

CTD apprehends five terrorists linked to banned outfit in Karachi

KARACHI: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Wednesday apprehended at least five terrorists of a proscribed organisation in Karachi. According to details, on a tip-off, the CTD carried out an operation in Golimar area of the metropolis and detained five terrorists of belonging to the banned Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. According to the CTD officials, the arrested terrorists were involved in various criminal activities including target killing. Weapons and hit list were also recovered from the possession of terrorists. —APP

Etisalat shows Dh4.6b net profit in first-half 2020

ABU DHABI: The Etisalat Group has net profits of Dh4.6 billion for the first-half of 2020, with the numbers showing immunity that swept other businesses in the country. The telecom giant pulled out a 3 percent growth year-on-year.

It has consolidated revenues of Dh25.6 billion, with consolidated EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) totalling Dh13.2 billion.

"Etisalat delivered a good performance considering the circumstances - the world is voyaging through un-chartered waters and COVID-19 has affected all industries, including telecom," said Obaid Humaid Al Tayer, Chairman, in a statement. "Etisalat managed to respond and demonstrate resilience as we ensured the delivery of uninterrupted services to our customers." Al Tayer said Etisalat remained firmly committed towards providing more digital services for its customer base, with the recent pandemic highlighting the need. "The unconventional conditions have spurred the adoption of digital services, bridging a divide by changing customers' behaviour towards digital channels," he said.

"Etisalat's innovative solutions have catered to the social distancing era, it has enabled remote working and education, and it minimised human interactions and increased the pace of automation. Our infrastructure has accommodated the surge in requirements and is ready for more acceleration in digital adoption." Etisalat said the group's board approved an interim dividend of 15 fils per share for the second quarter, bringing interim dividend for first six months to 40 fils per share. —TLTP

SC seeks report on Matiullah's abduction

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police to submit report regarding abduction and release of senior journalist Matiullah Jan from the Capital's G-6 Sector.

A three-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed and comprising Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan and Justice Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhal heard the contempt proceedings against journalist Matiullah Jan over his alleged derogatory tweet against the court and its judges.

During the course of proceedings, the court sought details regarding abduction of Matiullah Jan from the capital. Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed asked why police had not recorded the statement of Matiullah Jan till now. What were the institutions doing, he questioned.

He said that the government should take action on the matter and proceed in accordance with the law. The Attorney General said that immediate proceedings had been initiated in the matter. Advocate Latif Khosa representing the Pakistan Bar Council and the Supreme Court Bar Association expressed concern over the abduction and said that the journalist was picked up in broad daylight. He demanded that the kidnappers be identified from the CCTV footage available with the police. The court directed the Islamabad Police to record the abducted journalist's statement and submit a challan before the relevant court. —APP

NBP, Winrock sign MoU for financial literacy

KARACHI: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and US based Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development (Winrock) for collaboration between the two organizations to look at increasing ways and means of credit availability to farmers, processors and service providers and enhancing financial literacy in selected areas and crops.

Initial focus will be on four non-major crops namely dates, banana, tomato and red chili, said a statement on Wednesday. Winrock is being represented via its Pakistan office through the PAD and is undertaking tasks on value chain development in the four crops in 12 districts (six each in Sindh and Punjab). Winrock International is a recognised leader in US and international devel-

The Business

Lahore, Thursday, July 23, 2020 Zil-Haj 01, 1441

EU ready to help Pak green sector through enhanced investment

ISLAMABAD: The European Union (EU) has expressed the desire to contribute to Pakistan's green sector through enhanced investment. The desire was expressed during a meeting between European Union's delegation to Pakistan and Adviser to Prime Minister on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam in Islamabad. Both sides discussed at length various matters of bilateral collaboration in green economic recovery through investment and green job creations. They also discussed environmental sustainability. —DNA



RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Advisor on Trade and Commerce, Razzaq Dawood addresses on the occasion of Virtual International Trade Forum organised by the RCCI. —DNA

Sindh approves tax cuts to promote construction sector

KARACHI: Sindh Information Minister Nasir Hussain Shah said on Wednesday that the provincial government has also taken steps to promote the construction sectors and the authorities will approve tax cuts to increase investment in the industry.

Nasir Hussain Shah, while talking to journalists, said that Sindh government will provide all facilities to the construction industry, whereas, the provincial cabinet reduced the taxes and focused to start one-window operation for the small businesses.

He said that the government is willing to create more employment through its policies. Shah praised police forces and other law enforcement agencies for giving best performance. He clarified that his statement did not mean to claim for the elimination of crimes, however, the crime rate was significantly reduced across the province especially in the provincial capital Karachi since June.

The minister said that anti-state elements had lodged attacks on police, Rangers and sensitive instalments which were successfully foiled by the law enforcers.

He said that the inspector general (IG) Sindh gave a briefing over the law and order situation in the cabinet meeting. He also briefed about the Safe City project and told the cabinet regarding the installation of more CCTV cameras in the metropolis. —DNA

Trade facilities, EDB at Chaman border top priority: Arbab

ISLAMABAD: Arbab Shahzad, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Establishment said that trade facilitation and ease of doing business (EDB) is the priority of the PTI government. He said that COVID-19 has damaged the interests of trader and business man especially in and around Chaman area which is directly related with the common people.

He said that exporters and importers facilitation will increase bilateral trade between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

He expressed these views while addressing the meeting on the closure of Chaman border and the difficulties being faced by common people of Chaman District in the Parliament House Islamabad.

The meeting proposed to coordinate with the provincial authorities regarding the issues faced by the traders and businessmen in and around Chaman border as people of the same tribe are settling across the border. The meeting also decided to recommend the provincial and district authorities to facilitate the locals immediately in this regard. The meeting was attended by Members National Assembly, Madam Shandana Gulzaar, Mohsin Darwar, Ali Wazeer, Muhammad Sadiq Shaikh, Ms. Nafisa Khattak and officers from Ministry of Commerce, Interior, Health and officers of Finance Ministry were present in the meeting.

Task force of Pak-Afghan Parliamentary Friendship Group on Tracking &

Scanning of Containers destined for Afghanistan deliberated that Scanning and tracking should not be hurdle for traders.

The task force decided to make proposals for making scanning and tracking of the containers at border upto international standards keeping in view of international standards of facilitating the exporters and importers at Afghanistan border.

Mohammad Sadiq Khan Pakistan's Special Envoy to Afghanistan said that both Pakistan and Afghanistan can take benefit from mutual trade. He suggested to make scanning easy and comfortable for the traders especially the scanning of perishable items. The task force meeting was chaired by member Muhammad Yaqoob Sheikh. Second Task force of Pakistan Afghanistan Parliamentary Friendship Group in Customs related issues recommended giving one time waiver regarding exponential demurrage charges owing to COVID-19 Pandemic which are stuck at Pakistan Afghanistan Transit trade.

The task force recommended that regional trade is imperative for the prosperity of the common man in both countries and suggested that special concession be given to exporters and importers at this time of emergency due to COVID-19 Pandemic. The task force also recommended taking provincial authorities and all government stake holders on board immediately to resolve the issues of demurrage charges. The participants appreciated the

Initiative of The Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser who believes in the parliamentary initiative to resolve the all issues faced by traders and business men especially the trade with Afghanistan.

FPCCI hails setting up of SEZs in Sindh
Mian Anjum Nisar, President and Sheikh Sultan, Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) have hailed decision taken by Chief Minister Sindh for setting up of two Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the province of Sindh.

They added that both SEZs will contribute to meet the domestic demand as well as enhancing the exports of services sector and agro foods as well.

While commenting on service sector, they stated that Service sector is the largest sector of Pakistan that contributes around 60 percent in GDP, 30 percent in tax collection and 35 percent in employment generation. They added that this has been their consistent view to increase the number SEZs so that new industries could be set up and the issue of unemployment can be tackled. They also appreciated the establishment of Bholari Special Economic Zone which is Pakistan's first private sector special economic zone is situated in District Thatta on the M-9 Motorway.

They also lauded the decision of handing over the possession of 1,535 acres of land for formal launching of Dhabaji Special Economic Zones, near Karachi. —DNA

No notices to industry, Aslam assures LCCI

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce & Investment Mian Aslam Iqbal has said that no notice would be served to the industrialist for industrial regularization until new Master Plan for Lahore is finalised.

He was speaking at a meeting at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry. LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar, Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad, former President Almas Hyder, former Senior Vice President Khawaja Shahzad Nasir and MD WASA Syed Zahid Aziz also spoke on the occasion.

The Minister said that issue of regularization of scattered industrial zones would be resolved once new Master Plan for Lahore is prepared and implemented. On demand of the LCCI President, the Minister directed the MD WASA to resolve the issue of disparity in water charges in different cities immediately as growth of businesses is top priority of the government. He said that WASA and LCCI should have meetings and form proposals till August 15 so that these can be forwarded to the government for necessary amendments.

To a question, Mian Aslam Iqbal said that proposals for opening of restaurants

with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) soon after Eid ul Azha would be forwarded to federal government. Likewise, proposal for opening of marriage halls in the first week of September would also be forwarded for approval. He also directed the MD WASA to ensure up-to-date drainage system in the markets to avoid financial losses to the business community.

"Punjab government was fully aware of its responsibilities and would utilizing all resources to solve the problems faced by the industry. Growth of industry, commerce and investment and sustained development in Punjab through a business friendly environment is top agenda of the government", the Minister added.

LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that industry situated in different parts of the city should be regularized without any hurdle. He said that businesses are already in a deep trouble due to COVID-19 therefore no notice should be served.

He said that businesses of marriage halls, caterers and restaurants are closed from last five months. They should be allowed to do businesses with SOPs. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that traders should be allowed to do 24/7 businesses till Eid as they have suffered a lot.

He said that sewerage system in the markets of Lahore is outdated, damaged and dysfunctional and shows flood-like situation whenever there is heavy downpour. He said that rainy water enters into the godown, shops & basements damages the trading goods like machinery, furniture and raw materials, etc. The streets of these markets get heavily flooded due to rainwater and the business activities get seriously hampered till the drainage of water.

The LCCI President said that other than sewerage issues, LCCI members are facing another problem because WASA has revised the water tariff by fixing Rs.100,000 per month and Rs.50,000 per month respectively for extracting ground water through tube-well of 1 cusec and ½ cusec for industrial and commercial consumers in Lahore.

Negative propaganda will damage pharma industry: ICCI
Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has said that negative propaganda against pharmaceutical industry of the country would damage it and stressed that such tactics should be avoided to save this important industry from any adverse effects. —Agencies



RAWALPINDI: Ambassador of Qatar, Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al Thani meets Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the GHQ. —DNA

China's satellites help Pak monitor desert locusts

ISLAMABAD: "The satellite data and meteorological data provided by China's meteorological satellites can be used to monitor Pakistan's desert locusts and provide early warnings to relevant parties", source from China Meteorological Administration (CMA) said, adding that CMA has released special reports on remote sensing data of locust attacks in Pakistan.

"China's Fengyun series satellites can generate information for analysis of locust-affected area by monitoring rainfall, soil moisture and land surface temperature (LST) changes of the African and South Asian countries," CMA noted, explaining that a hotter and wetter climate favours more multiplication of locusts, and studies have also linked wind direction, speed, and other

weather parameters to the migration of locusts, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Wednesday.

According to an update issued by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the summer breeding of desert locust swarms has commenced in Pakistan's Tharparkar, Nara and Cholistan deserts where hatching and band formation will increase later this month.

On top of monitoring the breeding and movement of locust swarm, Fengyun satellites are helpful when it comes to the assessment of vegetation damage. Locust swarms ravaged crops and pastureland, destroyed food and vegetation and jeopardized food security across Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and parts of South Asia.

Fengyun-3 (FY-3) polar orbit meteorological satellite, therefore,

is used to monitor how the crops are growing. With the monitoring data generated by FY-3, Pakistani scientists can offer remote sensing-based assessment of vegetation damage in locust-invaded areas.

As per CMA, PMD has been using data collected from China's CMACast, an updated satellite data broadcast system based on Digital Video Broadcasting - Satellite - Second Generation (DVB-S2) with both file and multimedia transmission capability since 2006; they have regularly posted maps sensed by Fengyun-2E (FY-2E) satellite online for various disaster prevention and mitigation authorities. In addition, data collected by China's MICAPS has been used by Pakistan to analyze and forecast weather for relevant institutions and the public. —Online