

Ahsan seeks report on dysfunctional 'CPEC Centre of Excellence'

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday expressed displeasure over dysfunctionality of the Center of Excellence for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which was supposed to provide support for CPEC. The minister expressed concerns while chairing a meeting to review a progress on projects initiated under the Ministry of Planning Development and Special Initiatives, said a press release issued here. —APP

The Business

Lahore, Friday, April 22, 2022 Ramazan 20, 1443

Rana Tanveer takes charge of Education Ministry

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain took charge of his post. On his arrival yesterday at the Federal Ministry of Education, the Education Secretary Naheed Durrani and other senior officials welcomed Federal Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain. Speaking on the occasion, he assured to make all out efforts to bring positive changes in the education sector. Federal Minister for Education Rana Tanveer Hussain also vowed to resolve pending issues of institutions and students on priority basis. —APP

Cotton cultivation be completed by May 15: Expert

FAISALABAD: Cotton growers here in the district have been advised to complete cotton cultivation by May 15 as late sowing could affect the crop in terms of quality as well as quantity.

Addressing a meeting of cotton growers in Chak 365-GB on Thursday, Deputy Director Agriculture (Extension) Khalid Mehmood said that cotton is a precious crop which is dubbed "white gold" owing to its high commercial value. "It not only helps in increasing national exports but also mitigates financial constraints of farmers", he said and advised the growers to bring maximum land under cotton cultivation. He said government of Pakistan fixed a support price of Rs. 5700/- per 40 kg for cotton, whereas Punjab government had announced a subsidy of Rs 1000/- on purchase of certified cotton seeds in addition to 50 percent subsidy on purchase of pesticides for cotton crops.

The government was also providing latest machinery on rent to cotton growers to bring down its cultivation cost so that farmers could reap maximum profit. —APP

PFC greets newly elected AJK PM Sardar Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Thursday felicitating the newly elected Prime Minister Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Sardar Tanveer Ilyas hoped that infrastructure development would be accorded priority besides promoting tourism and strengthening of small industries in the region.

In his greeting message, Chief Executive Officer PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq said under the dynamic and sagacious leadership of Sardar Tanveer Ilyas, an era of progress, development and prosperity would usher in whole of the territory of the state, said a press release issued here. He said it was point of satisfaction that all possible measures would be taken to promote tourism of international standard by improving infrastructure on modern lines and extending Murree Expressway to Kohala with the collaboration of federal govt. —APP

LHC asks AG to appear today after Cheema directives

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) has directed Advocate General (AG) to seek directives from Governor Punjab in connection with the matter of taking oath from Hamza Shahbaz as Chief Minister (CM) Punjab and appear before it.

The court summoned AG for assistance besides adjourning the hearing of the case till today (Friday). The petition regarding the matter of oath taking from Hamza Shahbaz as CM Punjab came up for hearing before CJ LHC Thursday. Ahsan Bhone, president Supreme Court Bar and Khalid Ishaq counsel for Hamza Shahbaz appeared in the court.

Counsel for Hamza Shahbaz argued during the hearing of the case when government resigns a new chief minister should come immediately. But the largest province of the country is running without govt. The oath is not being administered to the elected chief minister in defiance of the constitution. —APP

SC will not be influenced by criticism: CJP

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial on Thursday remarked that the SC will not be influenced by criticism as long as there are people who abide by the Constitution.

The CJP's remarks came during the hearing of the presidential reference seeking the interpretation of Article 63(A). He added that the SC stands for the supremacy of the Constitution. "The courts are open for critics as the court's job is to do justice with everyone," Justice Bandial said, adding that the court will continue to serve its purpose despite the criticism it is subjected to. Presenting arguments in the court during the hearing, Senator Raza Rabbani said the constitutional office holders attacked and ran campaigns against institu-

tionment and has made all arrangements for the Lahore rally.

According to details, three different enclosures have been set up, which include a general enclosure for the commons, one specified for ladies and another for families. It was further revealed that a stage comprising of forty containers has been set for the purpose and it has a seating capacity of 100 people, adding that separate containers have also been prepared for media, social media and MPs.

Shehbaz asks Murad to implement Ramazan package
Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has said providing immediate relief to the people reeling under inflation is top priority of his government.

The PM expressed these views during his meeting with Sindh CM Syed Murad Ali Shah who called on him here on Thursday. The prevailing political situation of the country came under discussion. The CM

Sindh congratulated PM on their determination in the first meeting of cabinet to work together for the sake of national development.

PM likely to visit Saudi Arabia by the end of this month
PM Shahbaz Sharif is likely to visit Saudi Arabia by the end of this month. Foreign ministry officials are working out details and schedule of the PM visit with Saudi government. The PM most probably will leave for Saudi Arabia on April 27. However final dates will be announced after mutual consultations.

Maulana Fazl calls on PM
JUI-F head Maulana Fazlur Rehman has called on Prime Minister (PM) Shahbaz Sharif. Federal ministers Rana Sana Ullah and Khawaja Saad Rafiq were also present on the occasion. The prevailing political situation of the country came under discussion during the meeting. —Agencies



LAHORE: Activates of PTI hold national and party flags' during PTI jalsa at the Minar-e-Pakistan.

PRGMEA asks govt to initiate lobbying for GSP Plus facility

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRGMEA) on Thursday felicitated newly-elected Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Commerce & Textile Minister Naveed Qamar, suggesting the new government to initiate lobbying for continuity of GSP Plus, besides implementing new Textile and Apparel Policy in its true spirit through revival of Pakistan Export Promotion Board.

PRGMEA Chief Coordinator Ijaz Khokhar and regional chairman Sheikh Luqman Amin observed that the largest value-added textile exporters' body, representing the majority of SMEs in the country, welcomes the new PM and appreciates his selection of Naveed qamar to assign him the vital ministry of Commerce & Textile.

Sheikh Luqman Amin observed that Naveed Qamar's appointment would help boost country's exports, especially of the value-added textile, while all the macro and micro issues of the trade and commerce would be addressed. Ijaz Khokhar suggested the new government to initiate work on lobbying for the renewal of Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP) plus

status for Pakistan from the European Union well before time to sustain exports growth, as the end of duty-free facility would damage the exports growth volume by at least \$3 billion annually.

He made an appeal to the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Commerce Minister Naveed Qamar to get personally involved in this issue of national importance, giving directives to all stakeholders, including foreign, finance, commerce and industries ministries at federal level while environment, human rights, women development and labour departments at provincial level, besides taking the value-added apparel sector exporters onboard to devise a strategy to influence the EU countries for renewal of the GSP Plus status for Pakistan. "Though the present status will expire in Dec 2023, but Pakistan can face its destructive effects from next year because the international buyers will start searching for other regional suppliers for placing new orders, leading to export loss of around \$3 billion for Pakistan," he warned.

Ijaz Khokhar observed that extension in the European Union's status has played a great role in enhancing Pakistan's exports. With a view to sustain the employment opportunities in the country as well as boost-

ing foreign exchange reserves further the government will have to act immediately to push the EU countries for extension of GSP Plus facility to Pakistan for another 10 years, from Jan 2024 to Dec 2033.

Interaction and communication with ambassadors of the EU bloc and other European countries should have to be initiated in this regard, he said, underlining the need for direct advocacy and lobbying through visits to the EU headquarters in Brussels. PRGMEA Regional Chairman stressed that the government should use its diplomatic relations to win extension in the GSP Plus status, as it is impossible for Pakistan to compete the regional countries especially Bangladesh, India and Vietnam, as the earlier countries' cost of production is comparatively low while the latter has preferential trade agreement with the EU.

Regarding Textile & Apparel Policy 2020-25, Ijaz Khokhar added that the apparel policy has already approved in 2022 after a long time which now needs implementation in its true spirit, as we have already lost one year. "By taking all the stakeholders onboard and ideally the quarterly implementation review must be carried on with the Prime Minister himself in the chair," he demanded.

Our main focus on growth in renewed agri options: Burki

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted an awareness session on "Valorizing the Economy: Connectivity Dividend" conducted by The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy (BIPP) and MGVC. The key-note speakers for the session are; Shahid Javed Burki, former Vice President World Bank and ex-Finance Minister of Pakistan, Turab Randhawa, Founder, Meta-agri Greater Venture Collective of Pakistan (MGVCP), Eldos Kenzhahmetov, former representative of Kazakh Invest National Company.

The event was attended by Long Chunjiu, Chief Scientist of Longping South Asia Seed R&D Centre, Ehsan Choudhry, Senior Vice President PCJCCI, Aksom Zaheer, Dr. Renuka Thakore, Founder Global Sustainable Futures and Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General PCJCCI. Shahid Javed Burki, Chairman BIPP exchanged his ideas in the opening remarks that our prime focus is on securing sustainable growth in renewed agriculture op-

tions to lessen the balance of trade deficit, in the backdrop of the lessons from the Chinese experience of poverty alleviation through exploiting agricultural resources, gender inclusion in agricultural practices, and tapping on food demands of the 76 million people of the Central Asian States.

Ehsan Choudhry, Senior Vice President PCJCCI shared his views by saying that China's experience in poverty alleviation indicates that courage, vision, sense of responsibility, and the eagerness to take on challenges are the most essential. With strong will and determination, as well as practical action, one can make steady progress towards overcoming poverty and realizing common prosperity.

Turab Randhawa, Founder, MGVC, and Aksom Zaheer stressed upon the legal frameworks that support AgriTech Startups in Pakistan. Dr. Renuka Thakore also highlighted the importance of systems-thinking, and creating sustainability through mutually beneficial partnerships. Eldos Kenzhahmetov, former representative of Kazakh Invest National Company shared about how we

could identify opportunities of mutual trade of agri-based products between Kazakhstan and Pakistan. Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General PCJCCI said that we assure full support for future endeavours and image building of Pakistan through enhanced regional connectivity.

Renewable energy need of the hour to cope with supply and demand gap
Energy is crucial for socio-economic development, new dams and fully exploitation of renewable energy is need of the hour to cope with ever increasing energy gap between supply and demand.

This was consensus reached at the end of round table conference on "Energy Needs of Pakistan" held here Thursday under the aegis of Model Steel Group of Companies. Chairing the conference Abdul Basit, former President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry and convener Kalabagh Dam Committee, stressed the urgent need for fully utilisation of renewable energy resources and construction of new dams including Kalabagh dam for storage of water for both irrigation and power purpose.

Four terrorists killed in CTD, Police Bannu Op

BANNU: Four terrorists have been killed in a joint operation by CTD and police in Bannu. According to CTD on information about presence of terrorists in the area of Umar zai in Bannu, a joint operation along with police was conducted. The terrorists opened firing on the forces. In retaliatory firing by the forces four terrorists were killed.

CTD said the terrorists who were killed were wanted in the cases of target killing, bomb blasts, and attacks on forces.

Heavy contingent of police rushed to the scene on information. All the four accused were proclaimed offenders and were wanted in different police stations. —Online

Govt expedites work on Naulong Dam in Jhal Magsi

ISLAMABAD: The government has expedited the construction work of Naulong Dam on Mula River in the Jhal Magsi District, which will be the first hydel dam of the province to generate 4.4 megawatt electricity and irrigate 47,000 acres land.

The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) had already completed its feasibility and detailed design, besides all other required arrangements, a WAPDA official said on Thursday. With gross storage of 242,163 acre feet of water, he said, the dam would irrigate 47,000 acres of land in Jhal Magsi, Gandawa and Khuzdar, which would help boost economic activities and strengthen the farmers fraternity in the province.

The official said the Naulong Dam, which would cost around Rs 3.85 billion, would be 186 feet high with live storage of 200,000 AF water. The agriculture would reap annual benefit of Rs 2,017 billion, power Rs 0.413 billion and fisheries Rs. 0.018 billion because of the dam, while it would create 23,500 agricultural jobs. It would help protect the catchment areas from the deluge, he added. —APP

Pak location will make it Asia's hub, says Ashraf

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf Thursday said that United Arab Emirates was not only a brotherly country but a partner in progress and development.

He said that Pakistan and UAE are entwined in mutual religion, culture and history said a news release. He said that both countries shared same goals of shared prosperity and regional development. He expressed these views during a meeting with UAE Ambassador in Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Saleem Al-Zaabi in Parliament House. Enhancement of bilateral relations and matters of mutual interest came under discussion.

Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf while talking to the Ambassador said that Pakistan and United Arab Emirates enjoyed long standing fraternal ties rooted firmly in common religion and culture. He said that it was also encouraging that both the countries enjoy significance convergence in political views on host of regional and global issues. —Online

British HC calls on Hina Khar

ISLAMABAD: The British High Commissioner Dr. Christian Turner called on Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar in her office on Thursday.

He congratulated her on assuming the office and hoped that both sides will work together to further deepen the Pakistan-UK relations. Minister of State (MoS) Khar thanked the British High Commissioner for the felicitations and stated that Pakistan highly values its relations with the UK, which are based on mutual respect and shared perceptions on broad range of regional and international issues.

MoS also appreciated the role undertaken by the British government in promoting health, education, governance and human development in Pakistan. Both sides also agreed to celebrate 75th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations in a befitting manner. Besides bilateral relations, discussions on evolving geopolitical situation and regional matters including IIOJK &

PM terms Baloch valuable asset

Continued from Front Page

also attended the meeting. The delegation members congratulated the PM on assumption of the office and also discussed the overall political situation in the country.

PM orders foolproof security as Imran to attend Lahore rally

PM Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday ordered foolproof security of former prime minister Imran Khan after he announced to attend Lahore rally.

PM Shehbaz has directed Interior Ministry to take immediate steps over report of security threat to PTI Chairman and asked Rana Sanaulah to personally monitor the arrangements. Interior Ministry has penned letter to Home Secretaries of all four provinces, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan and ordered strict security arrangements for former premier.

Meanwhile, PTI has ignored security warnings of the local gov-



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Niazi exchanges view with Tarek Mohamed Dahrour Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan.