

Country has come out of difficult time: Alvi

FAISALABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has said that the country's economy is expected to grow in months as it has successfully overcome the menace of extremism and terrorism.

Addressing the business excellence award distribution ceremony arranged by the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) in a hotel here on Thursday, he said that the country had come out of difficult time. He said: "Now we are at a jumping pad to build economically strong Pakistan, but the private sector must share its responsibilities to achieve this goal."

He underlined the importance of businesses and said that no doubt businessmen did their business to earn profit, but at the same time, it also created new job opportunities in addition to earning precious foreign exchange for the country.

The president said that Pakistan was as one of the most generous countries, which had accommodated more than 3.5 million Afghan refugees and of them, 2 million were still residing in Pakistan.

About the recent tension between Pakistan and India, Dr Arif Alvi said that in India, the leaders, civil society and media created war hysteria but at the same time, in Pakistan we proved that we loved peace.

He said that the government was working to facilitate the businessmen as it wanted to improve its ranking in international index up to 100. Regarding IT, he said that it was the most important sector, which could transform our economy by involving the neglected segment of female population. He said that in IT and digital economy, our share was less than 1 per cent, which was 38 per cent in case of China. He assured the FCCI of taking up the issue of establishment of the IT university and the Lahore High Court bench in Faisalabad.

FCCI president Syed Zia Alamdar Hussain, Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce and Investment Mian Aslam Iqbal and others also addressed the function. Earlier, the president distributed business excellence awards among industrialists and traders, who showed excellent performance in different sectors.

Later, addressing the PTEA export excellence award distribution ceremony, President Dr Arif Alvi said that Faisalabad had become a focal point of trade and business after the CPEC and we must cash this opportunity by weeding out corruption and providing conducive business climate to the local as well as foreign investors. He said that the corrupt elements had plagued our system.

He identified energy crisis as one of the major problems that had retarded the country's growth rate. He said that we must identify its root causes with proper measures to avoid recurrence of such crisis in future.

He also underlined the importance of tourism and said that it was one of the fastest growing sectors of our economy. He mentioned that Gilgit-Baltistan was one of the most attractive tourists' sites in the region and we must exploit these areas to attract maximum tourists.

He also pointed out that Pakistan had a number of Buddhism and Sikh religious sites, which could be utilised to promote religious tourism in this part of the region. He said that he would request Prime Minister Imran Khan to visit Faisalabad at an appropriate date and time to interact with the people and business community of this important city. He said that the businessmen should remain in touch with their elected members and communicate their genuine grievances with viable solutions so that they could move a proper legislation in the parliament. PTEA chairman Khurram Mukhtar and others were also present.

Earlier, President Dr Arif Alvi held a meeting with the All Pakistan Textile Processing Mills Association office-bearers and assured them of resolving their genuine problems on priority basis.

Sardar Akhtar