a higher degree of excellence,” Kashif said. “The problem with furniture making is that it takes so much labour. So one of our goals is to show people what we do and why our work is worth what it costs them.” “The PFC is also continuing its work to develop a Pakistani presence in more countries and to act as the focal point for Pakistani furniture designers and manufacturers to enter the international market,” he added.

Pakistan’s wood industry is well developed and captures 95% of the country’s total market for furniture. The country has more than 700 units of wooden furniture with Chiniot alone meeting 80% of furniture demand in the country, Gujarat with world-class furniture, Peshawar, Lahore and Karachi being important sale/purchase centres. The market is divided into home use and contract markets, constituting supplies to hotels, restaurants, offices and public facilities. Zeeshan Rathore, Manager Marketing and Rehan Nasir, Manager Accounts PFC have been appointed focal persons for expo and can be approached on following email pakistanfurniturecouncil@gmail.com

Secretary PFC Aqal Sardar briefing the meeting said Pakistan was not known globally as a furniture market which could convince international business community about innovation and quality of Pakistani products. He suggested that the government should encourage and support business houses to invest and develop trustworthy furniture trade markets. There is a need for holding exhibitions in the EU member states to raise awareness about Pakistan’s traditional and innovative products, he added. He said that Europe would be the biggest market for Pakistan’s textile products in future. However, Pakistan should also focus on other exportable products to increase its share in European market and reduce dependence on traditional exports. In Pakistan, he said, most of the furniture was hand-made but still it was very cheap and could be marketed in EU countries at a better price.

Pakistan, China likely to sign industrial pact

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and China are likely to sign an industrial framework agreement for CPEC during the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to China. The development of CPEC Special Economic Zone (SEZs) will also be part of the industrial framework agreement which will get a kick-start during the PM’s visit, official sources told The Nation. The Chinese government has invited Prime Minister Imran Khan to attend the China International Import Expo. Pakistan is the guest of honor at the conference to be attended by members of the Belt and Road Initiative. Prime Minister Imran Khan will visit China during first week of November. During the visit, the source said that a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the establishment of Joint
Working Group for the inclusion of social sector development may also be signed during the PM’s upcoming visit to China. The source said that the sector and financial arrangements for the social sector development will be finalized in the upcoming visit. Pakistan will request China to provide grant for the development of social sector which includes the construction of low-cost housing, health, education facilities, the source added. Regarding Special Economic Zones, the source said that although SEZs are part of the main CPEC framework agreement but Pakistan and China have to yet sign specific framework agreement for the development of the proposed Special Economic Zones (SEZs). It is pertinent to mention here that China and Pakistan have agreed on the establishment of nine SEZs in Pakistan. The source said that it is part of the main CPEC agreement, it has the endorsement of the Chinese high officials and NDRC however no framework agreement has been signed regarding the development of these zones.

Now SEZs will become part of the Industrial Framework Agreement and may also get a kick start, the source said. On Tuesday a progress review meeting on the Rashakai SEZ, located in Mardan KP, was held in the Ministry of Planning and it was decided that it will be discussed with Chinese so a roadmap can be finalized for the zone. Of all the SEZs, Rashakai Industrial Zone is in the advance stage and its feasibility has already been done and now the provincial government will open its makeshift office there till the establishment of permanent office, the source said. The Industrial Framework agreement will go beyond SEZs and it will also include the relocation of Chinese industries to various parts of Pakistan, the source maintained. The next phase agreements of 300 megawatts coal-fired Gwadar power project and socioeconomic development schemes could be signed during the prime minister’s visit. More deliverables would be worked out during the joint working groups of CPEC meetings. Meanwhile, Pakistan and China here on Tuesday signed eight MoUs worth $100 million for mutual investment in seafood, agriculture, steel and pharmaceutical sectors. Around 14 private companies from both sides signed MoUs for mutual investment and joint ventures to expedite the trade and business ties between the two countries. The signing ceremony of Pak-China Trade Cooperation Projects was organised by Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and Ministry of Commerce China.

Addressing on the occasion, Economic and Commercial Counselor of China Embassy, Wang Zhihua said that Chinese Embassy welcomes the mutual investment and joint ventures between the private investor companies of both sides and encouraged private sectors to go for more investment in both countries. He said Pakistan is friendly country, adding that since the diplomatic relations started between Pakistan and China, the cooperation between both sides has increased in defence, technology, agriculture, leather and chemicals. In recent years, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) under 'One belt one road' has given new height to mutual relations and cooperation between both friend countries. He said that the leadership of both sides gives prime importance to economic and trade relations which need to be increased. He said that China is working on around forty projects in different sectors including infrastructure, energy and transport where huge employment opportunity are available for local people in Pakistan. Wang Zhihua informed that trade between China and Pakistan has been increased from last five consecutive years besides increase in bilateral cooperation in agriculture, mineral, chemical and steel. He said that Pakistan and China are negotiating on phase -II of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to increase trade and providing free trade opportunity their markets. He said that Pakistan has huge potential market for international investors and its strategic location gives more comparative advantages to other trading partners.
Addressing on the occasion, Additional Secretary Ministry of Commerce and Textile, Syed Tariq Huda said that Chinese investment in Pakistan gives positive impact to local market of Pakistan. He said that 'One Belt and One Road' initiative also gives vision for inclusions and welfare all region. “We have $ 60 billion Chinese investment in CPEC which includes development projects in Gwadar and also discussing free trade agreement (FTA) for increasing trade and economic relations between China and Pakistan. On the occasion, Director General, Department of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce China, Mr. Liu Changyu welcomed the MoU signed by the private sectors of both sides and said that both of the countries need to further increase trade for exploiting the economic and trade potential of two sides.

The Nation
October 12, 2018

China investors interested for JVs investment

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of China Council for Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), led by its vice president Wu Dengguo, visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and showed interest in exploring opportunities of JVs and investment in Pakistan. Speaking at the occasion, Wu Dengguo, Vice President of CCPIT, said that the purpose of the visit of Hunan Province delegation was to explore business prospects in Pakistan and find out areas that offered good opportunities of collaboration between the business sectors of both countries. –NNI

The Nation
October 12, 2018

PRGMEA team attends 34th IAF World Fashion Convention

LAHORE - With a view to open new avenues for the garment industry to collaborate with international buyers and leading brands, a high-powered delegation of Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufactures and Exporters Association has attended 34th IAF World Fashion Convention, held on Oct 9-10 in Maastricht, Netherlands, where they held series of successful meetings with Centre for the promotion of imports from developing countries (CBI). PRGMEA Chief Coordinator Ijaz Khokhar said that the delegation also had meetings with House of Denim, Amsterdam Fashion Institute and with HOGIAF, which is the largest trade organisation of Dutch Entrepreneurs. PRGMEA team included central chairman Mubashar Naseer Butt, former SVC Sheikh Luqman Amin, Sohail Afzal Sheikh, Sajid Saleem Minhas, and Javed Iqbal Bhatti etc. On this occasion, PRGMEA also gave a presentation on Pakistan and shown a documentary on Pakistan that it was a thriving country for creating awareness about the potential of Pakistan as production hub of textile items especially garments, he added. The importance of mega CPEC project was also highlighted in the convention aimed at creating awareness about the impacts on development prosperity not only of Pakistan but also in the region. Ijaz Khokhar said that the
International Apparel Federation (IAF) is the only global federation of its kind representing apparel associations from 60 countries representing over 150,000 companies.

He said that the MODINT- the Dutch Association for the fashion and textile industries- has about 600 members who have a cumulative annual turnover of about 9 billion Euros. The IAF Convention caters to apparel industry leaders from across the supply chain from all countries. The Convention is a unique opportunity to gain the insights necessary to understand where our industry is heading he added. The PRGMEA chief coordinator added that IAF World Fashion Convention helped Pakistani delegation develop direct interaction with international business tycoons and delegates. PRGMEA is making efforts for bringing big boom in export garments, he said and added the IAF Convention has surely opened new vistas of further development of the domestic industry and helped in bringing innovation in products. Central Chairman Mubashar Butt stated that value-added garments sector is major tax payer, largest employment generator in whole textile chain and exporting up to $5.5 billion products while the sector has a huge scope of expansion. He said textile value-added garments sector had shown growth of 11.22 percent in 2017-18 despite the internal and external challenges. He said PRGMEA was committed to increase exports of value-added garments sector but it needs a level-playing field as par the regional competitors. “We will be able to compete in international market and garment export could fetch $6 billion dollars in one year.” He said that strenuous efforts would be made to motivate the participants of IAF World Fashion Convention that they should come forward and invest in mega project of CPEC.

The Nation

October 14, 2018

Pak manufacturers to showcase products at China Import Expo

BEIJING: Pakistan will establish a pavilion at China International Import Expo to be held in Shanghai, to provide a chance to its manufacturers and producers to showcase their products in order to gain access to Chinese market. “The federal secretary commerce will soon be visiting Shanghai to finalize all the arrangements in this regard,” a senior official told state-run media. The Chinese government has granted the status of “Guest of Honour” to Pakistan to ensure the provision of all possible facilities and benefits to the Pakistani business community at the Expo scheduled to be held from November 5 to 10. The gesture also shows the level of commitment in China to make Pakistan part of a shared future, the official added. According to experts, to take advantage of China’s food market, Pakistani producers at the expo can offer their own unique and cost-effective products. A bigger share of the market in China would translate into higher revenues, improved quality and a wider product range. Apart from food, there are other Pakistani products with immense potential for export to China, including onyx stones, minerals and surgical items. The expo organizers were initially expecting around 150,000 purchasing agents, but they have so far registered over 160,000. This massive participation will present Pakistan with access to markets in other countries as well.

As foreign buyers experience the previously unexplored Pakistani prospects, new windows of trade will open. Thus, Pakistani businesses will expand not just into China, but also internationally. As a follow-up step to the import expo, Pakistani manufacturers can take advantage of China’s
booming e-commerce sector. They can utilize this highly developed industry to reach out to more customers than would be possible only with physical stores in China. Some 2,800 companies from G20 member states as well as 50 countries and regions involved in the Belt and Road Initiative will take part. More than 30 of the world’s 44 least-developed countries will be represented at the expo. Forty-three African countries will take part, with about 190 enterprises from the continent set to promote products such as Egyptian dates and Ethiopian coffee. Shanghai has been holding rehearsals, improving city infrastructure and training volunteers to prepare for the event.

At the National Exhibition and Convention Center, the expo venue, the event organizer held a comprehensive rehearsal covering various scenarios. The Shanghai government has been renovating roads around the convention centre and developed mobile apps to guide traffic in the area. The city has also added eight bus routes and readied 100 backup vehicles. During the expo, 5,000 volunteers will offer services including translation and navigational help to visitors. It is estimated that products from more than 1,500 exhibitors have arrived in the Chinese mainland, and another 1,000 are being shipped. Chinese companies are eyeing great potential in boosting imports through the event. China expects to import at least 1,000 kinds of products and services that have not been sold in the domestic market.

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October 14, 2018

Indonesia asked to set up JVs for palm oil production in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan was a major importer of palm oil to meet its domestic needs while Indonesia was the world’s largest producer of palm oil and its investors should set up joint ventures in Pakistan for production and processing of palm oil that would help in reducing import bill. This was observed by Ahmed Hassan Moughal, president Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry, while exchanging views with Wisnu Suryo Hutomo, Head of Economic & Commercial Department, Embassy of Indonesia, during his visit to Chamber House. ICCI president said that Pakistan’s palm oil import witnessed 23 percent increase during the first half of 2017-18 and stressed that Indonesia should cooperate with Pakistan in enhancing local production of this commodity. Ahmed Hassan Moughal said that Pakistan and Indonesia should focus on promoting bilateral trade as the current volume of trade of around $2.5 billion was not reflective of their true potential. He said that with serious efforts from both sides, the two-way trade could be increased up to $8 billion. He said that after comprehensive review of the Preferential Trade Agreement between Pakistan and Indonesia, Indonesia had granted additional tariff lines to Pakistan and stressed that it should expedite the process of ratification of the additional tariff lines that would help in improving bilateral trade. He said that during the visit of President of Indonesia Joko Widodo to Pakistan in January this year along with a business delegation, both sides had signed several important agreements of cooperation and emphasized that practical steps should be taken for the implementation of those agreements in order to realize their actual benefits.

Rafat Farid, senior vice president, and Iftikhar Anwar Sethi, vice president, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry, said that Pakistan and Indonesia should enhance cooperation in
agriculture field for achieving mutually beneficial outcomes. They said that both sides should promote partnerships between their private sectors to achieve win-win results. They assured that ICCI would like to work with Indonesian Embassy to promote business linkages between the business enterprises of both countries in order to explore all untapped areas of potential cooperation. Speaking at the occasion, Wisnu Suryo Hutomo, Minister Counsellor of Indonesian Embassy, said that Indonesia was ready to cooperate with Pakistan in cultivation of high-yielding palm plants in addition to establishing palm oil refineries in Pakistan for meeting its domestic needs. He said that his country was also willing to set up joint ventures in the production and processing of palm oil along with manufacturing of high-value palm oil products in Pakistan. He said that Pakistan was exporting rice while there was a huge demand of Pakistani kinnow and mangoes in Indonesia which should be exploited. He said both countries should focus on regular exchange of trade delegations to further strengthen bilateral trade relations.

The Nation
October 15, 2018

**Saudi Arabia’s investment delegation to reach Pakistan on 18th**

ISLAMABAD - An investment and business delegation led by senior government functionaries from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will visit Pakistan by October 18 to negotiate on investment opportunities in different sectors. The investment and business delegation from KSA would negotiate with Pakistan side for increasing trade and investment in areas of petroleum, agriculture, textile and chemicals for enhancing cooperation between the two country, Secretary Commerce and textiles Muhammad Younas Dhaga told APP here on Sunday. “We proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to Saudi Arabia for increasing trade and business relation between both nations and they are agreed to further negotiate FTA after study.”

The Secretary Commerce said the Pakistan had proposed KSA to sign Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) before FTA to bring down the tariff lines between the two countries for enhancing trade and business relations. Replying to a question, he said: “We would achieve exports target and additional exports for economic development and prosperity.” He said the government was committed to enhancing exports and increasing manufacturing in engineering, textile, agriculture and chemical domains. The government, he said, would give priority to promotion of export-led growth and reduce dependence on imports, adding that it had identified many sectors to boost exports.

“Primarily, we are focusing on increasing exports in engineering and Information Technology (IT), chemicals and innovative technology through enhancing their competitiveness in global market.” With regard to export promotion strategy, he said it would focus on increasing the country’s exports to compete with regional and global players in international market. He said special attention would also be given towards promotion of textile exports, particularly knitwear, apparel, garments, leather products and rice, besides, promoting furniture industry of the country which has great export potential. He said the government, in consultation with stakeholders, would devise comprehensive policy guidelines to promote textile and industrial exports.
Pakistan’s pharmaceutical and surgical sector delegation visits Lagos

KARACHI (PR): A business delegation of Pharmaceutical and Surgical Sector of Pakistan is visiting Lagos, Nigeria to participate in Medic West Africa Trade Fair scheduled from 10 -12 October, 2018 under tutelage of Trade Development of Pakistan (TDAP). Delegation includes seven companies of pharmaceutical sector and two companies of surgical sector. TDAP is participating first time with such a meaningful delegation. In order to take advantage of the presence of Pakistani companies in Nigeria, Commercial Section, High Commission of Pakistan, Nigeria organised a B2B Meeting of Pakistani Pharmaceutical and Surgical Sector with importers, distributors, marketing companies, hospitals and manufactures of Nigerian health sector in coordination with Lagos Chamber of Commerce, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria and National Association of Nigerian Traders etc. Around 30 companies attended the event. Participants included companies from north as well as south of Nigeria. A delegation led by Mrs. Saratou Adeoti Kabasai, Hon Consul General of Pakistan in Benin also participated in the Meeting. Muda Yusuf, Director General Lagos Chamber, extended warm welcome to all the companies and promised to ensure all support to Pakistani companies in developing business relations with Nigerian companies. Maj. Gen (R) Waqar Ahmad Kingravi, High Commissioner of Pakistan travelled from Abuja to Lagos to attend the event and meet all the participants to ensure complete facilitation. Speaking on the occasion, he expressed gratitude to Lagos Chamber and Nigerian participants for the B2B Meeting. He emphasized that Govt of Pakistan is very keen to develop durable economic relations with Nigeria and assured that High Commission of Pakistan will provide all relevant information about Pakistani industry and extend maximum facilitation in quick visa processing.

He also invited Nigerian companies to visit Pakistan for exploring opportunities. Tahir Abbas, Commercial Secretary, High Commission of Pakistan, gave a detailed presentation on market size of Nigeria and West Africa, industrial strengths of Pakistan, achievements of pharmaceutical and surgical sectors of Pakistan, available opportunities for Nigerian businessmen in areas of imports, exports, joint ventures etc. He also discussed the Look Africa component of the Emerging Pakistan Initiative of the Govt. of Pakistan to emphasise the prevailing spirit to reach out to Africa. During breakfast meeting with High Commissioner, Khalid Javed Chaudhary, CEO Medipak Ltd. and former President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry expressed deep satisfaction on the support extended by High Commission of Pakistan for facilitation in quick visa processing, B2B Meetings, ready availability of information and in other matters related to trade with Nigeria, in particular, and West Africa, in general.
ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and Russia have extended the government to government agreement for the $2 billion North South Gas Pipeline for six months, it was learnt reliably here. The extension was required to advance the negotiations between Pakistani and Russian companies for the pipeline, and therefore it was granted, official sources told The Nation. Without the extension, no negotiation was possible between the two companies involved in gas pipeline project, said the source. Currently a delegation of Russian company RT-Global Resources is visiting Pakistan and Monday started negotiations with ISGS Inter State Gas Systems (Private) Limited (ISGS) regarding North South (Lahore to Karachi) gas pipeline. The Government to Government Agreement was due to expire on October 16, 2018 (Tuesday) and therefore it was extended for six months, official sources said. The Government to Government agreement was extended last week and the petroleum minister signed the extension on behalf of the government of Pakistan, the source said. Previously both the governments were extending the agreement on year to year basis.

It is pertinent to mention that the ECC in its meeting held on 10th January 2015 had approved the North-South Gas Pipeline Project (Project) under Government-to-Government (G2G) arrangements. The Government of Pakistan and the Russian Federation entered into G to G agreement on the cooperation for the development of the pipeline project on 16th October 2015 at Islamabad. The project will be implemented on Build Own Operate and Transfer (BOOT) model by Russian company under Government to Government Agreement. Russian side submitted the initial commercial proposal in November, 2016, which is under consideration. Earlier, Pakistan had asked Russia to make a reduction in the tolling fee for pumping liquefied natural gas (LNG). The length of the North South pipeline will be 1122KM with 42-inch diameter, which would annually transport around 12.4 billion cubic meters (BCM) of gas LNG from Karachi to Punjab. The source said that negotiations between ISGS and Russian company RT-Global Resources started on Monday and will continue for three days. On the first day of negotiations, the BOOT Contract terms were discussed. The legal, commercial and technical aspect of the agreement was discussed, the source added. It is pertinent to mention here that besides North South Gas pipeline project, Pakistan and China had agreed to work on the proposal for development of 1200 MMCFD South-North Gas Pipeline, on a BOOT basis from Karachi to Lahore. An MoU has been already been signed between PCIGL and ISGS for the same.

The Nation

October 20, 2018

Austrian company keen to invest in construction sector of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Doka, an Austria based service provider company to big construction projects Friday expressed its intention to invest in Pakistan as it was a potential market for business and investment activities. While exchanging views with president of Islamabad chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahmed Hassan Moughal here, Project Manager, Doka Martin Hoeriesberger said that with more than 160 sales and logistics facilities in over 70 countries, Doka has a highly efficient distribution network to provide swift and professional equipment and technical support to big construction projects. He said Doka has the expertise to provide form work solutions to big construction projects including residential and commercial high-rise buildings, bridges, power plants and tunnels and it was now interested to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan. On
the occasion, Ahmed Hassan Moughal briefed the Doka representative about business and investment opportunities in Pakistan. He said that Pakistan offered great investment opportunities to foreign investors in many sectors of its economy including construction, energy, infrastructure and many other fields. He said the current government had also launched Naya Pakistan Housing project to construct 5 million housing units in the country and it was the best time for Doka to enter Pakistani market to offer its framework solutions for achieving lucrative outcomes. Ahmed Hassan Moughal said that Austria was a key member of European Union as well as an important development partner and Pakistan wanted to further strengthen business and investment relations with it to achieve beneficial results for its economy. Both the sides also exchanged views on various options for further enhancing bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Austria. It was stressed that both countries should focus on regular exchange of trade delegations to explore all untapped areas of potential cooperation.

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October 22, 2018

Two-day 3rd Pak Water & Energy Expo from 24th

LAHORE - The two-day 3rd Pak Water and Energy Expo 2018, the largest and most extensive global water trade event showcasing in Pakistan will be held here at Lahore Expo Centre on October 24-25, 2018. The purpose of organising Pak Water Expo is to gather all the related business professionals and industries including sellers and potential buyers to show them the current development and new trends in the Water industry around the world. It is also aimed to provide a forum for exchanging new ideas and discussions with the aim to propose solutions of various water related problems in Pakistan, according to Kamran Abbasi, Director of Pak Water & Energy Expo, here on Sunday. He said that exhibitors would include from sectors: water technologies, waste water solutions, power generation, transmission and distribution, renewable energy, sustainability & green engineering, automation and instrumentation. The exhibitors would have a comprehensive range of products and services and the latest state-of-the-art technologies of the entire water value chain. Abbasi asserted that it was a platform where top government officials, industry leaders, water experts, practitioners and enterprises would converge to establish business and networking opportunities.

A conference dedicated to discuss water woes in the country, its challenges and long-term solutions would also be part of this expo in which officials and experts from government organizations, private sectors would deliver lectures. This would bring academia from different sectors to join hands on this important topic. The highlights for this year's Water Expo are on Advanced Wastewater Treatment Technology, Reuse Solutions and Smart Water solutions. Expo was being organized by the Prime Event Management, he maintained. Abbasi said that with a growing convergence of urban, water and environment issues around the world, there was a need to adopt an integrated approach to manage water resource, environment and urban planning. This would allow buyers and sellers to leverage shared synergies in cost efficiency, productivity and R&D, he added. "Event is exclusively focused on water and energy, both are crucial elements of every plant utilities and equally important for the sustainable economic developments, wellbeing of public and prosperity of the country," Kamran Abbasi concluded.
Framework readied to attract FDI in export sector

ISLAMABAD: In order to promote foreign investment in export-oriented sectors, the Commerce Division has shared a draft investment document titled ‘Trade Related Investment Framework’ with all stakeholders including Board of Investment (BoI). The document provides a comprehensive framework to attract investment in export-oriented sectors and suggested measures to remove all bottlenecks hindering investments. A senior official told Dawn that commerce division is awaiting feedback on the policy. However, he said the BoI has not provided its response so far. The draft policy recognises the critical nexus between trade and investment, identified the global trends in foreign direct investment (FDI) and analyses Pakistan’s investment performance over the years. The policy comes at a time when cumulative foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to Pakistan were recorded at $10 billion in the last five years out of which 81 per cent was concentrated in non-manufacturing sectors like power, oil & gas, construction, financial business, communication IT & telecom, transport and trade.

For promoting investments in export, the draft policy identified allocation of resources from labour intensive sectors value added footwear and bags, apparel and textiles to resource-intensive sectors such as copper cathodes, aluminium sheets and foils, and high-technology steel-making. The document also highlights the need for investment in agriculture sector especially in value addition of resource-intensive sectors of agro-processing are especially juices and syrups, confectionary, fish and edible oil. It also suggests investments in import substitutions in oil refinery and petrochemicals, data processing/ITC equipment, telecom, LED Lights and solar panels. The policy suggested integrating global value chains especially in consumer electronics, integrated circuits manufacturing, automotive electronics, electricity equipment; and chromium bromide batteries. The document highlights extra ordinary incentives for selected sectors such as energy, sugar, fertilizers and attractive returns in real estate and stock exchange as the primary reasons for subdued investments in the manufacturing sector. The past and existing policy channelizes investments and FDI into non-manufacturing sectors but even in the case of manufacturing related investments, preference has been to capture local demands rather than prioritizing exports such as automobile sector. At the same time, the preferential market access secured under trade agreements has not been translated towards increasing exports to partner countries. Lack of synergy between the investment, industrial, agriculture, trade and tariff policies has also hampered the flow of investment in the country.

According to the draft, investment into export-oriented manufacturing in the priority sectors primary hinges on competitiveness of production and market access. The competitiveness enhancement could be achieved by interventions. Top of the list is the tariff rationalization. Pakistan has amongst the highest average weighted tariffs amongst the 68 countries with annual exports of $20bn. The tariffs, especially on raw materials, erode competitiveness and breed in efficiencies. However, the 20 fastest export growth economies have reduced import tariffs; and the top two growing economies have reduced tariffs by 72pc and 51pc, respectively. A draft tariff policy currently awaits cabinet approval to remove anomalies.
Pakistan best destination for business

LAHORE - Pakistan has a shining future and was a best destination for doing business and picture portrayed by international media about this great country has nothing to do with reality. Top businessman from Italy, Massimiliano Pasqualini expressed these views in a meeting with acting president of Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Khawaja Shahzad Nasir, vice president Fahim-ur-Rehman Sehgal and former Executive Committee member Chaudhry Khadim Hussain here on Saturday. Terming Pakistani nation as peace loving, he said, “There is no truth behind the negative propaganda by the international media as I have found Pakistan a great country with immense economic potential.” Massimiliano Pasqualini said that businessmen of both the countries should hold sector-wise study to evolve a comprehensive joint strategy to enhance volume of trade between the two brotherly countries. He said that Pakistan was the most important country of Asia and its private sector had the ability to do a lot at economic front. They must have strongest liaison with their Italian counterparts to extract huge benefits from Italian expertise.

He said that businessmen of Italy consider Pakistan as an emerging market and were keen to make investment and joint ventures in various economic sectors, asserting that there was a huge business potential in the two countries that should be tapped. He said that there was a vast scope for joint ventures in energy, pharmaceutical, agro infrastructure, automobile, textile and marble sectors. LCCI acting president Khawaja Shahzad Nasir said that Italy had been very supportive to Pakistan within the European Union (EU) with special reference to trade-related issues. Italy was Pakistan’s third biggest market in Europe and bilateral trade was likely to touch new heights in near future.

He said Pakistan attached the highest importance to its relations with Italy in various fields. He said that climate for foreign investors in Pakistan was so conducive that they could now have 100 per cent equity and there were no restrictions on remitting dividend, profits, fee etc. “The Italian investors can invest in agro-based industries, construction, mining, textiles and tourism sectors, where Pakistan could contribute and find complimentary areas in design and fashion. Other sectors included IT and telecommunication,” he maintained.

LCCI Vice President Fahim-ur-Rehman Sehgal said that Italian businessmen could take advantage from the investment-friendly climate of Pakistan that offered best return on the foreign investment with economic policies providing for legal protection to foreign investment. Despite ups and down and other problems, not a single foreign investor had suffered in Pakistan. He said that it was high time for the Italian investors to come to Pakistan and make investments as the country was fast becoming hub of economic activity in the region. He said that there was vast scope in the field of dairy products in which Italy enjoys expertise and hence both the countries could make huge profits. Chaudhry Khadim Hussain said that Italy was an important trading partner of Pakistan in Europe which simultaneously came at 4th place among the top importing and exporting destinations for Pakistan in European Union. He said that it was encouraging to see that volume of bilateral trade was being maintained over one billion dollar.
Pakistan sign contract for EXPO 2020 participation

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan Sunday formally signed participation contract with the EXPO-2020 authorities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Abu Dhabi. The contract was signed by Ambassador of Pakistan to UAE Moazzam Ahmed Khan, in his capacity as Commissioner General, EXPO-2020 and Sultan Al Shamsi, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, a message received here on Sunday said. The signing ceremony was witnessed by Reem Al Hashimy, Minister of State for International Cooperation and Director General, EXPO-2020 and Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce, Textile, Industry & Production and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood. The contract signing formally started activities for construction of Pakistan Pavilion in EXPO-2020 which would be built on a large sized plot in the Opportunity District.

The pavilion would be based on the ‘Emerging Pakistan’ theme, having representation from all provinces. Speaking on the occasion, Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce, Textile, Industry & Production and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood said Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with UAE and that looked forward to making its participation most meaningful in line with the EXPO theme of ‘Connecting Minds, Creating the Future’. He said the EXPO-2020 was not only a UAE specific event but was an exposition of the whole region. “We have already started the Design phase of the Pakistan Pavilion reflecting the true potentials of Pakistan. The Prime Minister has constituted a high-level steering committee having representation from private and public sector stakeholders for effective participation,” he added. The advisor noted that the last month’s visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan and his meeting with Sheikh Muhammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan set the bilateral relation on a new course. Both sides agreed to transform this special relationship into strategic partnership between the two countries. As a follow-up of the understanding reached between the leadership, a 15-member delegation headed by Sultan Bin Ahmad Sultan Al Jabar, Minister of State and CEO of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company visited Pakistan to explore the ways and means to enhance cooperation between the two countries in economic development, infrastructure, energy, agriculture and petrochemicals sectors.

EU for boosting ties with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD - European Union (EU) Ambassador to Pakistan Jean François Cautain European has said the EU wants to extend economic and trade ties with Pakistan while Generalized System of Preferences (GSP- Plus) would play a major role in increasing Pakistan exports to EU countries. During recent visit of EU Commission’s trade delegations to Pakistan, the two sides have discussed the different issues for third review process of GSP- Plus to enhance the trade and economic
relations between Pakistan and EU, he told while talking to APP here Monday. He said through the GSP, we will extend preferential market access to developing countries.

Meanwhile, a senior official of Ministry of Commerce informed APP that after signing the GSP-plus, Pakistan exports to EU countries had increased by 47 percent as compared to the past which had now reached to Euros 2.73 billion. He said that Germany, Netherlands, Spain and Scandinavian countries were the biggest trading partners of Pakistan, where the country’s exports had increased more after signing GSP- Plus. Replying to another question, he said that Pakistan was playing important role for international cooperation and was following the all conventions including United Nations (UN) and EU. He said that in recent years Pakistan had improved its ranking in women and child right issues and improved the governance system in different sectors.

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