

CHAMBER'S COMMUNICATOR

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UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF SECRETARY GENERAL**

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السر حرم

**Procrastination (delay) in repaying
debts by a wealthy person is an
injustice.**

Sahih Bukhari, 2287



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Timely information strengthens decision-making, and the Chamber's Communicator keeps members informed, aware, and empowered."

Dear Members,

With great pleasure, I present the 3rd edition of SCCI's exclusive e-magazine, "Chamber's Communicator." It is encouraging to see The Communicator continue to serve as a valuable platform for sharing key insights with Sialkot's business community, equipping our members with timely and relevant information to navigate an evolving trade environment.

This edition features a comprehensive Country Report on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), insights into the Leather Working Group, and an informative article on understanding HS Codes as a key tool for international trade. It also includes an important guide on phishing as a serious cyber threat to Sialkot's export sector, along with details of a strategic MOU with PITAC aimed at strengthening industrial technology and training support for SCCI members.

Additionally, this edition highlights Sustainable Aquaculture Solutions in Pakistan, focusing on mitigating toxicity through plant-derived compounds, as well as AI-driven titanium surface engineering for advanced surgical applications, aimed at promoting innovation, sustainability, and technological advancement in key industrial and Surgical sector.

At the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, we remain committed to supporting our members by providing knowledge that promotes growth, efficiency, compliance, and innovation. I encourage all readers to stay connected with The Communicator as we continue to foster awareness, preparedness, and progress across Sialkot's business landscape.

I am confident that this edition will serve as a valuable resource for our business community and support informed and strategic decision making.



Syed Ahtesham Maghar
President

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

GEOGRAPHIC/DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

MENA (Middle East and North Africa)
REGION

35.3
MILLION
estimated, 2025
POPULATION

\$1.256
Trillion
GDP 2024

Arabic
LANGUAGE

E-COMMERCE MARKET:

- **KSA's E-Commerce** sector is booming. It was valued at **\$22–24 billion** in 2024 (per Statista)
- **E-commerce Users:** 34.5 million by 2025
- **Imported Products:** 35.44% of products imported from outside the Kingdom in **2023**
- **Online Stores:** **42,900** (accessible in KSA)
- **Online Shopping:** 93.1% occurs on local websites
- Business Registrations: **16,556 verified e-commerce firms**
- Social Media Reach: **34M+ users**
- **Most used social media platforms:** WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitter / X, YouTube

TOP ONLINE PRODUCT CATEGORIES:

- **Electronics & Smart Devices**
- **Fashion & Apparel**
- **Beauty, Cosmetics & Personal Care**
- **Groceries and Food Items**
- **Home & Household Goods / Home Décor & Furniture**
- **Health & Wellness Products**

MAJOR SECTORS OF SAUDI IMPORTS:

- Machinery, Mechanical Appliances & Electrical Equipment
- Transportation Equipment & Parts
- Base Metals
- Chemicals & Related Products
- Vegetables & Agricultural Goods
- Textiles
- Food Products (Processed & Raw)
- Construction Materials
- Surgical Instruments
- Shoes & Saddlery

AMAZON.SA (VIA GLOBAL SELLING)

WWW.AMAZON.SA/

Valid business registration and identity. (Amazon Seller Central Saudi Arabia) If shipping into KSA and using FBA or local fulfillment: must register for VAT (zero-threshold applies for international FBA sellers). (Amazon Sellers) Products may need GTIN (UPC/EAN) or request GTIN-exemption. (Amazon Sellers) Imported goods must comply with Saudi import regulations for many types, this includes conformity certification.

NOON.COM (GLOBAL / CROSS-BORDER / KSA STORE)

WWW.NOON.COM/SAUDI-EN/

Sellers must be legally registered businesses with a valid trade licence issued in their home country. A Saudi VAT registration certificate is mandatory, even for international sellers. Sellers must provide valid identity proof (passport of the authorized person) and bank account details to receive payments, with Noon allowing international payout solutions such as Payoneer or LianLian. Sellers must register a Noon seller account, select Saudi Arabia (KSA) as the selling market, and successfully complete Noon's document verification and approval process. All listed products must comply with Noon's quality standards and Saudi regulatory requirements, including product authenticity, labeling, and import compliance.

NAMSHI (FASHION / LIFESTYLE, RETAIL PLATFORMS)

WWW.NAMSHI.COM/SAUDI-EN/ABOUT/

Sellers must be legally registered businesses with a valid trade licence issued in their home country. A Saudi VAT registration certificate is mandatory, even for international sellers. Sellers must provide valid identity proof (passport of the authorized person) and bank account details to receive payments, with Noon allowing international payout solutions such as Payoneer or LianLian. Sellers must register a Noon seller account, select Saudi Arabia (KSA) as the selling market, and successfully complete Noon's document verification and approval process. All listed products must comply with Noon's quality standards and Saudi regulatory requirements, including product authenticity, labeling, and import compliance.

STANDARDIZATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS ON IMPORTS IN SAUDI ARABIA



SASO & SABER SYSTEM

SASO (Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization) is the central authority responsible for product standardization, conformity assessment, certification, accreditation, and WTO-TBT notifications.

SASO applies mandatory standards equally to domestic and imported products and adopts international standards where suitable.

SABER Certification System is mandatory for products entering Saudi Arabia and requires:

- **Product Certificate of Conformity (PCoC)**
- **Shipment Certificate of Conformity (SCoC)** (required before shipment; post-arrival certification is not permitted).

SFDA

Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) regulates food, meat, medical devices, and surgical instruments, including Halal compliance and public-health safety standards.

ALL IMPORTED GOODS:

sector-specific certification, labeling (Arabic), safety, and quality requirements before customs clearance.

SALEEM PLATFORM

Supports product registration & tracking, integrated with SABER

KEY INTERESTING FACTS/OPPORTUNITIES

- **The Government of Pakistan** is actively focusing on KSA market through high-level meetings to promote bilateral trade via FDI and joint ventures. Sialkot-based businesses with potential collaboration or joint venture proposals may approach the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry for onward facilitation with the Government of Pakistan.
- **Saudi Arabia's hosting of the FIFA World Cup 2034** presents a strong opportunity for Sialkot's Sports Goods/Wear and Construction Industries. With preparations underway, including the construction of stadiums, clubs and supporting infrastructure, demand for sports equipment, sportswear, tools, safety gear, and allied products is expected to rise significantly.
- **Sialkot's internationally recognized** sports goods manufacturers can supply footballs, training gear, and merchandise through Saudi distributors and retail platforms, while the large-scale development works create parallel opportunities for the construction sector. Overall, the FIFA World Cup 2034 offers a timely platform for Sialkot industries to expand exports and establish a long-term presence in the KSA market.
- **As per international media reports**, Saudi Arabia's fast-growing medical tourism market presents opportunities for Pakistani industry to supply surgical instruments, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, and healthcare services, while also exploring joint ventures and service partnerships with Saudi healthcare providers in line with Vision 2030.
- **Saudi Arabia ranks among the top 5 G20** countries in mobile internet speeds.
- **Internet penetration in Saudi Arabia reached 99%.**
- **KSA has built thousands of fulfillment centers** and delivery firms, 191 couriers as of 2022.
- **KSA allows duty-free online orders up to \$266 (as of 2023)**, making cross-border shopping easier and smoother.
- **Saudi Vision 2030** and digital policies make it easier for foreign businesses by simplifying setup, improving digital payments, and moving toward a cashless society creating good opportunities for Pakistani tech and service firms.
- **Pakistani freelancers can serve** Saudi demand for software, design, digital marketing, AI, fintech, gaming, and e-learning services.
- **The central location facilitates major trade** and transit routes between continents.
- **Vision 2030 megaprojects need skilled labor;** opportunities for Pakistani engineers, healthcare workers, construction experts, and vocational trainers.
- **The growing Saudi tourism** market is creating opportunities for Pakistani travel tech, halal tourism services, hospitality partnerships, and Umrah-related offerings.
- **Pakistani SMEs can sell** textiles, leather goods, and handicrafts on Amazon.sa, Noon, and other Saudi platforms, with support from local e-commerce training programs.
- **Pakistan can explore** non-traditional exports such as pharmaceuticals, chemicals, textile, leather goods, footwear, furniture, and IT services, with products like leather and sports goods having strong potential to enter Saudi online markets.
- **KSA is the largest source of remittances.** Opportunities exist for Pakistani banks, fintech, logistics, and e-commerce services targeting the diaspora.
- **Pakistan can expand exports** of Vegetables & Agricultural goods, Textiles, Construction materials, Food Products (Processed & Raw) and light engineering goods to Saudi Arabia by meeting high demand through targeted marketing and e-marketplaces.

PAKISTAN

KSA

TRADE

FINANCIAL YEAR (JUL-JUN 2025)

TOTAL TRADE

\$6.64

BILLION

Exports to KSA: 1.29 USD (B)

Import from KSA: 5.35 USD (B)

Source: State Bank of Pakistan

Description	Sialkot Exports to KSA- 2024	KSA's Imports from World-2024
Sports Wear	2.025	53.07
Cutlery & Crockery	4.546	109.303
Badges	0.009	6.285
Musical Instruments	0.085	2.833
Leather Products	0.504	265.855
Sports Goods	0.785	77.834
Gloves & Protective Equipment	1.609	29.848
Surgical Instruments	3.855	1473.262
Shoes & Saddlery	0.596	1143.574
Total	14.014 (M)	2.162 (B)

(SOURCE: TRADEMAP/WORLD BANK)
Sources: ITC calculations based on Pakistan Bureau Of Statistics
All values in US\$ Million for the Year 2024

The table presents Sialkot's export performance to KSA for the year 2024, amounting to US\$ 14.014 million, compared with KSA's total global imports of US\$ 2.162 billion, depicting considerable scope for enhancing bilateral trade.

KSA EXHIBITIONS/FAIRS

Trade fairs and exhibitions are vital for business growth, as they enable market expansion, global networking, and the creation of new opportunities. Below is a list of key fairs and exhibitions in KSA.

Foodex Saudi (Riyadh & Jeddah) – Food
foodexsaudiexpo.com

Saudi FashionTex – Sportswear, Leather products, Shoes & saddlery, Apparel & garments, Bags & accessories
saudifashiontexexpo.com

Hotel & Restaurant Supplies Expo – Hospitality Interiors & Cutlery & crockery
hotelandrestaurantexpo.com

Gifts & Homeware Expo Saudi Arabia – Cutlery & crockery, Homeware/tableware, Kitchenware, Housewares (possibly small home goods)
giftshomewareexpoksa.com

China Homelife Saudi Arabia Expo – Textiles & Apparel, Household and Gifts, Furniture & Soft Decoration, Machinery, New Energy and more.
reg.pneec.com/chinahomelifeSaudiArabia

International Hardware Fair Saudi Arabia (IHF Saudi Arabia) – Gloves & Protective Equipment, tools & hardware
hardwarefair-saudi.com





IMPORTANT LINKS FOR INFORMATION

Embassy of Pakistan, Riyadh, KSA

pakistaninksa.com

Consulate General of Pakistan, Jeddah, KSA

parepjeddah.org

KSA, Embassy in Islamabad

pk.saudiembassy.sa/en/Pages/default.aspx

KSA, Consulate General in Karachi

pk.saudiembassy.sa/en/Pages/default.aspx

For Business Visa

ksavisa.sa

For determination of Tariff/duty

eservices.zatca.gov.sa/sites/sc/en/tariff/Pages/TariffPages/TariffSearch.aspx



LEATHER WORKING GROUP (LWG): WHY COMPLIANCE WILL SHAPE THE FUTURE OF PAKISTAN'S LEATHER INDUSTRY

The Leather Working Group (LWG) was established in 2005 by leading global brands to address a critical credibility gap in the leather industry: the lack of a reliable, globally accepted benchmark for environmental performance and supply chain responsibility. Nearly two decades later, LWG has emerged as the most influential sustainability standard in global leather trade quietly but decisively reshaping market access. Today, LWG compliance is no longer optional; it determines who can participate in premium international supply chains.

LWG operates as a non-profit, multi-stakeholder initiative that audits tanneries against rigorous environmental and social criteria. Its audit framework assesses water and energy efficiency, effluent treatment, chemical and waste management, occupational health and safety, and—most critically—full traceability of hides from slaughterhouse to finished leather. Tanneries are rated Bronze, Silver, or Gold, with certification valid for 24 months. For global brands and buying houses, these ratings are now embedded in procurement policies and commercial contracts.

Globally, more than **2,200 tanneries across over 60 countries are LWG-certified**, accounting for nearly one-third of finished leather production. Countries such as Italy and India recognized early that sustainability compliance is not a regulatory burden but an economic strategy. Through investment in centralized effluent treatment, cleaner technologies, traceability systems, and skills development, they have safeguarded buyer confidence, expanded value-added exports, and built resilience against tightening environmental regulations.

Pakistan, despite being among the world's major producers of raw hides and skins, stands at a strategic crossroads. Leather and leather products particularly gloves, footwear, and apparel remain important export earners. However, fewer than 60 tanneries nationwide currently hold LWG certification. In Sialkot, Pakistan's most export-oriented leather cluster, only two tanneries are compliant. This gap directly explains reduced access to high-value markets, increased buyer audits, and continued reliance on low-margin wet-blue or semi-processed exports.

In this context, the **Sialkot Tannery Zone (STZ)** represents a structural shift rather than an incremental fix. The relocation of tanneries into a purpose-built, environmentally compliant zone addresses the most demanding elements of LWG compliance. Centralized effluent treatment segregated drainage System, chrome recovery systems, cleaner production layouts and landfill site for the sludge, and energy-efficient infrastructure are not upgrades they are the foundations of modern leather manufacturing. By enabling shared infrastructure, the STZ lowers compliance costs and allows certification at scale, transforming sustainability into a cluster-level competitive advantage.

As global buyers face stricter due-diligence and traceability requirements particularly in Europe LWG's role as the primary gatekeeper of the leather trade will only strengthen. For Pakistan, LWG compliance is no longer an aspiration; it is an economic necessity and a pathway to long-term relevance in global markets.

SCCI SIGNS STRATEGIC MOU WITH PITAC TO STRENGTHEN INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY & TRAINING SUPPORT

DECEMBER 02, 2025 | LAHORE



The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) has signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Pakistan Industrial Technical Assistance Centre (PITAC), aimed at enhancing technological support, industrial modernization, and capacity building for Sialkot's manufacturing sector.

The MoU was formally signed at PITAC Headquarters in Lahore by **Syed Ahtesham Mazhar, President SCCI**, and **Ms. Fareeha Ali Randhawa, Director General PITAC**. The SCCI delegation included **Mr. Salman Sheikh, Vice President**, and Executive Committee Members **Sheikh Atique-ur-Rahman** and **Mr. Sohail Masood**.

Under the agreement, PITAC will offer advanced technical assistance, customized training programs, R&D facilities, and product development support to SCCI members. PITAC has also extended a 20% discount to SCCI members, particularly SMEs, for all technical and training services.



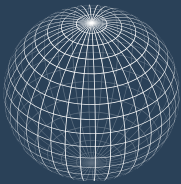
The delegation was given a comprehensive tour of PITAC's state-of-the-art labs, tooling centers, and engineering facilities. The management of PITAC expressed strong interest in working collaboratively with Sialkot's industry, while SCCI leadership highlighted the importance of leveraging PITAC's expertise for technology adoption, component localization, and industrial automation.

Vice President SCCI, **Mr. Salman Sheikh**, stated that SCCI looks forward to building sustainable pathways for industrial advancement in partnership with PITAC, especially in areas like process improvement, precision engineering, and workforce development.

This collaboration marks an important step toward equipping Sialkot's industries with modern technical skills and resources, ultimately contributing to increased competitiveness, innovation, and export growth.

UNDERSTANDING HS CODES: A KEY TOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE

What is a HS Code and why is it important?



HS Code (Harmonized System) is an internationally recognized classification system used to identify traded goods. It is applied worldwide by traders, customs authorities, shippers, and port officials to ensure accurate declaration and smooth movement of goods.



WCO

Organized and maintained by the World Customs Organization

How does the HS Code System Work?

Sections → Chapters → Headings → Sub-headings

First 6 digits: standard globally.
Beyond 6 digits: countries may add detail (8, 10, 12).



Example:
HS Code 420310
(Articles of apparel, of leather or composition leather)

→ **42 = Chapter** (Articles of leather, or composition leather...)

→ **03 = Heading** (Leather apparel)

→ **10 = Subheading** (apparel made of leather, or leather...)

Why HS Codes matter for exporters/importers



Determine duties, taxes, and customs procedures.



Ensure smooth customs clearance and fulfill requirements.



Incorrect codes can cause inaccurate duty charges, delays, or rejection.



Identify trade restrictions such as bans, quotas, or licensing.

How to find HS code on Trade Map



1. Log in to Trade Map (free registration) and go to the "Product" selection menu.
2. Search by entering descriptive keywords.
3. expand from 2-digit → 4-digit → 6-digit HS codes
4. select the code, the 6-digit HS subheading is the international standard

Sustainable aquaculture solutions in Pakistan: Mitigating toxicity with plant-derived compounds

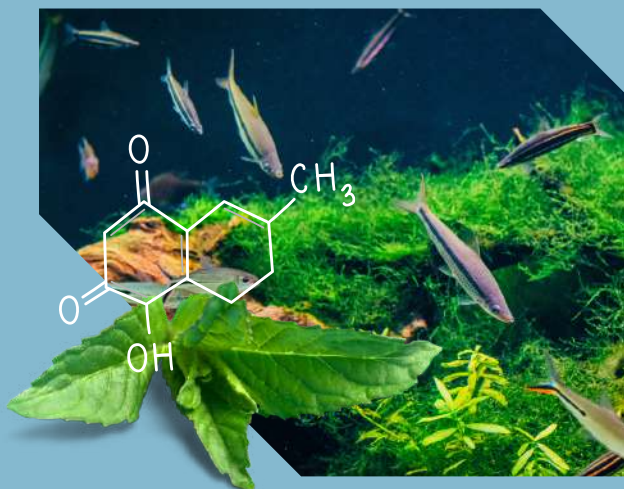


Dr. Moazama Batool

Assistant Professor

Department of Zoology, GCWUS

ABSTRACT



Aquaculture play a vital role in ensuring economic development, food security and enhancing livelihoods, yet sustainability of aquaculture is progressively menace by environmental toxicants such as heavy metals, PFAS and insecticides. These toxicants affect the water quality, fish health and production rate. Current research highlights the ameliorative potential of flavonoids, plant-derived compounds as eco-friendly and sustainable factor adept of minimizing the toxic effects in fish. Incorporating flavonoid-based interventions into aquaculture practices offers a cost effective approach to improve water quality, fish health and growth of fish. This strategy also support the global aquaculture development and aligns with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With new developments, plant-based flavonoids will perform a vital role in transforming aquaculture into sustainable and scientific-based sector.

CONCLUSION



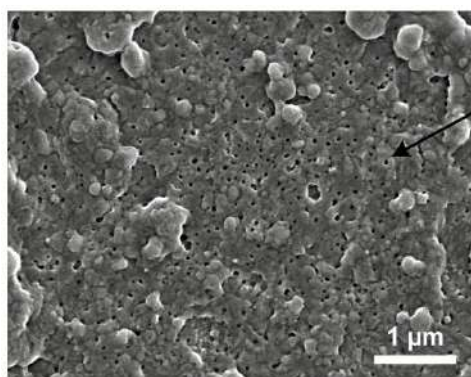
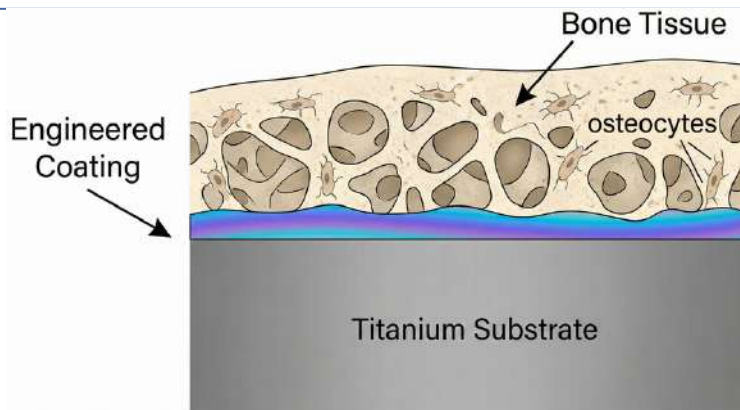
It is concluded that sustainable aquaculture depends on strategies that not only improve the fish productivity and health but also reduce the toxic effects of environmental pollutants. Use of plant-derived flavonoids offer eco-friendly and cost effective ways for ameliorating the toxicity in fish. These polyphenolic compounds act as anti-inflammatory, antioxidants and protective agents counter the effects of pollutants.

By incorporating flavonoid-based products in aquaculture practices, Pakistan's fish culture can improve water quality, boost fish health and growth and support the economy. This green innovation support the global trends towards international sustainability and offers a valuable pathway for enhancing food security. With new developments, plant-based flavonoids will perform a vital role in transforming aquaculture into sustainable and scientific-based sector.

AI DRIVEN TITANIUM SURFACE ENGINEERING FOR ADVANCED SURGICAL APPLICATIONS



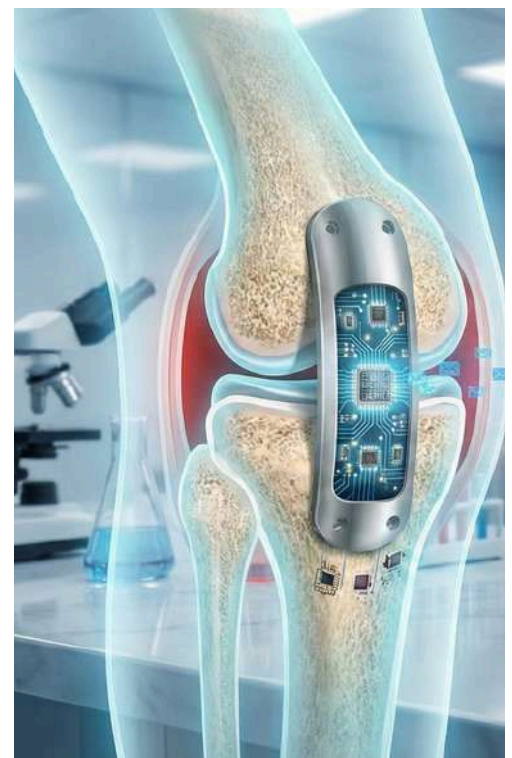
Dr Hammad Majeed
University of Management and
Technology, Sialkot



**Nanotextured
Surface for
Cell Adhesion**

Titanium is a premier material for surgical implants and instruments due to its unique surface chemistry and outstanding biocompatibility. When exposed to air or water, titanium spontaneously forms a dense, self-healing TiO_2 layer, typically 2 to 10 nm thick, which provides excellent corrosion resistance. TiO_2 primarily exists in anatase and rutile phases with bandgaps of ~ 3.2 eV and ~ 3.0 eV, respectively, enabling photocatalytic activity and antimicrobial potential. While alloys like Ti-6Al-4V are widely used, long-term wear can release metal ions or particles, necessitating engineered surface coatings to enhance durability and safety.

Titanium-based coatings improve surgical materials by providing enhanced corrosion protection, increased surface hardness, and biological functionality. Hard ceramic coatings such as TiN, TiCN, DLC, and TiAlN (1–5 μm thick) reduce wear and fretting, while bioactive hydroxyapatite (HA) coatings (50–200 μm) mimic bone chemistry to promote rapid osseointegration. Antimicrobial properties can be integrated through photocatalytic TiO_2 or Ag/Cu-doped layers that release controlled ions to inhibit microbial growth without compromising biocompatibility. Advanced deposition technologies allow precise tailoring of these coatings. PVD methods, including magnetron sputtering and HiPIMS, yield dense, adherent oxide or nitride films, whereas ALD provides atomically uniform TiO_2 layers (5 to 100 nm) on complex geometries, reducing particle release. Plasma spray techniques deposit thicker HA coatings with tunable roughness, and electrochemical methods such as anodization and PEO create porous, nanotextured surfaces for cell adhesion and drug delivery. Industry 6.0 elevates titanium coatings further, employing AI-driven process control, digital twins, self-learning robotics, and embedded nanosensors. Smart coatings can monitor pH, micro-motion, corrosion currents, and early bacterial colonization, paving the way for adaptive, long-lasting, and safer surgical implants.



THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK!

Not every link leads to something good.

Phishing: A Serious Cyber Threat to Sialkot's Export Sector

With the increasing use of emails, online banking, and digital documentation in international trade, businesses are facing new cybersecurity risks. One of the most common and dangerous threats is phishing. Phishing is a cybercrime in which attackers pretend to be a trusted organization or individual to trick users into sharing sensitive information such as passwords, bank details, or login credentials.

How Phishing Attacks Occur

Phishing attacks usually happen through emails, text messages, or fake websites. These messages often appear to be sent by banks, courier companies, government offices, or even known business partners. They may ask the recipient to:

- Verify account details
- Confirm shipment or payment information
- Click on a link or download an attachment

Once the victim clicks the link or enters information, attackers gain access to confidential data, which can later be misused for financial fraud or further cyberattacks.

Common Causes of Phishing

Phishing attacks succeed mainly due to lack of awareness. Some common reasons include:

- Trusting emails without verifying the sender.
- Clicking urgent or threatening messages that create panic.
- Using the same password for multiple accounts.
- Lack of cybersecurity training among staff.

Impact on Exporters of Sialkot

Exporters in Sialkot regularly communicate with international buyers, banks, and logistics companies. A successful phishing attack can lead to:

- Unauthorized access to company email accounts
- Fraudulent bank transactions or invoice manipulation
- Loss of confidential client and pricing information
- Damage to trust and credibility with foreign buyers

In some cases, phishing emails are used as the first step to launch ransomware attacks, making the threat even more serious for export-oriented businesses.



Preventive Measures Against Phishing

To reduce the risk of phishing, exporters and staff should adopt the following measures:

1. **Verify Email Sources:** Always check the sender's email address carefully.
2. **Avoid Clicking Suspicious Links:** Hover over links to check their authenticity before clicking.
3. **Never Share Sensitive Information:** Banks and official institutions never ask for passwords via email.
4. **Use Strong Authentication:** Enable two-factor authentication for email and banking accounts.
5. **Staff Awareness Training:** Regularly educate employees on identifying phishing attempts.
6. **Report Suspicious Activity:** Inform the IT department immediately if a suspicious email is received.

Conclusion

Phishing is a deceptive yet powerful cyber threat that can cause serious financial and reputational damage to exporters.

By remaining vigilant, verifying communications, and educating employees, Sialkot's export community can protect itself from cyber fraud and ensure smooth and secure international trade operations.

THE SIALKOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

Chamber's Communicator

scci.com.pk

