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FAISALABAD: Ambassador of the United States to Pakistan Richard Olson highlighted the opportunities that could strengthen economic ties between the US and Pakistan during visits to Sialkot and Lahore. The envoy also cited several examples of Pakistani entrepreneurs who benefitted from US economic assistance.

In Sialkot, Olson toured the Sialkot International Airport, the Silver Star Group and KM Ashraf Industries. He also met with the executive board of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In Lahore, he met with representatives of US companies and praised them for their work in Pakistan at the annual dinner of the American Business Forum.

The US stands with many entrepreneurs across Pakistan as you develop your businesses, said Olson during his visit to Silver Star in Sialkot. Silver Star produces nearly 70% of the hand-stitched footballs sold by the US firm Nike.

The US was among the largest investors in Pakistan and Pakistan exported more products to the US than to any other country in the world, he added. The envoy underscored this point during the visit to KM Ashraf Industries, which exported more than \$20 million worth of sports uniforms to the US annually.

At the Sialkot International Airport (SIAL), he congratulated the management for recent upgrades that allow the airport to carry the load of 10 jumbo planes, benefitting hundreds of businesses and more than a million travellers each year.

This is a clear example of how private-sector funding can be used to meet the needs of the business community.

At the meeting with the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Olson discussed opportunities to deepen ties between the US and Pakistani businesses. He also said that businesses can take advantage of the US Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), which allows more than 3,500 Pakistani goods to enter the US duty-free.

Courtesy: Tribune