



Women's workforce can be better utilized in the economic development of the country

Minister for Industry and Production
Rana Tanveer

President for further boosting bilateral cooperation with UK

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday said that Pakistan and the United Kingdom (UK) enjoy cordial relations, rooted in history and shared legacy, which have been reinforced by high-level interactions and people-to-people contacts over the years. He stressed the need to further strengthen trade and economic ties for the mutual benefit of the two friendly countries.

The president expressed these views while talking to the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Both sides exchanged views on matters of bilateral importance. During the meeting, the president expressed his warm sentiments for His Majesty King Charles III and the Princess of Wales, Catherine Middleton, and wished them good health. He also mentioned that the people of Pakistan held His Majesty the King in high esteem. Talking about the economic situation of the country, the president stated that the stabilization of the economy was the priority with a key focus on employment generation and poverty alleviation. The president highlighted that climate change posed a serious challenge to Pakistan as it was among the most vulnerable countries to climate change.

He informed the high commissioner that Sindh had mangrove forests, covering an area of 600,000 hectares, which supported the coastal ecosystem, besides contributing to environmental sustainability. He said that Pakistan had huge potential for solar and wind energy, and their proper utilization could help the country meet its energy requirements. Jane Marriott felicitated President Asif Ali Zardari on assuming the office of the President of Pakistan.

Development of SMEs govt's top priority: Rana Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Industry and Production Rana Tanveer reaffirmed on Thursday that the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is the government's top priority. While presiding over a high-level meeting, the minister received a detailed briefing about SMEDA's working from its Chief Executive Officer (CEO), said a news release. The minister said that small and medium industries were playing an important role in the country's economic development.

The government will facilitate SMEs to achieve economic development. SAMEDA should focus on human resource development to work effectively, he added. Rana Tanveer said that women play an important role in the economic development of the country and urged SMEDA to focus on women's entrepreneurship. Women's workforce can be better utilized in the economic development of the country, he added.



ISLAMABAD: The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ms Jane Marriott, calls on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. APP

PM lauds Pakistan Navy for safeguarding country's maritime interests



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday visited the Naval Headquarters here wherein he appreciated the services of Pakistan Navy to safeguard the maritime interest of the country despite limited resources. The prime minister, who was accompanied by the federal ministers, especially lauded the professional response of the

Pakistan Navy to foil the recent terrorist attack on Naval Airbase Turbat. Upon arrival, the prime minister was welcomed by the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf and was presented Guard of Honour by a smartly turned out naval contingent. The prime minister also laid a wreath at the Shuhada monument and afterwards was introduced to the Principal Staff Officers of Naval Headquarters. During the meeting, matters pertaining to the

Regional Maritime Security milieu and operational readiness of the Pakistan Navy were discussed.

The Naval Chief apprised the prime minister on roles, capabilities and future modernization plans of the Pakistan Navy. Later on a detailed briefing was presented by Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) on the prevailing maritime environment, challenges being faced by Pakistan Navy and its response to meet the challenges.

The prime minister was especially apprised about the capability requirements of Pakistan Navy to meet the current and future challenges being faced by the country in the maritime domain. He was also apprised of the measures to benefit from economic prospects of the maritime sector.

Prime Minister Shehbaz stressed that a strong economy held the key to meet all the challenges faced by the country. Towards the end, the prime minister also visited the Command Operations Centre of Pakistan Navy. The naval chief thanked the prime minister for his visit and reposing his confidence in the Navy. He also assured that Pakistan Navy with Allah's help would continue to defend the country's sea frontiers and maritime interests and would shoulder the responsibilities with honour both during peace and war.

Chief Representative of CFFEX in Pakistan and PSX Director meet Finance Minister



ISLAMABAD: The Finance Minister, Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday held a meeting with You Hang, the Chief Representative of China Financial Futures Exchange (CFFEX) in Pakistan, and Director of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX). The meeting focused on enhancing cooperation and exploring new opportunities for strengthening Pakistan's financial markets and investment landscape. During the meeting, Finance Minister Aurangzeb and Chief Representative Hang engaged in detailed discussions on various aspects of financial market development, including the potential for collaboration between CFFEX and PSX to promote innovative financial instruments in Pakistan.

The Finance Minister highlighted the government's commitment to implementing reforms aimed at improving the regulatory framework, enhancing market transparency, and facilitating the development of a vibrant and resilient financial sector in Pakistan. He also emphasized the role of strategic partnerships with international financial institutions and exchanges, such as CFFEX, in achieving these objectives and advancing the country's financial market infrastructure. Chief Representative Hang expressed CFFEX's keen interest in collaborating with PSX and other stakeholders to explore opportunities for launching new financial products, sharing technical expertise, and promoting cross-border investment between China and Pakistan. He reaffirmed CFFEX's commitment to supporting the development of Pakistan's financial markets and contributing to the country's economic prosperity. In the end, PSX also extended an invitation to the Federal Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb to participate in upcoming financial sector events and visit key financial institutions in Pakistan to have an overview of the financial market dynamics and regulatory environment.

The meeting concluded with both parties agreeing to further explore potential areas of cooperation, facilitate knowledge exchange, and develop actionable strategies to strengthen Pakistan's financial markets.



ISLAMABAD: Commerce Minister Jam Kama! Khan presenting a souvenir to Turkish Ambassador Dr. Mehmet Pacaci during his visit to the Commerce Ministry.

Federal Interior Minister and KP Chief Minister discuss peace & security

PESHAWAR: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur held discussions on matters related to peace and security in the province here on Thursday.

The Interior Minister visited the Chief Minister's House in Peshawar to discuss law and order and other security issues with Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur. They both agreed on improving coordination between federal and provincial authorities to enforce laws aimed at enhancing peace and security in the province. They condemned the recent attacks on Chinese nationals and expressed sympathy with the Chinese government and families of the deceased. It was decided in the meeting to bring the perpetrators of the incident to justice and eradicate terrorism.

Ali Amin Gandapur emphasized that peace and security are top priorities for the provin-



cial government and ensuring the protection of life and property of the people is the foremost objective. He mentioned that efforts would be made to strengthen the police and other law enforcement agencies in the province. The Chief Minister also stated that concrete steps would be taken under a coherent strategy to achieve this objective. He added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been most affected by terrorism and is at the forefront in the war against terrorism. APP

Govt. taking every possible step to increase IT exports, FDI: Shaza

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Thursday said that the present government was diligently pursuing measures to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) and boost IT exports.

During a discussion with a high-level delegation from the Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA), led by its Chairman, Muhammad Zohaib Khan, Shaza Fatima highlighted the critical role of the IT industry, particularly in providing international-level training to youth and creating employment opportunities for them. The Chairman P@SHA extended congratulations to Minister of State for IT, Shaza Fatima Khawaja for assuming the office. The minister said that Pakistan's IT professionals can serve as the premier choice for international companies and urged P@SHA to assist in bridging the demand-supply gap of IT professionals. Zohaib Khan reaffirmed P@SHA's commitment to collaborating with the Ministry of IT for the economic stability of the country. He commended Minister of State for IT, Shaza Fatima, for her dedicated efforts in promoting the IT industry.

Misinformation, disinformation, fake news problems of entire world, says Attaullah Tarar



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Thursday that misinformation, disinformation, and fake news were problems of the entire world which had to be controlled. During a meeting with the Political Counselor of the British High Commission Miss Zoe Ware,

the minister said the biggest challenge on social media was fake news and the government was dealing with this problem.

In the meeting, relations between the two countries, and the promotion of cooperation in the fields of media were discussed in detail. Cooperation in the fields of film and drama was also discussed.

Attaullah Tarar said that journalists should adopt the process of verification on social media and the whole world should develop a code of conduct related to social media.

Miss Zoe Ware congratulated the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) on forming the government and Attaullah Tarar on assuming charge as Minister of Information and Broadcasting. The UK diplomat assured her full cooperation for the promotion of bilateral relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom. VOM Report

PMDC's int'l recognition 'historic milestone' for Pakistan's health industry, says Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday said the recognition of Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) by the World Federation for Medical Education was a testament to Pakistan's commitment to excellence in healthcare and medical education.

"An effective healthcare system's greatest indicator is to ensure that all citizens, despite their socioeconomic background, get the best available health facilities in a timely, acceptable, affordable, and accessible manner," he said while addressing a ceremony held to commemorate a significant mile-

stone in the history of medical education and healthcare in Pakistan. The minister commended the collective efforts of healthcare professionals, educators, policymakers and stakeholders who tirelessly worked towards enhancing the standards of medical education and healthcare delivery in Pakistan, a news release said.

Highlighting the notable progress of Pakistan's healthcare sector over the past decade, the minister shared that 3.5 percent increase in life expectancy from 2005 to 2019 was recorded. In the area of infant mortality, he said a 15 percent decline was recorded



from 2000 to 2019, with an infant mortality rate of 58 per 1,000 live births.

Remarkable increase was also marked in the number of healthcare facilities, which grew up to 20 & from 2007 to 2017, resulting in a total of 7,089 healthcare facilities.

Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that a concerted effort from all stakeholders was required to achieve the country's roadmap for health, which aimed to bridge disparities in healthcare access among poor, expand healthcare services and make universal healthcare a possibility for every citizen.

"Doctors play a critical role in strengthening can advocate for increased government funding and improved working conditions in public

health facilities," the minister stated. One of the foremost challenges is to reduce disparities in healthcare access across all socioeconomic groups, as evidenced by the fact that the poorest 20 percent of the population use only 13 percent of healthcare services.

Citing examples from developed countries, the minister urged Pakistani to take lessons from Singapore and Japan for prioritizing preventative measures, Norway and Estonia for using telemedicine, Canada and New Zealand for drug price negotiation with pharmaceutical companies, and Germany and Switzerland for mandatory health insurance for all citizens.

Pakistan's commitment to address healthcare challenges, such as rural healthcare, health equity, and medical professional shortages, stems from an urgent need to transform the existing healthcare system.

The minister expressed confidence in government's dedication to follow a carefully planned approach that will ensure awareness building, access enhancement, and data usage for health related decisions. He congratulated PMDC on being accredited by World Federation for Medical Education and subsequently paving a brighter future for medical education in Pakistan. APP

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Terror rising

OMAY AIMEN

Terrorism has become a complicated problem worldwide, and in recent years, state-sponsored terrorism has become a major worry. Incidents like the 9/11 attacks have highlighted the frequency of activities carried out by intelligence organizations such as the Indian Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), endangering the stability and sovereignty of adjacent countries. Even in the face of international rules that oppose meddling in the domestic affairs of sovereign governments, RAW's long history of interventionism and espionage, which dates back years, continues to influence the way it approaches regional geopolitics.

This pattern is further reinforced by reports that connect Indian operatives to the murder of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada

sored terrorism with international implications. This pattern is further reinforced by reports that connect Indian operatives to the murder of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada, presenting a worrisome image of state-approved extrajudicial violence. Such claims highlight the pressing requirement for an extensive probe into the operations of the Indian intelligence establishment and the involvement of government players in terror attacks abroad. The world community has taken note of the seriousness of India's suspected state terrorism. Comments by international leaders like Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the testimony by US Assistant Secretary of State Donald Lu before the US Congress Committee revealing the depth of India's alleged state terrorism, implicating Indian government officials in the nefarious plot, should be taken as strong warnings in response to the allegations.

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Amar Z Khan

My recent article in these pages ('Reckless borrowing', March 18), while appreciated for its candor, has also evoked a strong sense of despondence among readers.

The question that pervades everyone's mind is how to escape the spiral and whether there is a way out. I must confess that, having waded through both articles and TV programs by economic experts, I have noticed a complete paucity of practically implementable steps for building a journey towards generating foreign revenue. I share below my thoughts based on observations and experiences in countries I have visited and worked in.

The core point is to appreciate that the country must earn, and not borrow, foreign exchange for its domestic consumption. Unless we have more resources, we must curb and rationalize expenditure. This requires the courage to allow 'wrong' businesses to close and radical diversification and upscaling of exports with the help of international collaboration.

Our present preoccupation with protecting import substitution and building exports exclusively off local raw materials or produce will continue to retard our export aspirations. Successful countries look outward to identify gap trends in international demand in the medium term and build and revamp their capacity to service this need gap. This is radically different from our current approach.

Let me share strategies adopted by countries facing similar crises that enabled them to successfully turn around their economies while living within objectives similar to Pakistan's. This warrants building a national consensus supported by all political parties. For this, we first need to be transparent with the nation to prepare people for short-term dislocation and hardship, with a view to the light at the

end of the tunnel. First, new FDI should initially be only permitted into predominantly export-generating projects, not import substitution. We have examples to consider here: Malaysia initially required foreign investors to seek cabinet approval which was only given if the project was wholly for exports.

India adopted a similar strategy and it permitted Honda and Coke to invest in the country if the project generated \$5 foreign currency income for every \$2 of foreign exchange consumed by this investment by way of imports, other foreign expenses, royalties and profit repatriation.

Second, existing businesses and manufacturers - whether local or foreign-owned - should be informed that they are welcome to sell products and services to meet domestic demand but they must generate their own foreign exchange (through expansion into exports) for their import needs or source this in a Dutch auction of residual foreign currency left over after the government had met essential needs like foreign currency debt repayment, and other critical essentials (including, oil, defence, exporters' import needs).

For instance, Nigeria in 1983 when faced with a similar foreign currency crisis announced that it could no longer underwrite the nation's foreign currency consuming demand by increasing the country's foreign currency borrowings. Today, despite similar corruption levels and other fiscal indiscipline, this bankrupt country now boasts a Sovereign Fund as a consequence of import-substituting businesses either dying or retooling and expanding into becoming world-class exporters.

Third, instead of relying on building the export momentum on the back of existing local businesses that had developed a local delivery capacity, countries opted for new manufacturing directly for export for which there was no past local experience. In the early 1980s, South Korea started exporting washing machines

to the Gulf countries - even when its local population had not seen or used washing machines. Thailand started manufacturing motor vehicles from scratch at scales, quality and prices that made them competitive for export. Malaysia similarly launched chip manufacturing in Penang in the '90s directly for export without any local use. Vietnam likewise boasts multiple such export projects; China's toy manufacturing in the late 1980s is another example. Fourth, the government must admit to the nation that it does not have the capacity to underwrite domestic foreign currency-fueled demand as it cannot afford to increase the country's foreign debt burden which would have to be borne by future generations. A similar strategy was adopted by Nigeria in the 1980s.

Fifth, a radical shift in agricultural production out of low revenue-yielding crops into higher revenue-generating crops for exports. This policy is complemented by a shift away from a dated perspective of meeting food security through domestic production to instead importing the lower cost crops the production of which has been de-emphasized. It is important to note that China over the past 20 years has de-emphasized production of low-revenue grain (which it now imports) and instead increased from 15 per cent to 55 per cent the proportion of acreage deployed for growing higher-value fruits and vegetables.

Similarly, Malaysia has progressively de-emphasized the growing of rubber trees and vegetables and has shifted its arable acreage to oil palm agriculture.

Sixth, building a national consensus on how the country's scarce foreign currency should be rationed to maximize sustainable benefits for the country. A prime example to consider is that of Britain. In the 1970s, after the oil price hike, when faced with a severe foreign currency crunch Britain televised multiple national debates to determine how the population would prioritize its foreign currency-consuming choices.

Seventh, the export of raw commodities and minerals should be discouraged/prohibited and instead processing for local value addition should be made mandatory and incentivized. This has been done before. Nigeria over the late 1980s and 1990s reduced crude oil export and invested in refining, crackers and petrochemical plants to convert crude oil into value-added products for exports. Multiple Asian countries including India have also adopted this approach for minerals and commodities extraction.

Eighth, understand the importance of free-floating the exchange rate. The government should not give in to the temptation to manage the currency rate as this will result in greater fiscal deficits or an increase in unaffordable external borrowing. This encourages imports and inhibits exports. Pakistan's history of deteriorating balance of trade over the past 70 years illustrates the folly of not adopting this discipline.

Ninth, the country must avoid fiscal deficits. Cut the government's role to what it can afford based on the revenue it earns. The absence of this discipline causes inflation which causes greater poverty for the poor and middle classes; loan interest rates to rise, inhibiting manufacturing and employment; it increases the government's future debt service obligation further and reduces its future capacity to spend on current needs; and results in spiralling depreciation of the currency. This caution is further heightened for Pakistan given the current government's desire to invest in affordable housing, more public transport, healthcare, education and tree planting. Nigeria followed eight out of the nine points. It consequently illustrates all the negative consequences tabulated above. OECD countries by adopting this discipline in the last two decades reflect the consequent benefit of low inflation throughout this period.

The writer is the former president of United Bank Limited (UBL).

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

Today in History

History of Pakistan



However, an exception was made for Punjab which did not apply to other provinces.[43][44] Intense communal rioting in the Punjab forced the governments of India and Pakistan to agree to a forced population exchange of Muslim and Hindu/Sikh minorities living in Punjab. After this population exchange only a few thousand low-caste Hindus remained in Pakistani Punjab and

only a tiny Muslim population remained in the town of Malerkotla in India's part of Punjab.[45] Political scientist Ishaq Ahmed says that although Muslims started the violence in Punjab, by the end of 1947 more Muslims had been killed by Hindus and Sikhs in East Punjab than the number of Hindus and Sikhs who had been killed by Muslims in West Punjab.[46][47][48]

Nehru wrote to Gandhi on 22 August that up to then, twice as many Muslims had been killed in East Punjab than Hindus and Sikhs in West Punjab.[49] More than ten million people migrated across the new borders and between 200,000 and 2,000,000[50][51][52][53] people died in the spate of communal violence in the Punjab in what some scholars

have described as a 'retributive genocide' between the religions.[54] The Pakistani government claimed that 50,000 Muslim women were abducted and raped by Hindu and Sikh men and similarly the Indian government claimed that Muslims abducted and raped 33,000 Hindu and Sikh women.[55][56][57]

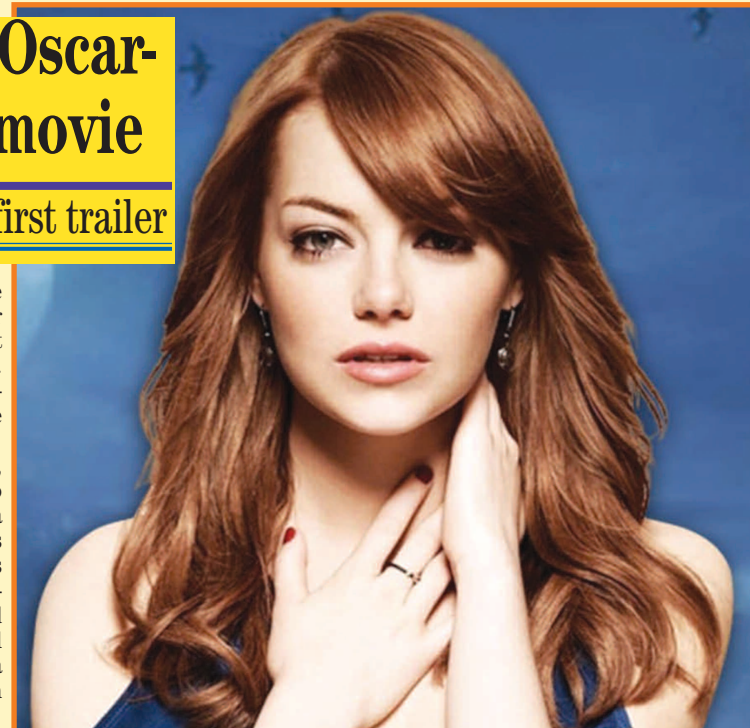
To be continued.....

Emma Stone teams up with Oscar-winning director for latest movie

The new movie, 'Kinds of Kindness', releases first trailer

The award-winners, Emma Stone and Yorgos Lanthimos has announced latest movie together, Kinds of Kindness. Searchlight Pictures released the first teaser trailer on Wednesday, featuring Stone, who recently won her second Academy Award for her role in Poor Things, and filmmaker Lanthimos, who are collaborating for their third project since The Favourite in 2018. The 46-second teaser showcases Stone driving a purple car and hints at appearances from an ensemble cast that includes Willem Dafoe, Margaret Qualley, Jesse Plemons, Hong Chau, Joe Alwyn, Mamoudou Athie, and Hunter Schafer. Although the

trailer doesn't reveal much about the plot, it ends with Stone's character driving into a parking lot at what appears to be an apartment complex. The teaser is set to the tune of Eurythmics' 1983 hit Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This). "Kinds of Kindness is a triptych fable, following a man without choice who tries to take control of his own life; a policeman who is alarmed that his wife who was missing at sea has returned and seems a different person; and a woman determined to find a specific someone with a special ability, who is destined to become a prodigious spiritual leader," reads an official synopsis for the movie.



Showbiz

Tech

WhatsApp's latest update surprises users

A tweaked interface for the calling screen is being released by WhatsApp and is accessible to a selected group of beta testers. This is intended to draw attention to the call type more clearly, emphasising that it is end-to-end encrypted. There is also a new button on the bottom sheet that allows you to easily add other participants to the call, according to WABetaInfo. It seems that WhatsApp is currently trying to make this screen even better by adjusting the interface and boosting specific components to make the user experience better. WhatsApp is adding a new minimise button to replace the back shortcut, improving the feature's usability and navigation during talks. The minimise button provides a more user-friendly way to depart the



call screen than the back button, even though they are both for the same goal. This update resolves a common user complaint in which pressing the back button was inadvertently interpreted by ending the call. WhatsApp addresses this problem by introducing the minimise button, which gives users an obvious method to leave the call screen without ending the current call. WhatsApp streamlines user interaction inside the calling interface by substituting a more natural back shortcut. Additionally, WhatsApp embeds such buttons into unique forms to contrast with the calling screen's background, ensuring that they are always visible and distinctive.

How your mom's pregnancy cravings shape your appearance

You are beautiful but have you ever wondered why you are that way? Well, you should thank your mom's pregnancy cravings for your great looks. A new research exploring the origins of facial features found that a pregnant mother's diet may influence certain facial features from the womb, potentially creating the appearance of her children, the New York Post reported. The study, which was recently published in the journal Nature Communications, linked a mother's protein levels to gene activity, specifically mTORC1 genes, which influenced the

"craniofacial shape of the embryos". According to the study, high-protein diets resulted in stronger jawlines and bigger noses, while low-protein diets resulted in slimmer, pointier features. In other words, the mother's nutrition may "fine tune" her children's facial traits, such as the size and form of their jaw or nose. The team of international researchers genetically manipulated pregnant mice and zebrafish and fed them diets varying in nutrition level. They then observed them before concluding the results.

Although these findings are new, previous studies have shown that mothers' diets, particularly those involving vegetables, have been linked to better child health outcomes. One of the previous studies indicate that obese mothers increase the risk of overweight boys at birth who may develop metabolic conditions like fatty liver disease later in life. Additionally, another research suggests that ultra-processed food consumption by mothers can pass harmful chemicals to their fetuses, further highlighting the negative health consequences of such food consumption.



Health

