



For Better Understanding on China-Pakistan and CPEC

Gleanings from the National Press

July 1-15, 2020

A pilot project of PICS

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July 01, 2020

Business Recorder

CPEC: 15-member business council reconstituted

ISLAMABAD: A 15-member business council to accelerate industrialization under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was re-constituted on Tuesday.

The federal government has notified the name of reconstituted business council, which has three members from public sector, and rest from the business community. The council on the CPEC is initially formulated for a period of two years from the date of notification and shall automatically stand dissolved on the date of expiry of its term, unless otherwise further extended through a notification by the authority. Advisor to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood will be the chairman and member of the steering committee, Chairman Board of Investment (BOI) Atif R Bokhari and Chairman CPEC Authority Lt-General Asim Saleem Bajwa (ret'd) are members of the steering committee. Chairman BOI is convener of the joint working group on industrial cooperation.

The advisory group is a consultative forum between business community and the government on matters related to private investments under the CPEC and it will make specific recommendations for private sector investment in Pakistan under industrial cooperation.

The group will propose feasible projects for investments for discussion with Chinese Business Companies, and to formulate strategies for expediting ongoing and future B2B projects under industrial cooperation. The forum will discuss and explore opportunities and develop new investment model for future projects of the CPEC, and advice on developing an integrated approach for future development of industrial cooperation under the CPEC with a special focus on agriculture, industry, housing, tourism and any other potential area or sector mentioned in the CPEC long-term plan.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/01/1-page/842668-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

SBP receives \$1.3b from Chinese banks

The SBP has received \$1.3 billion as loan disbursements from Chinese banks this week, the central bank announced in a post. "SBP has received \$1.3 billion as GOP loan disbursements from Chinese Banks this week. This brings the total amount of official inflows received since 23rd June 2020 to around \$3 billion," the bank said. Last week, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced that it had received one billion dollars – 500 million dollars each from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

<https://pakobserver.net/sbp-receives-1-3b-from-chinese-banks/>

China, Pakistan's bus firms join hands to tackle COVID-19

“We’ve shared our anti-COVID-19 SOPs regarding public transportation with the knockdown (KD) factory in Lahore, Pakistan,” source from China’s Zhengzhou Yutong Bus Co., Ltd. (Yutong Bus) said, adding that about 30% of the KD factory’s staff had returned to work, China Economic Net reported on Tuesday. According to Yutong Bus, a large-scale modern manufacturing company specialized in the R&D, manufacturing and sales of bus products, they did well in COVID-19 control and prevention at headquarters in China, and therefore they recommended all of the Standing Operation Procedures (SOPs) to their Pakistani employees in Lahore. At present, SOPs are strictly followed in the KD factory to ensure zero infections of COVID-19. On top of sharing tips on the control and prevention of the COVID-19 pandemic, the bus firm donated a batch of 200,000 masks to Punjab, Pakistan earlier this month. Provincial Minister for Transport Jahanzaib Khan Khichi, Secretary Transport Asad-ur-Rehman Gilani and other concerned officers were present on the occasion. What is more, equipment on the public transport products exported to Pakistan during the COVID-19 pandemic has been upgraded. For example, the air conditioner and the overhead ventilator are connected to refresh the air; every bus is equipped with an ultraviolet lamp which could complete the interior disinfection in a short time. When it comes to the bus station and passengers, Yutong Bus listed all of the tips for the disinfection regarding buses, bus stations, ticket lobbies, and waiting rooms. Besides, it has provided sufficient surgical masks for bus staff and passengers. Whenever a passenger steps into the ticket lobby, he/she must have his/her body temperature taken. Anyone does not wearing a mask is not allowed to enter the ticket hall, and they shall be disinfected again before getting on the bus.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-pakistans-bus-firms-join-hands-to-tackle-covid-19/>

CPEC and Sino-Indian Military Escalation in Galwan Valley

Professor Dr Muhammad Khan

The Sino-Indian military escalation in East Ladakh has wider strategic, military and political implications for South Asia and the surrounding. The area of escalation is situated closer to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). India has clearly opposed CPEC ever since it was conceived in 2013. It has illegally occupied a vast portion of Jammu And Kashmir State in 1947 and illegally converted its occupied part into union territories in 2019. Daulat Beg Oldie (OBO) was strategically identified as the significant outpost by Indian strategic planners after China won a war against India in 1962. Since then Indian military commanders have been investing on the development of this area. It has significant importance for India against China and Pakistan. In the event of any military confrontation, this Indian airstrip can be used for fast deployment of Indian military and IAF. The airstrip has the potential to directly threaten the Chinese military in Aksai Chin, the Karakorum Pass and the Karakoram Highway, now being renovated as the CPEC. In the recent past, India has been threatening Pakistan to attack AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan, after it illegally annexed the India-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) into Indian Union. The main target of India is the Karakorum Highway, the CPEC and key locations in this strategic

area. The Karakoram Pass 18,176 feet high mountain pass is linked with Kashmir dispute along LAC between India and China in the wider Karakoram Range. It is the highest pass on the ancient caravan route between Leh in Ladakh and Yarkand in the Tarim Basin.

The Daulat Beg Oldie is situated closer to Line of Actual Control (LAC) while strategically overlooking the military activities and developments in Chinese-held areas of Aksai Chin. In a way, this became a check point for Indian military to monitor the activities of Chinese Army. After taking over the power in 2012, President Xi Jinping and his team had a strategic reappraisal of all Chinese borders. After a detail assessment of Indian military activities and infrastructural developments in DBO area, Chinese leadership reached the conclusion that India must be constrained to take further developments.

Indian military authorities were contacted to stop the activities, failure to which in April 2013, Chinese troops intruded deep into Indian Territory in the Depsang Valley. In some of the areas, the Chinese military intrusion was up to 19 kilometers. Indian Foreign Minister went running to Beijing since there was a high level visit of Chinese Premier to New Delhi planned in May 2013. After tense three weeks of military standoff on 5 May 2013 the issue was resolved and Chinese troops withdrew to their original position.

After the episode of April-May 2013, India could have restrained from military advancements in the area. Nevertheless, it continued covert military activities and development of communication infrastructure. In April 2020, there have been many complaints from Beijing to New Delhi about the secret military advances, but the latter did not take a note. Finally, there was a response from PLA on 6 May 2020 which pushed back Indian troops. The current military escalation has taken place after India started construction of roads and air strips in the area. India is in the process of construction of dozens of roads along the Sino-Indian borders in the region and beyond for rapid mobilization of its military and to facilitate the peace-time administration. The key road is linking the Galwan Valley with Daulat Beg Oldie air base.

As per Chinese Foreign Ministry, China is seriously threatened by India after it had unlawfully ended the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir and imposed Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act-2019, relegating the state into union territory. Indeed, the unilateral Indian declaration of Jammu and Kashmir State as its union territories is against the UN Charter, UN resolutions on the disputed status of the state and above all violation of 4th Geneva Convention. China is seriously peeved over the key road in the finger area of Pangong Tso Lake region, besides another road connecting the Darbuk-Shayok-Daulat Beg Oldie road in Galwan Valley.

This is a strategically envisioned road, running parallel to the Line of Actual Control between China and India while overlooking Chinese border posts besides linking major Indian supply bases at various points. Apart from this strategically planned road, the construction of airstrip in the disputed area is a clear manifestation of power politics. The road and airstrip is an offensive military posture which will enable India to make best use of its air power and armour formations against China in a situation like 1962.

Indian military raid on a Chinese post resulted into killing of over 20 troops which include the Commanding Officer of 16 Bihar Regiment (Infantry Battalion). Apart from these killings, there

are dozens of soldiers captured by PLA. This all happened despite the military commanders from both sides agreed for a peaceful resolution of border issues along LAC, a week earlier. Even there has been symbolic pulling out of the Chinese troops to the pre-escalation positions. Indian Army however did not wait for the next phase of talks between local military commanders and tried to achieve the surprise over its Chinese counterpart, but got surprised them, repulsed and suffered heavy casualties.

There is a larger and strategic context of Sino-Indian military escalation in Galwan Valley. Through its increased military activities and development of roads and infrastructural deployment, India threatened the Chinese military deployment in Aksai Chin. Besides, it is directly threatening the CPEC; the strategic linkage between Pakistan and China. China has taken a very firm stance and repulsed Indian military misadventures. The situation is still tense in the region. Since Indian military can't compete the highly professional PLA, therefore, the ambitious Indian leadership must accept the ground realities and de-escalate tension through negotiations. Since CPEC provides wider regional connectivity, therefore, India must benefit from this unique opportunity.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-and-sino-indian-military-escalation-in-galwan-valley/>

CPEC & baseless international propaganda

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

CHINA-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is going to enter its phase-II due to which international propaganda has now been disseminated fake news, biased analysis, official statements and last but not the least articles about its utility and benefits. Most recently, The Jerusalem Post, Israel published an article entitled “Beijing’s China-Pakistan Economic Corridor leads to nowhere” on June 20, 2020 written by Preity Upala an Indian citizen settled in the USA, indicated so-called structural flaws, contractual ambiguities, concealment of important information regarding finances, terms & conditions, trade imbalance, opposition from Baloch nationalists, serious concerns of residents near Gwadar Port and the resistance of local actors. She misinformed that originally CPEC was valued at \$46 billion, the estimate of CPEC projects is now \$87b and only a quarter of which have been completed.

On the contrary, CPEC was meant to integrate regional potential and resources to modernize Pakistani infrastructure and strengthen its economy by the construction of modern transportation networks, numerous energy projects and special economic zones (SEZs). Being prominent regional expert of CPEC & BRI, I think that Preity Upala is biased in her financial assessment about the CPEC by exaggerating the initial value from \$46 billion to \$87b. Moreover, she was wrong to highlight Baloch nationalists fear and concern about the development of CPEC in their soil especially in Gwadar Port. It is estimated that CPEC would be game and fate changer for the local population in terms of socio-economic prosperity, new jobs, reduction of poverty and modernization.

Preity Upala, the writer of the article, upheld that most of the SEZs are still underdeveloped and remained largely empty. It seems that writer does not know about the actual functionality and

“scheme of arrangement” of the ongoing and future projects under the umbrella of CPEC. Development of numerous SEZs would be accelerated mostly in its phase-II. Preity Upala seems to be ill informed even about the “concept” of the CPEC and portrayed it as “false premise” of economic sustainability and social prosperity. On the other hand, CPEC was initiated to achieve greater socio-economic prosperity, regional connectivity, massive industrialization, generation of new jobs and ultimately increase in the exports.

The writer of this article also termed CPEC a Chinese “colonial adventure” which is totally wrong and shows her “mental inflexibility” to see its true colors. CPEC is “collaborative” and “participatory” mega project which does not have any match with Indian “hegemonic designs”.

Right from its inception, the “Indian lobby” has been secretly working against the CPEC. Most recently, article entitled “China Pakistan Economic Corridor will be ‘trillion dollar blunder’” was published in “Business Standard” on June 22, 2020 pinpointed numerous financial abnormalities associated with the CPEC. Being prominent regional expert of CPEC & BRI, I strongly protest “pseudo intellectualism” of Indian lobby and its pay-rolled “robots” to defame CPEC. CPEC represents socio-economic prosperity and greater regional connectivity in the days to come.

Even now European institutes have apparently lost their so-called superior knowledge of economics, financial data, international relations and last but not the least commercial diplomacy and unfortunately surrendered their abilities of logic and wisdom to Indian lobby. Most recently Italian Institute for International Political Studies published a baseless article entitled The “Growing security dimension of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor” on March 10, 2020 termed CPEC a potential security risk for the South East Asia Region. The basic thesis of its so-called empirical studies is based on various security formations of the Government of Pakistan to provide essential security cover to ongoing projects of the CPEC.

The said publication labeled CPEC an epicenter to influence the power dynamics in South Asia and beyond. Moreover, it is gaining momentum since it becomes obvious that the CPEC is not only a program to promote economic growth but also serves as an instrument for Beijing to extend its strategic influence from the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. The assumptions and data collections of this Italian publication are not based on facts.

Ours is the age of commercial diplomacy and every country has the right to secure its “territorial sovereignty” through bilateral socio-economic mega projects or trilateral military alliances which should not be taken a security risk to any regional country. India lobby and agencies have been actively pursuing their vested interests in Maldives, Nepal and even in Sri Lanka and no super power equated its adventures a regional security risk in the past. So what is so special about the CPEC?

Unfortunately, this Italian publication showcased the CPEC as the most rapidly growing security risk attached to Chinese international development projects. Various security units like Special Security Division (SSD) Pakistan Army, ‘Civil Armed Forces’ (CAF) Interior Ministry, Task Force-88’ (TF-88), Coastal Security and Harbor Defense Force, Force Protection Battalion, Pakistan Navy have been formed to provide “security shield” to Chinese engineers working on various mega projects of the CPEC. Indian RAW has been trying to sabotage development

activities under CPEC in Baluchistan and other parts of the country which needs to be matched with better security apparatus having specialized security units and commands.

In order to secure ongoing CPEC, Pakistan and China have already formed a 'Joint Maritime Information and Coordination Centre' (JMICC) and 'Coastal Watch Stations' (CWSs) especially with the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). Besides the aforesaid security measures focusing mainly on Gwadar and the larger maritime component of the CPEC, the central authorities also boosted their police capacities to ensure law and order along the corridor. CPEC is life line for the revival of our national economy for which sincere efforts must be initiated to protect it.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-baseless-international-propaganda/>

The News

CPEC Business Council reconstituted to accelerate industrialization

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Board of Investment (BOI) Atif R Bokhari has reconstituted the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Business Council to accelerate the process of industrialization under the umbrella of the CPEC.

On the advice of the Adviser to Prime Minister for Commerce and Investment, the chairman BOI, being convener of the Joint Working Group (JOP) on Industrial Cooperation, was to reconstitute the following CPEC Business Council to enhance the industrialization in the country, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

According to a notification issued here, the following CPEC Business Council was notified as Chairman and member Steering Committee, the Adviser to Prime Minister for Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood and Minister of State and Chairman BOI, Atif Bukhari and Chairman CPEC Authority, Lt-Gen (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa are the Members of Steering Committee, including 12 members, from different areas of cooperation.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TORs) of the Advisory Group are to be a consultative forum between business community and the government on matters related to private investment under CPEC.

The advisory group will make specific recommendations for the private sector investment in Pakistan under the Industrial Cooperation and to propose feasible projects for investment for discussion with Chinese business companies.

The group will also formulate strategies for expediting ongoing and future Business to Business (B2B) projects under industrial Cooperation to discuss and explore opportunities and develop new investment models for future CPEC projects.

The group advises on developing an integrated approach on the future development of industrial cooperation under the CPEC with special focus on agriculture, industry, housing, tourism and any other potential area or sectors mentioned in the CPEC long-term plan.

The group also advises on any other issue referred to by the concerned ministries.

The Business Council on CPEC is initially formulated for a period of two years from the dated notification and shall automatically stand dissolved on the date of expiry of its terms, unless otherwise further extended through a notification by the competent authority.

The notification hereby supersedes BOI's earlier notification of even dated March 27, 2019 regarding the composition of CPEC Business Council.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/680463-cpec-business-council-reconstituted-to-accelerate-industrialisation>

July 02, 2020

The News

Coronavirus countrywide toll reaches 4,446

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI/ LAHORE: Death toll from COVID-19 in Pakistan has mounted to 4,446. The total confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Pakistan have reached 216,097.

Of these, 86,795 have been reported in Sindh, 76,262 in Punjab, 26,938 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 10,608 in Balochistan, 12,912 in Islamabad Capital Territory, 1,489 in Gilgit-Baltistan and 1,093 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The death of another 35 COVID-19 patients raised death toll to 1,762 in Punjab while confirmed cases of novel coronavirus reached 76,262 with the addition of 761 new infections in the province, according to report issued by Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department Wednesday.

So far, 686 fatalities have been confirmed from Lahore, 304 Rawalpindi, 177 Faisalabad, 122 Multan, 85 Sialkot, 70 Gujranwala, 48 Rahim Yar Khan, 34 Bahawalpur, 32 Gujrat, 25 Sargodha, 22 Sheikhpura, 17 each Dera Ghazi Khan and Mianwali, 16 each in Muzaffargarh and Sahiwal, 10 Kasur, nine each in Nankana Sahib and Vehari, eight Toba Tek Singh, seven Okara, six each in Hafizabad and Lodhran, five each in Attock, Chiniot and Bhakkar, four Jhang, three each Bahawalnagar, Rajanpur and Jhelum, two each in Narowal, Khushab and Pakpattan, one each from Khanewal and Mandi Bahauddin and none from Chakwal and Layyah.

Out of 761 new cases, as many as 403 were reported from Lahore, 87 Rawalpindi, 64 Faisalabad, 42 Multan, 26 Gujrat, 22 Muzaffargarh, 12 Gujranwala, 10 Mandi Bahauddin, nine Chiniot and Toba Tek Singh, seven Sheikhpura, Narowal, Dera Ghazi Khan and Sahiwal, six Sialkot, Sargodha and Bahawalpur, five Rahim Yar Khan, four Jhelum and Mianwali, three Khushab and Pakpattan, two Attock, Vehari and Layyah and one each Nankana Sahib, Kasur, Okara, Hafizabad, Khanewal and Jhang.

So far, 39,450 COVID-19 patients have been confirmed from Lahore, 5,943 Rawalpindi, 5,225 Multan, 4,961 Faisalabad, 2,812 Gujranwala, 2,020 Gujrat, 1,971 Sialkot, 1,251 Dera Ghazi Khan, 1,217 Bahawalpur, 1,028 Rahim Yar Khan, 966 Sargodha, 964 Sheikhpura, 864 Muzaffargarh, 594 Sahiwal, 539 Hafizabad, 537 Kasur, 497 Toba Tek Singh, 415 Vehari, 383 Attock, 392 Jhelum, 385 Bahawalnagar, 365 Mianwali, 317 Layyah, 314 Nankana Sahib, 296

Lodhran, 288 Jhang, 286 Mandi Bahauddin, 262 Okara, 258 Khanewal, 260 Chiniot, 234 Bhakkar, 226 Narowal, 206 Chakwal, 204 Khushab, 176 Rajanpur and 156 Pakpattan.

In Sindh, as many as 2,139 new cases of coronavirus have been detected after testing 8201 samples and 29 more patients died lifting the death toll to 1,406.

This was stated by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah in a press statement issued here on Wednesday.

Syed Murad Ali Shah said that currently out of 36,803 under treatment patients, 35,131 were in home isolation, 158 at Isolation centers and 1,514 at different hospitals.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reported 340 coronavirus infections and 22 deaths, taking the overall cases to 26,938 and death toll to 973, the provincial health department said.

Balochistan reported 132 coronavirus infections, taking the overall cases to 10,608 in the province, the province's health department said.

Pakistan and China have set up officially a joint prevention mechanism on COVID-19 to strengthen coordination and exchanges between the two countries as well as promoting cooperation while maintaining ongoing response in the long fight against the virus, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson said on Wednesday.

The first virtual meeting of the joint prevention controlled mechanism was also held.

“Representatives from sectors and departments of foreign affairs, public health, education, and customs on both sides attended the meeting,” he said during his regular briefing.

He said the settlement of this mechanism is aimed to strengthen coordination and exchange between the two sides as well as promoting cooperation while maintaining ongoing response in the long fight against the virus.

Regarding the consensus reached between the two sides, he informed that first, both the countries will continue take targeted prevention measures to prevent rebound and spreading of the epidemic and stem cross border spreading.

He said the two countries will strengthen corporation COVID-19 and share experience, adding, “China will continue to provide support and assistance to the best of our capacity.”

He said both countries will continue providing facilitation to personnel exchange and economical corporation while maintaining epidemic response.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/680869-coronavirus-countrywide-toll-reaches-4-446>

China-Pak Gwadar Faqeer Middle School's expansion completed

GWADAR: The expansion project of China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School was successfully completed and handed over to Pakistan's education department, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday.

Supervised by Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), the expansion project is funded by China Foundation for Peace and Development (CFPD) and constructed by CCCC-FHDI Engineering Co., Ltd., a renowned integrated large-scale investigation and design company in China. The Final Acceptance Certificate for the project was signed by relevant parties.

According to CFPD, the expansion work was never an easy one with the COVID-19 pandemic, the shortage of engineering materials, technologies and construction personnel and security risks striking at the same time.

However, engineers from CCCC-FHDI Engineering have made feasible plans and taken measures effective to guarantee the quality and processing of the expansion project, and the construction was completed ahead of schedule.

Covering an area of 1,600 square meters, China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School is equipped with two teaching buildings and supporting facilities after the expansion. It will not only fulfill local kids' educational aspirations, but also strengthen the China-Pakistan friendship. China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School is located in Faqeer Colony and also dubbed as Faqeer Middle School. This school is a part of Chinese funded ventures with the aim of providing quality school system in area.

Relevant parties signed the agreement on the expansion project in September 2019, and laid the foundation and officially started construction last November.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/680848-china-pak-gwadar-faqeer-middle-school-s-expansion-completed>

July 03, 2020

Business Recorder

Pakistan, China launch 'Shandong Export Online Fair'

BEIJING: The online launching ceremony of 2020 Shandong Export Online Fair (Round II) was held in Jinan, China, demonstrating a creative way of engaging international business during the Covid-19 lockdown, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday.

Hussain Haider, Consul General of Pakistani Consulate General in Shanghai, Wang Zihai, president of Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI), Iqbal Kidwai, Secretary-General of Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers' Association (PCMA), Muhammad Nadeem Zafar, vice president of Pakistan Hardware Association and others attended the online opening ceremony.

As per Hussain Haider, online negotiation for international business will become a new normal as the COVID-19 pandemic dealt the events industry a blow.

He further mentioned that China has become Pakistan's largest trading partner, largest country of origin for imports, largest foreign direct investor and its third-largest export destination, while Pakistan has become China's largest investment destination in South Asia due to the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The exhibition is hosted by Shandong Provincial Department of Commerce. Pakistani Consulate General in Shanghai, Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers' Association (PCMA), Pakistan Hardware Merchants Association (PHMA), etc has provided great support to the event.

According to the event organizer Inter Commerce Expo (ICEC), deals worth \$2.94 million were agreed at the first round of 2020 Shandong Export Commodities (Pakistan) Online Exhibition, with 28 Pakistani enterprises being invited this May.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/03/7-page/843006-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan Army strongly denies presence of Chinese troops in country Rejects Indian claim of PLAAF aircraft presence in Pakistan

The military's media wing on Thursday termed reports by the Indian media that Pakistan had deployed troops along the Line of Control in Gilgit Baltistan region as "false and irresponsible". Inter-Services Public Relations Director General Maj Gen Babar Iftikhar, via Twitter, said there was no truth to Chinese troops using the Skardu Airbase, saying that the reports were "false, irresponsible and far from truth". "No such movement or induction of additional forces has taken place. We also vehemently deny presence of Chinese troops in Pakistan," he added. Indian media outlets have claimed that Pakistan has deployed "almost 20,000 additional soldiers" along the LoC in AJK and GB "to match Chinese deployments on the LAC (Line of Actual Control) in the east". "The level of troops Pakistan has deployed is more than what it did after the Balakot air strikes. Pakistani radars are believed to be fully activated all along the region too," a report by Economic Times said. Furthermore, the publication claimed that meetings have been held between China and Pakistan officials and the former is also holding talks with the Al-Badr outfit in order to "incite violence" in occupied Kashmir. The reports come after Prime Minister Imran Khan said on the floor of the parliament on Tuesday that Pakistan had "no doubt" that India was involved in the attempted attack on the Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi that took place earlier this week. India is currently engaged in a conflict with China at the disputed LAC in the Galwan Valey of the Ladakh region. Last month, 20 Indian soldiers were killed in a violent clash between the two armies; the deadliest in decades. Pakistan has repeatedly expressed its concern that India may initiate a "false flag operation" to divert attention from its casualties in the conflict with China. Both India and China have accused each other of instigating the clash between their forces in the valley.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-army-strongly-denies-presence-of-chinese-troops-in-country-rejects-indian-claim-of-plaaf-aircraft-presence-in-pakistan/>

Pakistan future will be driven through agriculture: Fakhar

Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Syed Fakhar Imam, Thursday, said that Pakistan's future will be driven through agriculture. During meeting with Yao Jing, Ambassador of China; Minister for National Food Security and Research, Syed Fakhar Imam mentioned that Prime Minister Imran Khan is very much interested in revival of agriculture. He said to Chinese Ambassador that both countries need to revisit the contours of agricultural sector. He said that technical experts from two sides should directly interact with each other to come up with concrete projects for agricultural research. Federal Minister said that Pakistan is facing

problem of low yield. So there must be exchange of germplasm as an area of cooperation which will provide an opportunity to develop high yielding varieties for cotton, fruit, hybrid rice and wheat by our research centers. Syed Fakhar Imam said that China is one of largest markets in the world for export of meat & meat products. Pakistan has no access to Chinese market due to the issue of FMD. So collaboration can be done in this regard. He mentioned that Balochistan is excelling in producing organic cotton. It was decided that China will help in installing phyto sanitary system for increasing fruit export. It was also decided that China will help in building vocational and technical agriculture institutions for training farmers and other people. He added that now Plant Breeders Act and Plant Seed Act will give a window for branding our products. Chinese Ambassador also showed interest in mutual cooperation in fishery at Gwadar. China–Pakistan JWG on Agricultural Cooperation was established in pursuance of the MoU (signed on 02.11.2018) and Framework Agreement (signed on 26.05.2019). First Meeting of JWG was held on November 01, 2019 in Islamabad. Chinese side has provided in-kind donation of locust control equipment to the tune of around Rs. 4.94 mil.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-future-will-be-driven-through-agriculture-fakhar/>

The Express Tribune

CM Kamal underlines Balochistan’s importance in CPEC

Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan Alyani on Thursday said the country would get maximum benefits as soon as the importance of Balochistan has been acknowledged in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, adding that the real CPEC is Balochistan, which will provide access to Afghanistan, central Asian states from Chaman and furthermore to Europe through Iran and Turkey.

Presiding over a high-level meeting here on Thursday, he said that the province of Balochistan is a land of opportunities and its long coastal belt and other resources and projects, including TAPI gas pipeline project, further increased its importance in the region.

The meeting reviewed various development projects. All concerned ministers, secretaries and director general Balochistan Coastal Development Authority attended the meeting, which continued for several hours. The concerned officials briefed the CM about projects of their respective departments.

Kamal with the reference to the briefing said the present government believes in taking practical steps and wants to work for the development of all sectors and thus wants to empower them. He said it would, however, be unfortunate if concerned departments do not improve their performance.

He said that decisions regarding development and progress should not be kept only on papers and results should be visible on ground.

While reviewing the projects of the Forest & Wildlife Department, the chief minister expressed his dissatisfaction over the performance. He said despite being an important department, the concerned authorities had not determined the priorities and did not suggest development projects for the PSDP.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2253081/cm-kamal-underlines-balochistans-importance-in-cpec>

The Nation

CPEC serves as excellent project for Pakistan's socio-economic uplift: PM Imran

Prime Minister Imran Khan said the multifaceted game-changer initiative would guarantee a bright future for the country. while referring to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) an excellent project for Pakistan's socioeconomic uplift.

Chairing a meeting to review progress on the CPEC projects, the prime minister reiterated that the Corridor was the manifestation of Pakistan-China friendship and the government would complete it at any cost to pass on its benefits to the citizens.

While applauding the performance of CPEC Authority, the prime minister directed for all necessary measures to further improve its working as well as capability.

During the meeting, the prime minister was briefed in detail about the status of the ongoing projects under the CPEC.

Federal ministers Asad Umar, Makhdoom Khusro Bakhtiar and Omar Ayub, Commerce Advisor Abdur Razzak Dawood, CPEC Authority Chairman Lt General (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa and senior officers of the organizations concerned attended the meeting.

<https://nation.com.pk/03-Jul-2020/cpec-serves-as-excellent-project-for-pakistan-s-socio-economic-uplift-pm-imran>

July 04, 2020

Business Recorder

CPEC projects: progress reviewed

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Friday the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project was the sign of strong friendship between the neighboring countries and it assured the bright future of Pakistan.

PM Imran Khan chaired a high-level session to review the progress of projects designed under CPEC which was attended by federal ministers and CPEC officials. The premier was briefed over the current status of different projects being completed under the CPEC plan.

PM Khan expressed satisfaction over the performance of CPEC Authority and said the economic corridor was a best plan to bring socio-economic development which also assured the bright future of Pakistan.

The premier vowed that the federal government would complete the CPEC project as per plan at any cost, adding the project was a sign of all-weather friendship between Pakistan and China. He added that every Pakistani would be benefitted from the mega project.

He directed concerned officials to further enhance the performance and capacity of the CPEC Authority for the early completion of the ongoing projects.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/04/1-page/843070-news.html>

Aftermath of Covid-19: Pakistan, China reaffirm resolve to take steps for early economic recovery

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China on Friday reaffirmed their resolve to take measures aimed at earliest possible economic recovery in the aftermath of Covid-19 and also expressed the resolve to deepen strategic consultation at all levels to collectively promote shared goals of peace and stability in the region.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a telephone conversation with Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Friday in which bilateral, regional, and international issues came under discussion, Foreign Office said in a statement.

During the telephonic conversation, Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored that Pakistan and China were 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partners' and had preserved the fine tradition of expressing solidarity, mutual assistance and mutual support to each other in the face of common challenges.

He reiterated that Pakistan remained committed to 'One-China policy' and firmly supports China on its core interests including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang.

Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored that regional security situation was deteriorating and underlined that India's belligerent posture and expansionist policies were imperiling peace in the region. Apart from committing egregious violations of human rights in IOJ&K, India was seeking to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory.

Qureshi also briefed about the repeated violations committed by India across the LOC as well as targeted killing of the civilians. In the face of Indian provocations, Pakistan was exercising restraint, Foreign Minister added.

He underscored that disputes in the region should be resolved through peaceful means and agreed mechanisms rather than resorting to unilateral, illegal and coercive measures reflected in India's decision of August 5, 2019.

Foreign Minister Qureshi emphasized that the recent attack at Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi was supported by anti-Pakistan elements seeking to undermine Pakistan's economic development and stability.

State Councilor Wang Yi briefed Foreign Minister Qureshi about the regional situation.

He lauded Pakistan's sincere and relentless efforts to promote peace and stability in the region and thanked Pakistan for the support it had extended to China during difficult and challenging times.

"Both sides also reaffirmed their resolve to support each other at the multilateral institutions and hoped that those institutions would foster a spirit of objectivity and coherence in advancing their goals," the Foreign Office further stated.

It stated that the two foreign ministers expressed determination to promote peace and development in Afghanistan. It was hoped that the next meeting of China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers Dialogue will take place at the earliest to facilitate peace and reconciliation efforts in Afghanistan.

“Both sides reaffirmed the resolve to take measures aimed at earliest possible economic recovery in the aftermath of Covid-19,” it added.

Foreign Minister Qureshi underlined that BRI and CPEC would become the hub of trade and economic activity, sustainable development and greater people-to-people exchanges. Pakistan and China were taking relevant measures which would help timely completion of CPEC projects, it added.

It added that State Councilor Wang Yi underscored that CPEC was a flagship project of BRI and that the second phase of CPEC would complement Pakistan’s efforts aimed at job creation, enhancing agricultural productivity, reducing poverty, and massive economic recovery.

State Councilor Wang Yi emphasized that, in the aftermath of Covid-19, Beijing was taking swift, practical, and demonstrable measures to promote economic recovery in the region. He thanked Pakistan for supporting Beijing’s idea of ‘Health Silk Road’ which, he believed, would play a major role in addressing the region’s social and economic needs.

“Both sides resolved to implement consensus reached by the leadership of the two countries to deepen strategic consultation and coordination at all levels so as to collectively promote shared goals of peace and stability,” it stated, adding they decided to have face-to-face meeting soon to discuss challenges confronted by the region.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/04/2-page/843084-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

Qureshi, Chinese counterpart agree to promote mutual coop

The Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and China have agreed in a key telephone conversation to promote mutual cooperation between the two countries on international forums. According to details, Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi had a telephone conversation with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and discussed important issues of mutual interest, including the region’s overall situation. The Foreign Minister told his Chinese counterpart that India was constantly violating the Line of Control ceasefire by targeting innocent civilians in order to cover up its internal failures. Wang Yi said that he appreciated Pakistan’s efforts for peace in the region and thanked Pakistan for its support in every difficult moment. Wang Yi said that CPEC Phase II is a very important part of the BRI project as it will increase economic activity and create new employment opportunities in Pakistan.

<https://pakobserver.net/qureshi-chinese-counterpart-agree-to-promote-mutual-coop/>

Chinese minister bids farewell to Naghmana Hashmi

Ambassador of Pakistan to China Ms. Naghmana Alamgir Hashmi was accorded farewell after one-year tenure in Beijing, China Economic Net reported on Friday. Moin-ul-Haque, currently serving as Ambassador of Pakistan to Paris will replace Hashmi as the new envoy to Beijing. Vice Foreign Minister of China Luo Zhaohui met with Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi on Thursday. On the occasion, Luo conveyed his thankfulness to Hashmi for her great contribution to promoting friendly exchanges and cooperation between China and Pakistan, and expressed the

hope that Hashmi would continue to care for and support China-Pakistan relations. Hashmi thanked the Chinese side for its valuable support during her performance of duties and believed Pakistan-China relations would overcome any difficulties and challenges and constantly achieve greater development.

Hashmi is recognized for her contribution to the cultural understanding between China and Pakistan. As an ambassador in favor of Chinese culture, she depicts the traits of Chinese civilization as peaceful and benevolent. Meanwhile, she has endeavored to share the core spirit of Pakistan and its people by introducing Sufism to the Chinese audience. Her deep understanding of both Chinese and Pakistani cultures has warranted her achievements in bringing the two peoples closer.

Hashmi is a champion of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). She highlighted the tangible results and benefits to the local people brought about by CPEC and recognized its renewed vitality into Pakistan's socioeconomic development. Her signed article "From Khunjerab to Gwadar: 69 years of concord, cooperation, and connectivity" represents part of her efforts in promoting the CPEC project.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-minister-bids-farewell-to-naghmana-hashmi/>

The Express Tribune

Gwadar International Airport construction underway, confirms CPEC chairman

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Chairman Asim Saleem Bajwa on Saturday said the Gwadar International Airport construction is underway. The chairman took to micro blogging website Twitter and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to launching and completing all projects in Gwadar in line with Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision. "Mega airport costing \$230M will be a harbinger of development of Gwadar City/Gwadar Port," he wrote.

A day earlier, the premier emphasized that the CPEC project would be completed in any circumstances as the project was a guarantee for the bright future of Pakistan.

In line with his vision to provide relief to poor people by reopening the construction industry, Imran, while reviewing the progress of projects under CPEC, remarked that "CPEC is an excellent project in terms of socio-economic development of Pakistan."

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2253289/gwadar-international-airport-construction-underway-confirms-cpec-chairman>

The Nation

Pak Navy Coastal Command gears up to overcome CPEC challenges

Commander Coast Vice Admiral Faisal Rasul Lodhi has said that Pakistan Navy coastal command was fully geared up for the challenges related to CPEC and no stone will be left unturned for securing the maritime interests of the country.

He was addressing the Passing out Parade of Pakistan Navy SEAL Course held at PNS IQBAL in Karachi, according to the officials. A press release received here on Friday said that the parade comprised of officers and sailors, who completed rigorous training in conformity to set standards. Commander Coast Vice Admiral Faisal Rasul Lodhi graced the occasion as chief guest.

While addressing the ceremony, the chief guest underlined that coastal command of Pakistan Navy has been entrusted to safeguard country's coastal area from Sir Creek to Jiwani under the challenging security milieu.

He further said that Pakistan Navy coastal command is fully geared up for the challenges related to CPEC and no stone will be left unturned for securing the maritime interests of Pakistan.

The chief guest while congratulating the parade expressed his hope that addition of special operators in Navy's offensive punch will surely enhance the capabilities Special Service Group (Navy). Later, he gave away prizes to position holders. The 'Iron Man' trophy for the overall best trainee of the course was awarded to Janbaz Asim Khan, whereas Best Endurance Swimmer and Best Endurance Runner Trophies were won by Janbaz Osama and Janbaz Ehsan Ullah respectively. Due to COVID 19 pandemic, the ceremony was attended by limited number of guests, according to the press release.

<https://nation.com.pk/04-Jul-2020/pak-navy-coastal-command-gears-up-to-overcome-cpec-challenges>

The News

Pakistan, China agree India threatening peace in region

ISLAMABAD: For the first time since the recent military standoff between China and India in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed, Pakistan Friday publicly told Beijing that the regional security situation was deteriorating and underlined that India's belligerent posture and expansionist policies were threatening peace in the region.

Pakistan also sent out a clear message to the world capitals that it remained committed to 'One-China policy' and firmly supported China on its core interests including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang.

The two sides were interacting after the militant attack on the Pakistan Stock Exchange, which the outlawed terrorist group BLA said was carried out to send a message to China's investments in Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan.

The last few weeks have seen a contact between the two sides on these issues at the official level and Friday saw a phone call between Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and his Chinese counterpart State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi in which bilateral, regional and international issues were discussed.

"State Councilor Wang Yi briefed Foreign Minister Qureshi about the regional situation. He lauded Pakistan's sincere and relentless efforts to promote peace and stability in the region and thanked Pakistan for the support it has extended to China during difficult and challenging times," said a statement from the Foreign Office.

Both sides also reaffirmed their resolve to support each other at the multilateral institutions and hoped that those institutions would foster a spirit of objectivity and coherence in advancing their goals.

Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored that disputes in the region should be resolved through peaceful means and agreed mechanisms rather than resorting to unilateral, illegal, and coercive measures reflected in India's decision of 5 August 2019.

"Apart from committing egregious violations of human rights in IOJ&K, India is seeking to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory. The foreign minister also briefed Wang Yi about the repeated violations committed by India across the LOC as well as the targeted killing of civilians. In the face of Indian provocations, Pakistan is exercising restraint," added the statement.

Qureshi underscored that Pakistan and China were 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partners' and had preserved the fine tradition of expressing solidarity, mutual assistance and mutual support to each other in the face of common challenges.

State Councilor Wang Yi was quoted as saying during the telephone call that the CPEC was a flagship project of BRI and that the second phase of CPEC will complement Pakistan's efforts aimed at job creation, enhancing agricultural productivity, reducing poverty, and massive economic recovery.

Qureshi underlined that BRI and CPEC would become the hub of trade and economic activity, sustainable development and greater people-to-people exchanges. Pakistan and China were taking relevant measures, which will help timely completion of CPEC projects.

The two foreign ministers expressed determination to promote peace and development in Afghanistan. It was hoped that the next meeting of China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers Dialogue would take place at the earliest to facilitate peace and reconciliation efforts in Afghanistan.

Both sides reaffirmed the resolve to take measures aimed at earliest possible economic recovery in the aftermath of COVID-19.

Wang Yi emphasized that, in the aftermath of COVID-19, Beijing was taking swift, practical, and demonstrable measures to promote economic recovery in the region.

He thanked Pakistan for supporting Beijing's idea of 'Health Silk Road' which, he believed, would play a major role in addressing the region's social and economic needs.

Both sides resolved to implement consensus reached by the leadership of the two countries to deepen strategic consultation and coordination at all levels so as to collectively promote shared goals of peace and stability.

They decided to have face-to-face meeting soon to discuss challenges confronted by the region. Meanwhile, earlier the Foreign Office rejected remarks by the Indian MEA's spokesperson regarding elections in Gilgit-Baltistan.

"The Indian government, which has been holding fraudulent "elections" in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) under the barrel of Indian occupation forces, and has turned the

occupied region into the world's largest open prison, has no locus stands to comment on elections in Gilgit-Baltistan," said the Foreign Office.

Pakistan reiterates that India remains in illegal occupation of parts of Jammu and Kashmir. The Jammu and Kashmir dispute, which is the longest outstanding item on UN Security Council's agenda, stems from India's forcible and illegal occupation of the State of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/681842-pakistan-china-agree-india-threatening-peace-in-region>

Pakistan's sovereignty to be protected at all costs

ISLAMABAD: The country's top civilian and military leadership Friday reviewed internal and external security situation and resolved that sovereignty of Pakistan would be protected at all costs.

It was also resolved that Pakistan believes in peaceful co-existence with its neighbors but the nation has both the will and the capacity to defend territorial integrity.

Prime Minister Imran Khan chaired a high-level meeting to review the internal and external security situation. The recent developments with regard to Ladakh clashes between China and India and security challenges faced by Pakistan are also understood to be deliberated upon during the meeting.

Minister for Defence Parvez Khattak, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Nadeem Raza, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan and Director General Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Lieutenant General Faiz Hamid attended the meeting.

The meeting expressed serious concern over the continued human rights violation by Indian forces in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) and urged the international community to take notice.

The meeting also paid glowing tributes to the bravery and coordinated efforts of law enforcement agencies that successfully thwarted the recent attack on Pakistan Stock Exchange.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Imran Khan presided over a review meeting on the progress of projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The prime minister expressed satisfaction over the performance of the CPEC Authority. The prime minister was apprised of the status of ongoing projects.

Presiding over the meeting, the prime minister said that CPEC is an excellent project in terms of socio-economic development of Pakistan and a guarantee of a bright future for Pakistan.

The CPEC project, the meeting emphasized, will be completed in all circumstances and its fruits will be delivered to every special and common Pakistani.

Appreciating the performance of CPEC Authority, the prime minister directed that all necessary steps be taken to make the performance and capacity of this body more efficient.

The meeting was attended by federal ministers Asad Umar, Khusro Bakhtiar, Umar Ayub, Trade Advisor Abdul Razak Dawood, Chairman CPEC Authority Lt Gen (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa and senior officials of the concerned ministries.

Meanwhile, the prime minister chaired a review meeting to restructure the master plans of the federal capital, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Imran Khan Friday directed that the roadmap for finalizing the master plans and the report containing the interim strategy during the execution of this process be completed within one week.

The prime minister was given a detailed briefing on the progress made so far in adapting and restructuring the master plans of major cities of Islamabad, Punjab and KP as per the present requirements. Addressing the meeting, the prime minister said that unplanned expansions in major cities in the last few years had not only posed serious threats to the environment but also caused complex problems in civic amenities, cities. He noted the limited green areas and adjacent agricultural lands were being affected and this situation could pose a serious threat to food security in the future.

The prime minister said that the process of amendments and upgrades in the master plan should be taken forward keeping in view the motivations and socio-economic activities of each city.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/681839-pakistan-s-sovereignty-to-be-protected-at-all-costs>

July 05, 2020

Dunya News

Ministers term CPEC a game-changer for entire region

Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan and Minister for Science and Technology Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Sunday termed that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a game-changer for the entire region which would bring economic revolution in Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan.

The partnership in the form of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will prove to be a historical milestone in the Pak-China bilateral relations, both the ministers said while speaking to a Radio Pakistan's Current Affair Programme.

Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan said from the beginning the Prime Minister Imran Khan has been supporting the game changer project CPEC and was determined to take this great initiative to its logical end.

The mega project would not only benefit China and Pakistan but the entire region, he said, adding, this project also is a gateway to European markets for trade activities.

The government under CPEC was mainly focusing on making improvements in economic, education, health and industrial sectors, he highlighted.

Ali Muhammad said at this time, special attention was being given to Baloch people to eliminate their sense of deprivation.

The government would definitely ensure maximum projects in Balochistan under CPEC and to ensure the people of the province would get maximum benefit from CPEC, he assured.

Minister of Science & Technology Fawad Chaudhry said, it was a good development that CPEC has entered its final stages of second phase.

In 1st phase of this initiative, special emphasis was on overcoming energy shortage and improving road infrastructure. In second phase of this mega project, the industrial growth was among the priorities, Fawad said.

He added, special economic zones and industries have been established in this phase. In the third phase of CPEC, agriculture sector would be focused.

China was keen to provide its expertise in agriculture production to Pakistan, he concluded.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/552865-Ministers-term-CPEC-a-game-changer-for-entire-region>

Govt committed to complete all projects in Gwadar: Asim

The Chairman of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Information and broadcasting, Asim Saleem Bajwa has reaffirmed the commitment in launching and completing all projects under CPEC in Gwadar. On a social media website Twitter, Saleem Bajwa said, “Gwadar International Airport construction in progress,” said Bajwa in a tweet on Saturday, while sharing pictures of the project.

“We reaffirm our commitment to launching and completing all projects in Gwadar in line with PM’s directive,” he added. Bajwa informed that the project under construction cost about \$230 million.

Earlier, Prime Minister Imran Khan had said that the timely completion of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the government’s leading priority. PM Imran Khan had chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress of projects designed under China Pakistan Economic Corridor. The meeting was attended by federal ministers and CPEC officials. The premier was briefed over the current status of different projects being completed under the CPEC plan. PM Khan expressed satisfaction over the performance of the CPEC Authority and said that the economic corridor was the best plan to bring socio-economic development which also assured the bright future of Pakistan. He had said that development projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) must be concluded on a fast-track basis and aimed at providing final form to the consultation process on the future plans. Praising the time-tested friendship with the northern neighbor, the prime minister had said that during the difficult times’ China had always helped Pakistan, and CPEC was a symbol of the multi-dimensional partnership between the two sides.

He also noted that Chinese experiments in the social sector need to be fully addressed, particularly for alleviating poverty and growing agriculture. Under the second priority phase, the prime minister had directed the CPEC officials to speed up implementation pace on various projects.

<https://pakobserver.net/govt-committed-to-complete-all-projects-in-gwadar-asim/>

The News

Pakistani students join poverty relief programme in China

HANZHONG: Pakistani students joined poverty relief programme in China, with the spirit of promoting goodwill between the two brother countries as well as to learn from the Chinese experience for improving the living conditions of low-income group.

They along with the other international students shared knowledge on agricultural techniques with local farmers to get maximum output of their hard work for a better life. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Saturday, helping farmers get rid of poverty by agricultural industrialization is an important way of China's poverty relief. Now, China is approaching its target of eliminating absolute poverty by the end of 2020.

“Our trip to agriculture fields made us get more understanding of the Chinese government's excellent strategies. “I will try to imply those in my country Pakistan,” said Rahat Sharif, a Pakistani studying in China, after joining a poverty alleviation program here.

Rahat Sharif and Abdul Ghaffar Shar, two Pakistani students, along with other students of the China's Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University (NWAUFU) made a short research visit to Zhenba County, Shangzhi Province last week.

“This activity is an opportunity for the international students to learn more about China. It is also good for promoting the people-to-people connectivity,” according to Cheng Shangzhi, the office administrator of CIE in NWAUFU. They used their professional knowledge to help the local farmers improve agricultural production and get rid of poverty soon.

Sharif said, “Life is not easy there but the government has managed to provide them with all the daily necessities. Our visit also has done well for them because members of our team shared some useful safety tips with them to keep the farm animals healthy and in good conditions.”

They also visited a local vegetable farm where Sharif gave briefings to the local potato farmers about the potato's cultivation and harvesting. During the talk, the farmers asked him about the management of potato diseases and how to increase the overall production with minimum inputs. Abdul Ghaffar Shar, researching plant nutrition for his doctoral degree, makes training on tea plant's fertilization and nutrient uptake for workers of a local agricultural company, the report added.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/682281-pakistani-students-join-poverty-relief-programme-in-china>

July 06, 2020

Business Recorder

China, Pakistan agree on JV proposals: Razak

ISLAMABAD: The Adviser to the PM on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood said on Sunday that China and Pakistan have agreed on some proposals for Joint Ventures between Chinese and Pakistani companies, particularly in the value added agriculture sector.

The joint venture with China would benefit Pakistan because of its export potential not only in China but elsewhere as well, the Adviser Razak Dawood told APP here.

Replying to a question, he said Pakistan's exports increased in value terms by 2.2 percent in July-Jan period of this fiscal year.

The adviser said joint ventures with the Chinese companies would allow Pakistan to have improved technology and enhanced capacity for production and exports.

He said both sides were reviewing the plans to enhance bilateral trade and investment for future Sino-Pak economic and trade connectivity.

Razak Dawood said China was moving fast on some of the construction projects in Pakistan, which would create a number of jobs for the local population.

The opportunities and ongoing projects of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) were also discussed in a recent meeting with the top leadership of both sides.

The adviser commerce emphasized the need to start industrial activity through development of Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

The meat and poultry exports of Pakistan have risen by more than 50 percent in the fiscal year 2019-20, with market accessibility to China and different potential markets of the world.

Abdul Razak underscored that the Pakistani exports were beginning to gain momentum after a slow down caused by Covid-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdowns.

Now China and Pakistan need to sit together again and discuss issues related to bilateral trade with efforts to further diversify the products being exported from Pakistan, with a specific focus on value-addition, under the China Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Phase II, he added.

Replying to another question on recent trade connectivity China through the Khunjerab border, Razak Dawood said that "We had discussed the opening of Khunjerab border as well as strategies to exploit bilateral trade and investment opportunities in the wake of the Corona pandemic.

He told that around 186 containers were stuck at the Khunjerab border which is a cause of great concern especially among small businesses.

The adviser said temporary opening of the border was under consideration in order to clear the backlog of containers.

Both sides agreed to finalize the modalities in this regard to resolve the issue on priority.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/06/1-page/843255-news.html>

M-8 project 'a beacon of light' for southern Balochistan: CPEC chairman

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Information and Broadcasting General Asim Saleem Bajwa (ret'd) said on Sunday work on M-8 project, also known as Gwadar-Ratodero Motorway will commence on a top priority basis.

Taking to the micro blogging site Twitter, he said the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) has accorded approval for construction of 146-kilometre-long Hoshab-Awaran section of the motorway.

He said this highway in the remote districts of Kech and Awaran is a beacon of light for impoverished Southern Balochistan and will change lives of people of these areas.

“This road in remote districts of Kech/Awaran is a beacon of light for impoverished Southern Balochistan, will change lives,” said Asim Saleem Bajwa who also heads the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) authority.

Bajwa said a number of projects under the CPEC are in the pipeline, including \$7.2 billion ML-1, two hydel power projects worth \$3.5 billion, special economic zones, and agricultural schemes.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/06/1-page/843260-news.html>

Daily Times

Beijing hybrid wheat benchmark of Pak-China agri cooperation under CPEC

Beijing hybrid wheat promoted in Pakistan is going to become a benchmark project for agricultural cooperation under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

In the context of Sino-Pak cooperation in the agriculture sector, China’s Guard Agri Company last week sent a letter to Beijing Academy of Agriculture and Forestry Sciences, stating that they are looking for further cooperation particularly on an expanding its planting area in 2020-2021. This project not only benefits Pakistani enterprises but would also alleviate food crisis in the country. “Therefore, we are enthusiastically seeking cooperation, hoping that China would provide seeds to support the plantation of Beijing hybrid wheat in 2020-2021,” the letter said.

Dr. Zhang Shengquan, Beijing Academy of Agriculture and Forestry Sciences/ Beijing Hybrid Wheat Engineering and Technology Research Center told Gwadar Pro that this year; China will also support the promotion of Beijing hybrid wheat in Pakistan, and provide adequate seeds as well. If the experiment goes well, the hybrid wheat will come onto the Pakistani market on a large-scale next year.

Through a long-term research and experiment, over 120 hybridized combinations and more than 230 pilot projects, comparing with domestic breed, Beijing hybrid wheat has created a 24.4% average increase of yield. Beijing hybrid wheat gained another good harvest in Pakistan pilot site in the crown of the year 2019-2020.

It is reported that for the same planting area, Beijing hybrid wheat yields 20% more than the best breed in Pakistan, by sowing seeds that are 90% less than the latter.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/636580/beijing-hybrid-wheat-benchmark-of-pak-china-agri-cooperation-under-cpec/>

Completing CPEC ‘at all costs’

The government has done the right thing by putting to rest any doubts about timely completion of CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor). There were doubts, especially as economies the world over took a big hit from the coronavirus pandemic, that something as ambitious as the Corridor might be put on the backburner for a while, even if it is not written off altogether. But both Chinese and Pakistani authorities made it crystal clear late last week that no matter what happens this project will be completed on time. That alone ought to be enough to make regional

markets rally when they open in the new week, since keeping the project going will require continuous trade and infrastructure investments that should keep the whole continent happy.

Needless to say, of course, that despite all the problems caused by the pandemic this project will bring good news for both countries; and a whole host of others as well. For China, it is just one part of the huge BRI (Belt and Road Initiative), but an extremely crucial one. And for Pakistan, it will help build modern infrastructure up and down the country which will benefit the people and the economy in many more ways than just trade from the Corridor. In fact, the prime minister went the extra mile and stressed that nothing was going to impact the timeline for the completion for CPEC because he understands just how big a revolution in jobs and trade it is going to bring about very soon. All that is left now is to make sure that the timeline is respected and any irritants which always prop up now and then in such huge projects are handled in time and the original schedule is not disturbed. For any inconsistency would go on to impact not just our rate of progress but the entire project, of which Pakistan is just one part.

The Chinese government must be appreciated for keeping CPEC so high on its agenda even though it has had its hands full for a while, first with the trade war with the US, then the pandemic, and now with a cold war of sorts building with the Americans. It goes to show just how deep the bonds of friendship are between Beijing and Islamabad, which is why Chinese investment in CPEC is being thought of as something like the famous Marshall Plan, which enabled USA to help a devastated Europe to rebuild after the Second World War. With CPEC, this friendship will surely reach new heights.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/636540/completing-cpec-at-all-costs/>

Dunya News

CPEC a parallel world order focusing on economic cooperation, development:

Masood

Azad Jammu Kashmir President Sardar Masood Khan has said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was one of six main projects coming under the mega Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project.

Comparing the BRI to the Marshall Plan, he said that this project was of considerable economic and strategic importance as this unparalleled transcontinental project will connect countries and continents; thereby, creating a parallel economic world focusing on economic cooperation and development.

The President made these remarks while addressing a Q&A session organized by Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution (IICR) on “China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and its impact on Societal Emancipation of Pakistan and Afghanistan”. The session was moderated by Maj. Gen. (R) Raza Muhammad, member IICR Advisory Board, AJK Presidential Secretariat said.

Masood Khan said that CPEC a \$62 billion spanning around 15 years project comprises of ports, power generation plants and infrastructure development, which has now been made holistic and substantive with the addition of socio-economic development projects like skill development, employment and people to people contacts. “.The focus is not merely on Gawadar Port but

Gawadar and every other city of Pakistan, skill development, improving our overall human resource capital and indexes. The CPEC has transformed into an organic relationship between two brotherly nations”, he said.

The President said that there is an overwhelming national consensus on CPEC. “All political leaders, political parties and stakeholders have been brought on board. The people of Balochistan are very optimistic for CPEC”, he said while adding that India has been trying to jeopardize peace in Pakistan by carrying out proxy wars in not only Balochistan but other areas of the country. “We have to brush aside these risks and stay the course”, he said.

The AJK President that CPEC must not be mistaken as a substitute for the growing Pakistani economy rather it shall act as a catalyst for economic transformation, modernize its industry, develop its maritime economy, build its human capital, and diversify its trading partners and sources of investment.

Responding to a question, the President said that in 2015 when CPEC was finalized, the US State Department gave a very positive statement over this initiative saying it would help towards development. But later during the Trump administration, the US expressed reservations. India, he said objects because they cannot bear to see Pakistan economically progress. India has contested that CPEC passes through a disputed territory (GB and AJK) which in turn accentuates Pakistan’s stance that this area is a disputed territory while all the while India claims it as their “integral” part, he said.” India’s claims lack clarity and are instead counter-intuitive”, said Masood Khan.

Masood said that India, the lynchpin of QUAD, has tried to garner the support of Australia, USA and Japan in an attempt to sabotage CPEC by claiming it to be a disruptive programme. “Despite the opposition of India and its allies, completion of the Corridor will not see any delays. We have to look at the bigger picture; this project not only benefits Pakistan and China but the whole region including CARs and Afghanistan.

He said that China has established its writ in the Galwan Valley during the recent Ladakh standoff with India. India, he said is facing national humiliation and their reaction is more of self-emulation rather than punitive.

This standoff, said Masood Khan, will have an impact on the situation in IOJK as India brought Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir under union rule. He said that India further went on to issue fake maps bringing GB, AJK, Ladakh and Aksai Chin within India’s “so-called” territorial boundaries. China has in the recent past facilitated an informal debate on Jammu and Kashmir in the UN Security Council and now, not only does Pakistan and China have an economic alliance but also a military alliance and united against India’s expansionism.

To another query, the AJK President said that Afghanistan has always been very keen to join the CPEC. He added that the Afghan’s leadership and Pakistan’s government have a greater understanding and keenness in the project and despite complicating factors like security issues in Afghanistan, US presence along with the opposition of India, the ground is being prepared for including and incorporating Afghanistan in CPEC. Pakistan has recently played a positive role in the Afghan peace talks and its stock has increased in Washington too and is seen as a

peacemaker, facilitator and mediator, he said while hoping the diplomatic process continues and there is peace and security not only in Afghanistan but the whole region.

Being asked about the apprehensions of debt-trap diplomacy rumored by India, US and its allies; the President said that Pakistan does not more than 10 per cent of its total debt to China. He said that \$33 billion of CPEC's principal amount was not credited to Pakistan but instead was given to their corporations. The amount given directly to Pakistan under concessional and preferential credit lines amount to only \$12 billion, said the President.

“We are a sovereign nation and we are fully capable of paying back these debts extended to us on a concessional basis”, he said.

The AJK President also rejected the notion that China could be the next East India Company and trashed observations that the BRI and CPEC could somehow lead to colonialism. The President said that historically China has never been a colonial power; Pakistan is a strong, pivotal country in the comity of nations and the East India Company, he said, was an imperial legacy.

Despite all these challenges, the AJK President said that our leadership has to focus on economic development. “We can meet all the upcoming challenges if we are economically robust and have a rich human capital”, he said.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/553046-CPEC-world-order-focusing-economic-cooperation-development-Masood>

More CPEC agreements to be signed in near future: Asim Bajwa

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Lt. Gen (Retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa has said that despite prevailing situation of COVID-19 in the country, the mega project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was moving forward with full force and more projects under CPEC would be signed in near future.

Addressing the signing ceremony of Azad Pattan Hydel Power Project, Asim Saleem Bajwa who also heads CPEC Authority said the project would not only produce 701 MW clean and low-cost electricity but it would also attract \$1.5 billion foreign investment besides providing over 3000 jobs in the country.

“In only 10 days we have signed agreements that will bring \$4 billion investment and will produce 1800 MW clean and cheap electricity in the country. These projects will also help producing over 8000 jobs,” he added.

He said according to vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan, the country was moving forward to produce clean and cheaper electricity instead of utilizing the expensive imported fuel.

He said under the vision of the prime minister, the new projects were bringing billions of dollars of foreign investment instead of putting burden of loans on the government.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/553058-More-CPEC-agreements-to-be-signed-in-near-future-Asim-Bajwa>

Pakistan Observer

Torch Center of China to provide expertise for S &Tech Park on Biotechnology

Torch Hi-tech Industry Development Centre of the Ministry of Science and Technology will extend cooperation and expertise for the establishment and management of Science and Technology (S&T) Park on Biotechnology in Pakistan. This was shared during a virtual meeting of COMSATS' officials and the Torch Hi-tech Industry Development Centre of the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) held here recently to place a Memorandum of Understanding of COMSATS with the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology for cooperation in various fields of science and technology. This MoU is meant for the benefit of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) countries and COMSATS member states. This meeting was arranged to benefit from the expertise available with the Torch Centre for the establishment and management of Science and Technology Park on Biotechnology in Pakistan. The meeting was attended by Dr S M Junaid Zaidi, Executive Director COMSATS; Mo Tan, Director of the Division of International Cooperation, Torch Centre, Chinese Ministry of ST; as well as other senior officials of COMSATS and Torch Centre. During the meeting, Gen (Retd) Muhammad Tahir, Adviser (China Desk), COMSATS, greatly appreciated the help being rendered by China to Pakistan for dealing with the current coronavirus and locust crises. He considered China's good practices and experience in the field of agriculture important for Pakistan and other COMSATS member states in battling impending threat to food security. Gen (Retd) Tahir said that for the construction of S&T Park on Biotechnology in Jhelum, Punjab province of Pakistan, the land is being provided by the Government of Pakistan and the modalities have been worked out. He stated that the S&T Park would be based on the model of one of the Centers of Excellence of COMSATS, i.e., the Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology (TIB), China, which has excellent research and commercialization facilities. He added, the S&T Park once established will work in pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and green textiles and bio-sciences spheres and will also benefit other COMSATS member states and BRI countries. Mo Tan, appreciating this initiative, considered the working areas of S&T Park most pertinent to the emerging global needs and assured support of Torch Centre in this connection. He stated that China gives top priority to anything related to Pakistan and any proposal to help the country is always welcome. He gave a detailed overview of the working of Chinese Science / Technology Parks and explained their various facets. In this regard, Mr. Tan shared Torch Centre's role in policy making and management of S&T Parks in China. He extended offer of participation to stakeholders from Pakistan in Torch's annual workshops on planning, construction and management of S&T Parks for knowledge-sharing and capacity development.

<https://pakobserver.net/torch-center-of-china-to-provide-expertise-for-stech-park-on-biotechnology/>

July 07, 2020

Business Recorder

Azad Pattan Hydel Power Project

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China on Monday signed an agreement for construction of Azad Pattan Hydel Power Project of 700.7 megawatts of electricity as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

A statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office said that Prime Minister Imran Khan witnessed the signing of the agreement with China's Gezhouba for Azad Pattan Hydropower Project at a ceremony.

As part of the CPEC, with an investment of US\$1.5 billion and 700.7 megawatts of electricity, Azad Pattan will involve no fuel import, enabling the country to move towards cheaper and greener power, while generating local job opportunities.

The project is located at River Jhelum and is expected to be completed in 2026.

Addressing the signing ceremony of the agreement, the prime minister said the CPEC project would prove to be a milestone in the country's development and prosperity.

Signing of implementation agreement was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Energy, led by Planning Minister Asad Umar on June 20th of Azad Pattan hydropower project, said an official.

Another summary was moved by the Power Division in a few days to the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC0 of the Cabinet titled, "Revised Standard Security Package Documents" Kohala Hydropower Project, and Azad Pattan Hydropower Project as well as Mahl Hydropower project, all on Jhelum River, Azad Kashmir.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/07/1-page/843358-news.html>

Daily Times

Pakistan's economic future lies in CPEC projects: PM

Prime Minister Imran Khan Monday said China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will take Pakistan on the path of rapid progress and development as its economic future is related to the completion of various energy and infrastructure projects.

He was speaking after witnessing the signing of agreement with China Gezhouba for Azad Pattan hydropower project at a ceremony here. A part of CPEC, with an investment of US\$ 1.5 Billion, 700.7 MW Azad Pattan will involve no fuel import, thus enabling the country to move towards cheaper and greener power while generating local job opportunities. The project is located at River Jhelum and is expected to be completed in 2026.

The prime minister further said time will prove the long term benefits of CPEC which was based upon economic cooperation between Pakistan and China. He said Pakistan can learn a lot from China in realms of economic progress and prosperity as the country was fast emerging as world economic power. He expressed the optimism that in the future, they would learn from the

Chinese experiences. The CPEC has different phases with various bright aspects for prosperity and progress, he added.

Referring to the signing of agreement, the prime minister said it was part of the investment to complete a power project based upon the clean energy. Unlike past, the project would not burden the people, he said, and mentioned the previous governments' costly projects which were made functional with imported fuel, thus increasing the cost of energy manifold and stressing the local currency.

The prime minister said due to those policies, the power industry ran into losses impacting the consumers. He regretted that the country could not compete with its neighboring countries in terms of generating the low-cost energy. He said the hydro power generation was considered as big source of clean energy which was also in line with his government's policy of 'Clean and Green Pakistan' and regarded as environment friendly. It would also help stem the impacts of the global warming, he added.

The prime minister also appreciated the energy ministry, CPEC Authority, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab governments for the agreement over the project.

CPEC Authority Chairman Lt Gen (r) Asim Saleem Bajwa, on the occasion, said the project will be completed by utilizing the indigenous resources. He said work on CPEC projects continued with full force despite COVID-19 pandemic, generating job opportunities. He further briefed that during the last 10 days, they had signed agreements for bringing worth \$4 billion investment and for generation of 1,800 MW low cost powers in the country. These projects would provide jobs to about 8,000 locals.

Bajwa said despite prevailing situation of Covid-19 in the country, the mega project of CPEC was moving forward with full force and more projects under CPEC would be signed in near future. He said the project would not only produce 701 MW clean and low-cost electricity but it would also attract \$1.5 billion foreign investment besides providing over 3000 jobs in the country.

He said according to vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan, the country was moving forward to produce clean and cheaper electricity instead of utilizing the expensive imported fuel. He said under the vision of the prime minister, the new projects were bringing billions of dollars of foreign investment instead of putting burden of loans on the government.

Last year in November, Pakistan and China agreed to include 700 megawatts Azad Pattan hydropower project under the CPEC. Which is to be financed through Chinese currency? Azad Pattan hydropower project is a run-of-the-river scheme on the River Jhelum, in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir, with a capability of four hours of daily peaking.

The project would be located near the Azad Pattan bridge upstream of 720 MW Karot hydropower project and downstream of 640 MW Mahal hydropower project and would be part of the River Jhelum hydel cascade. The project would deliver approximately 3.3 billion units of clean, renewable energy in the grid after its completion in 2026. Being developed under the 2002 power policy, the project would be transferred free of cost to the government after the term.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/636771/pakistans-economic-future-lies-in-cpec-projects-pm/>

July 08, 2020

Business Recorder

CPEC boosts Pakistan's socio-economic development: China

BEIJING: China on Tuesday appreciated Prime Minister Imran Khan Remarks about China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and said that it had boosted Pakistan economic and social development, people wellbeing and regional connectivity.

“We agree with Prime Minister Imran Khan Comments on the CPEC. There has been a major progress and it has boosted Pakistan economic and social development, people wellbeing and regional connectivity,” Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing held here. PM Khan has recently remarked that the CPEC would take Pakistan on the path of rapid progress and development as its economic future was related to the completion of various energy and infrastructure projects.

Zhao Lijian said the CPEC followed principles of joint consultations, cooperation and shared benefits.

As the CPEC important pilot programme of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the flagship project was aimed to promote shared development of China and Pakistan, he added.

The spokesperson said, six years since it was launched, there had been major progress and it had boosted Pakistan economic and social development, people wellbeing and regional connectivity.

“China will firmly support the CPEC development and work together with Pakistan to implement our leaders consensus,” he added.

He said the Chinese side would work for promoting infrastructure development and also promote people livelihood, industries and agriculture cooperation and turn this corridor into a demonstration project of high quality Belt and Road Initiative development to promote benefits to the two peoples and countries.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/08/7-page/843567-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan, China, Afghanistan seek ‘orderly’ US pullout

Pakistan, Afghanistan and China on Tuesday called for an “orderly, responsible and condition based” withdrawal of the US-led foreign forces from the war-torn country in order to prevent potential resurgence of terrorist groups. The call came after senior officials from these three countries held a trilateral meeting through a video link to discuss the latest Afghan situation against the backdrop of accelerated efforts to seek a political solution to the lingering war. The 3rd round of China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Vice Foreign Ministers’ Strategic Dialogue was attended by Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Luo Zhaohui, Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Mirwais Nab and Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood, said a joint statement issued after the virtual meeting.

The three-way talks took place as efforts are underway to start the much awaited intra-Afghan dialogue. The intra-Afghan talks are part of the second phase of landmark deal between the Afghan Taliban and the US signed on February 29. The three sides agreed to continue to strengthen counter-terrorism and security cooperation, combat the “East Turkistan Islamic Movement”, and all other terrorist forces and networks posing threats to the common security. “The three sides agreed that the return of Afghan refugees should be part of peace and reconciliation process and underlined the role of international community for a time-bound and well-resourced roadmap for the return of Afghan refugees to their homeland with dignity and honor,” read the statement issued by Pakistan’s foreign office. The three sides, as per the joint statement, conducted in-depth discussions and reached consensus on cooperation against Covid-19, the Afghan peace and reconciliation process, and trilateral cooperation. The three sides attach great importance to the China-Afghanistan-Pakistan trilateral cooperation and would continue to vigorously implement the outcome of the 3rd China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers’ Dialogue. The three sides also agreed to further the cooperation against Covid-19, call on the international community to jointly prevent discrimination and stigma, support the World Health Organization’s leading role in coordinating global Covid-19 response, promote international cooperation on joint prevention and control, and safeguard public health security in the region and beyond. China and Pakistan appreciated the efforts by the Afghanistan government and relevant parties in expediting the exchange of the prisoners to pave the way for intra-Afghan negotiations and call for violence reduction and humanitarian ceasefire, according to the FO statement. China and Pakistan will enhance cooperation with the Afghan government in support of the “Afghan-led, Afghan-owned” peace reconciliation process, the launch of intra-Afghan negotiations at an early date, the preservation of the gains since 2001, and looked forward to the early restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan, it added. Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed to further strengthen dialogue and work for continuous improvement of bilateral relations including through the effective implementation of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS). China will continue to play a constructive role in improving Afghanistan-Pakistan relations.

The three sides expressed readiness to carry out trilateral practical cooperation in flexible manners, and keep exploring new fields of cooperation, with a view to accumulating outcomes for the 4th China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers’ Dialogue, the communiqué concluded.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-china-afghanistan-seek-orderly-us-pullout/>

USA, China, UK top three destinations of Pakistani exports: SBP

The United States of America (USA) remained the top export destinations of the Pakistani products during the eleven months of current financial year (2019-20), followed by China and UK.

The total exports to the USA during July-May (2019-20) were recorded at US \$ 3588.819 million against the exports of US \$ 3727.390 million during July-May (2018-19), showing

negative growth of 3.71 percent during the period under review, according to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth \$ 1535.454 million against the exports of \$1701.506 million last year, showing decrease of 9.75 percent. UK was the at third top export destination, where Pakistan exported products worth US \$ 1491.000 million during this year against the exports of US \$ 1622.887 million during last year, showing decrease of 8.12 percent, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to United Arab Emirates (UAE) stood at US \$ 1463.276 million against \$ 1250.515 million during last year, showing increase of 17.01 percent while the exports to Germany were recorded at US \$ 1191.297 million against US \$ 1210.943 million last year, the data revealed. During the eleven months, the exports to Afghanistan were recorded at US \$ 825.663 million against US \$ 1101.459 million whereas the exports to Holland stood at US \$ 906.558 million against US \$886.469 million. Pakistan's exports to Spain were recorded at US \$ 806.443 million against US \$ 857.290 million last year where as the exports to Italy stood at US \$ 690.365 million against US \$ 734.932 million.

Similarly, the exports to Bangladesh during the period under review were recorded at US \$ 632.888 million against US \$ 690.772 million while the exports to France stood at US\$ 395.755 million against US \$ 412.001 million. Pakistan's exports to Singapore were recorded at US \$ 158.866 million during the current financial year compared to US \$ 252.499 million last year whereas, the exports to Canada stood at US \$ 250.207m against US \$265.638m, to S.Arabia US \$ 418.295m against US \$ 305.007m whereas the exports to India stood at US\$ 25.009m during the financial year against US \$ 307.307 million during last year.

<https://pakobserver.net/usa-china-uk-top-three-destinations-of-pakistani-exports-sbp-3/>

CPEC & conflicting national narratives

Dr.Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

NATIONAL narrative has become “part and parcel” of soft image projection of today’s civilized world. It promotes “bridges” of better understanding and dismantles “statues” of inflexibility and hatred. It discourages “phobias” and develops “bridges” of trust. Thus CPEC and its various mega project’s needs “symmetric” but “comprehensive” national narrative from the government of Pakistan and its policy makers to successfully mitigate seeds of “bigotry”, “prejudice” and “disinformation” in which foreign ministry and “genuine experts” of CPEC & BRI may play a decisive role in the days to come.

Most recently, while chairing the high official meeting, Prime Minister Imran Khan showed his government’s strong commitment to complete the ambitious China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project at any cost and pass its benefits to the nation. He affirmed that CPEC and its all projects will complete at any cost and bring its socio-economic benefits to every Pakistani. Primer Khan termed the CPEC an excellent project for the country’s socio-economic development. He labelled it gigantic multi-faceted initiative which would guarantee a bright

future for the nation. He appreciated the performance of CPEC Authority and said measures must be taken to improve its working as well as capacity.

The CPEC has been compared to that of the Marshall Plan undertaken by the United States in post-war Europe. The initiative has entered a new phase after coming into power of the government led by Mr. Khan which has already decided to start its phase-II as soon as possible. Massive industrialization is the key to high exports, new job generation, capacity building, transfer of technology, development of labor market. Most recently to accelerate industrialization in the country under umbrella of CPEC, a 15 member Business Council has been reconstituted by the federal government which showed its commitment to encourage role of private sector in the ongoing and future projects of CPEC.

Moreover, it has been initially formulated for a period of two years. It will be chaired by Advisor to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood and consists of Chairman Board of Investment (BOI) Atif R Bokhari and Chairman CPEC Authority Lt-General Asim Saleem Bajwa (R) are members of the Steering Committee. It is an advisory group and a consultative forum between business community and the government on matters related to private investment under the CPEC and it will make specific recommendations for private sector investment in Pakistan under industrial cooperation.

Furthermore, it will propose feasible projects for investment for discussion with Chinese business companies, and to formulate strategies for expediting ongoing and future B2B projects under industrial cooperation. It will discuss and explore opportunities and develop new investment model for future projects of the CPEC, and advise on developing an integrated approach for future development of industrial cooperation under the CPEC with a special focus on agriculture, industry, housing, tourism and any other potential area or sector mentioned in the CPEC long-term plan. Being prominent regional expert of CPEC & BRI I term it right step towards right direction.

Regional hegemonic designs, invisible secret activities and obsession to maintain status-quo through naked power and its mastermind India has already started comprehensive “hybrid war” against Pakistan and CPEC. Reoccurring of a series of deadly terrorist acts and sabotage activities especially in the city of lights and commercial hub Karachi all fingers towards India, the enemy of regional stability, harmony, development and greater connectivity. Thus comprehensive national narrative about CPEC must be highlighted at every regional as well as international forum by highlighting its real potential of regional connectivity, greater socio-economic prosperity, human capital capacity, energy and food security and above all its inbuilt peaceful orientation.

At international level serious efforts have already been instigated against China by encircling it through the US series of economic sanctions, legal decrees (Hong Kong), social marginalization (UK intention on Hong Kong status), military embargos (South China Sea dispute) and last but not least promoting hidden ties with its regional puppets like India, Australia and even Taiwan to derail journey of “Asian Century” headed by China.

China-India continued standoff in Ladakh has its strategic impact on CPEC too. So, formation and CPEC right propagation is the way forward otherwise dissemination of conflicting regional as well as international narratives may be fatal in the days to come. It is ideal time to form an “Experts Council” to mitigate increasing propaganda of the US, India and the West against CPEC because US, India and many other Western countries are now showering money on international media outlets as well as regional so-called intellect robots, the artificial intelligent machines to pollute minds and souls of the regional countries and its people against CPEC & BRI. Chess board of the regional and its international masters have been disseminating fake and cheap news about CPEC’s security risk, debt concentration, uselessness, non-functional nature, bleak prospects and bar to national economy tagging to CPEC & BRI.

Being prominent regional expert of CPEC & BRI I reaffirm that CPEC is meant for enhancing regional stability, harmony and integration instead of so-called security risk. It is initiated to foster socio-economic development instead of so-called debt concentration. It has unlimited usefulness and utilities instead of so-called propagated uselessness. CPEC has multidimensional functionality which may open window of opportunity for private companies of both the countries to move forward exploring various avenues of cooperation and coordination instead of non-functional nature.

CPEC has already brightened scope and radius of bilateral relations, commercial diplomacy, B2B cooperation, speedy inflows of FDIs, easy and smooth transfer of technology, poverty reduction and last but not least, new job generation instead of bleak prospects. It uses holistic model of development and has noting with bar on national economies related to CPEC & BRI. It is high time to shackle sea-shells of so-called regional as well as international intellectuals against CPEC & BRI who have been wasting their time to build castles in the air and polluting sand by drawing zigzag lines on the sand. CPEC is a living reality and their so-called intellect is a rotten egg.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-conflicting-national-narratives/>

BRI — China pre-empts India

Col (R) Muhammad Usman

THIS may seem needless to remind that BRI is a gigantic undertaking and baby of China with an outlay of exceeding \$1Trillion. It stretches to three continents, involving 68 countries. This constitutes 65% population of the world with handsome GDP and vast reservoirs of resources. It is the largest infrastructure/investment initiative, ever conceived to plug infrastructure gaps to accelerate global trade and generate infinite growth in developing countries with equally healthy returns to investors. The altruism is its guiding light; mutual economic well-being, based upon growth/development and international trade however, its size and multiple dimensions renders it a wholesale case of geo-economics, geopolitics and geostrategic. BRI when operationalized would enable China to extend its trade reach to Eurasia and Africa.

It would not only accord China unassailable economic dominance but also enormous political clout internationally. By its implications, this contains within it seeds of a global conflict among

potential competitors as has been happening historically since times immemorial; desire for food, land, material, fuel and mastery. Now US are the competitor who ruled world unilaterally since last three decades and still its will is unremitting. It has already signaled a cold war with China in more ways than one. One way adopted is to pressurize Pakistan on CPEC which is the flagship project of BRI thus, denying China a shorter/reliable route to an all-weather/deep water seaport at Gwadar while concomitantly, forcing China to tread through Strait of Malacca where US has the advantage.

For its own reasons, CPEC is also an anathema to India. Seeing convergence of interests with US albeit mutually exclusive, India brushed up its enduring tack to pretend itself a bulwark against China including CPEC. Of late, its belligerency touched peak when it threatened to attack AK and GB. Being a posturing bully, India temptingly expected to bag rewards including regional hegemony, international recognition/prestige/goodwill as of a world class player with ultimate purpose of permanent seat at UNSC and generous economic military and scientific/technological assistance by US however, lady luck had different plans.

Probably, in order to simulate empty words with some element of reality, India raised its military base at Dault Beg Oldie (DBO) to brigade strength. Efforts were also afoot to connect it with internal roads network. In Oct 2019, a road Darbuk-Shyok-DBO was built to maintain brigade there. Conceptually, it was a potent move as DBO is just 8 KMs away from Karakorum Pass. This connects Pakistan with China and then rolls down to areas where CPEC exists and construction of Diamer-Basha Dam is underway. India bragged around to scuttle these projects, being in disputed territories belonging to it. Both are also equally vital to China symbolically as well as substantially. Besides, Indian moves were flagrant violations of status quo, mutually agreed upon with a potential to merge Ladakh into Indian Union. Regardless of what India actually intends to, mere possibility of such threats causes elements of uncertainty and ambiguity. These could impede economic activities because money is basically coward.

It holes up, just on whimper. Secondly, this could be construed a weakness on part of China to make BRI a success. China had to act and act firmly and it did it startlingly. In a planned move, it entered its 5000 troops in Galwan valley. They briskly captured nodal points in the area while physically beating Indians out thus, making Indian brigade at DBO operationally untenable. This eliminates Indian threat to CPEC. Indian response was mute and of low lying diplomacy to fetch some face saving. China offered some piffling concessions and Indian gleefully took them but mischievously planned to parade them as a result of military action. It boomeranged and this time, Indian troops were beaten to death with a clear message not to misjudge Chinese determination. Inevitably, India saw its salvation in tame surrender with humiliation, writ large at its forehead. India accepted it a fait accompli.

Another incident was of Nepal which added insult to its injuries simultaneously. Nepal along with other South Asian countries is a part of BRI where China has invested considerably and is helping Nepal to free itself from Indian hold, being a landlocked country. Probably to cash in a fleeting opportunity or show solidarity with China, Nepal issued its new map incorporating its three areas under Indian occupation. The action of a tiny country like Nepal is a testimony that

obituary of Indian hegemony over weak neighbors is just a few breaths away. This would certainly have domino effect. The cacophony of Indian might was also blasted by Pakistan in Feb last year when it encroached Pakistan's airspace while acting boastfully on a precedent set by US after 9/11 "either US would bring its enemies to justice or take justice to them". Pakistan barely took 24 hours to teach India a stern lesson while sounding it in advance that now it is our turn and wait, it would come.

Above unmistakably bring three glaring points to fore. One, vaulting Indian ambition of hegemony was beyond its means. India was galloping ahead of its resources. Now it has been laid to rest for ever because earlier also in 1962 war with China, they were routed equally ignominiously. It is the confirmation that India has no spine for an oversize role. One could only assign it at its own peril. Two, China stands ready to back deed of BRI by force. Three, countries in bondage with BRI could have incentives from China to prop up themselves economically and politically.

<https://pakobserver.net/bri-china-pre-empts-india/>

The Nation

FPCCI welcomes 700 megawatts hydropower project as part of CPEC

The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry president Mian Anjum Nisar has welcomed the Pakistan-China agreement for construction of Azad Pattan Hydel Power Project of 700MW of electricity, as part of the CPEC, suggesting the government to also include more hydropower projects in its plan, as the country cannot afford to rely on costly and anti-environment fossil fuels. "FPCCI is hopeful that the project, located on River Jhelum, will be completed within its time frame in 2026 and will not be delayed like several other hydro power projects in the country," he stated.

It's a good news for the public in general and business community in particular, as the new project would enable the country to move towards cheaper and greener power, inviting investment of \$1.5 billion besides generating local job opportunities, he added.

Mian Anjum Nisar emphasized the importance of dams, stating that over 20 million acres of barren land can be brought under cultivation if the water is made available by developing water storages in the country. He said that with construction of dams, the country can strengthen its agriculture to attain food security and cope with the fast growing needs of water in domestic and industrial sectors besides injecting sizeable low-cost hydroelectricity into the national grid to stabilize the national economy. He endorsed the government future plan in this regard, as a summary is being moved by the Power Division to the Economic Coordination Committee for the approval of Kohala Hydropower Project, and Azad Pattan Hydropower Project as well as Mahl Hydropower project, all on Jhelum River, which would prove to be a milestone in the country's development and prosperity.

He also called for speedy work of other power projects including Shargthang, Hanzal, Chilas, Naltar and Hassanabad Hunza, besides early construction of Kalabagh Dam which is the most suitable project for the national economy as it would produce cheap and sufficient electricity.

FPCCI President, referring to the factors behind the current scenario of water and hydropower sectors in the country, observed that the situation can be improved by putting a robust development mechanism in place and exercising prompt decision making. All stakeholders including the business community are ready to play their due role to implement the National Water Policy for water, food and energy security of the country, he said.

He said that Kalabagh dam should not be ignored at any cost, as water scarcity is heading towards the point of no return. Those opposing the Kalabagh Dam are unaware of the ground realities,” he said and added how can a mega water project be harmful for an agrarian country?

He said that one million acre feet of water gives benefit valued at \$2 billion annually to the economy, while Pakistan is throwing away 35 million acre feet of water by delaying construction of the dam. This means that we are wasting \$70 billion a year, which is almost equal to the country’s external debt, he added. He maintained that hydropower is the most advanced and mature renewable energy technology and provides some level of electricity generation in more than 160 countries worldwide including.

Moreover, hydropower is an attractive renewable option given the low-cost of electricity it produces, low greenhouse gas emissions and the flexibility it provide to the grid.

He observed that Indus River System Authority (IRSA) has constantly been issuing warning to the government on water scarcity and urged that all the allocations of PSDP should be spent only on enhancing water storage capacity. He said that Pakistan has to develop mega and small dams to store water if it wants to avert water crisis in the coming years.

FPCCI appreciates that despite prevailing situation of COVID-19 in the country, the mega project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor are being moved forward with full force and hope that more projects under CPEC would be signed in future.

We fully support the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan, according to which the country is going to move forward to produce clean and cheaper electricity instead of utilizing the expensive imported fuel. He said under the vision of the prime minister, the new projects would bring billions of dollars of foreign investment instead of putting burden of loans on the poor nation.

<https://nation.com.pk/08-Jul-2020/fpcci-welcomes-700-megawatts-hydropower-project-as-part-of-cpec>

The News

For a knowledge economy

In the post-Covid world, we face challenges but also many wonderful opportunities, if our planners truly understand the full implications of the 4th industrial revolution.

McKinsey Global has predicted a 100 trillion dollar impact of emerging technologies by 2025. Artificial Intelligence alone is predicted to have an impact of \$15.7 trillion over the next five years, We must move with a sense of urgency if we hope to be competitive in this fast changing world where only those nations will forge ahead that can successfully ride on the huge wave of disruptive innovations that is upon us.

There are a number of key factors that are essential for the development of a knowledge economy. The most important of these is an honest, visionary, technocrat government in which the leadership truly understands and implements a clearly defined road map for transitioning from our low value added agricultural economy to a strong knowledge economy.

This was what propelled Singapore and China forward, where the leadership was determined to give the highest national priority to education, science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship. Singapore is today ranked No 1 in the world in the Global Competitiveness Index, ahead of the US. Pakistan stands at a pathetic 110 behind Nepal and Nicaragua. In the Global Ease of Doing Business rankings, Singapore stands at No 2 in the World with Pakistan at a lowly 108, behind Vanuatu and Tajikistan. The story is no different if we now turn to China. China today has the highest R&D expenditure in the world, having overtaken the US in this critically important aspect in 2019.

According to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) based in Geneva, the US had only 597,141 patents filed in 2018, as compared to 1,542,002 patents filed by China in the same year. This illustrates how China has forged ahead of the US in innovation and creativity. Clearly, as done by Singapore and China, here in Pakistan too we need to have a technocrat government with the best minds appointed as ministers and secretaries.

An important prerequisite for a knowledge economy is a strong and fair justice system. Genuine industrial development and businesses cannot flourish with a corrupted judicial system as we have in Pakistan. The failure of successive governments to perform has been due to corrupt leaders who looted and plundered at will. With a few exceptions, they managed easily to escape justice while they amassed vast illegally acquired wealth in foreign lands.

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor represents a wonderful opportunity for Pakistan to leapfrog by establishing joint ventures for the manufacture and export of high-technology goods between the industrial groups of the two countries. This should be done by establishing hi-tech industrial clusters all along the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. For example, the knowledge hub in the field of biotechnology products could focus on the large-scale production of enzymes, vaccines, biopharmaceuticals, biopolymers, and recombinant proteins. Similarly, the knowledge hub in the field of electronics could produce personal computers, video game consoles, telephones, mobile phones, radio receivers, television sets, MP3 players, video recorders, DVD players, digital cameras, and camcorders.

Another knowledge hub could focus on high value agriculture products including hybrid rice and vegetable seeds, horticulture, high yielding and disease resistant varieties of cotton, wheat, rice and other edible crops, selected high value medicinal plants/extraction of commercially important constituents, mushrooms, ornamental trees, fisheries, and milk products. Similar hubs could be established in manufacture of engineering goods, trucks, automobiles, tanks, defense products and other such areas. Specialized metal alloys and new materials such as grapheme with special characteristics are in great demand for manufacture of engineering goods, as well as for production of defense equipment.

A knowledge hub for manufacturing specialized materials including special metals, composites, polymers, nano materials etc would therefore be important. A related hub should set up focusing on mineral extraction and processing. This could include technologies for production of rare earths needed in the electronics and other specialized industries.

Each hub should have four key components within it. These should be: (a) industries for the production of high technology and hence high value products in specific field technical training centers; (b) university research centers; (c) technology parks; and (d) technical training centers. The fields in which these knowledge hubs should be set up need to be carefully chosen in consultation with the Chinese government and industries so that they can attract Chinese private sector investments of \$500 billion over the next 10 years.

Balochistan is rich in mineral resources but this national wealth is being drained by smuggling of precious and semi-precious gemstones as well as through export of crude ores. Immediate steps should be taken to prevent this loss and manufacturing industries should be established in collaboration with China, Russia and other countries so that we produce and export only highly purified minerals.

The technical training institutes within each hub should train highly professional technicians required by the industries. The university research centers in each hub would carry out cutting edge research in the development of next generation products in that field. The tech parks would incubate and assist new startup companies and help in the transformation of the research undertaken in the research centers into commercial products and processes. The industries in the tech parks should be assisted by long-term tax holidays and by access to electricity, gas and other services at highly subsidized rates. A government sponsored insurance scheme should also be launched.

Pakistan stands at the crossroads of history. After the Covid pandemic, a new world will emerge a world dominated by artificial intelligence, next generation genomics, autonomous vehicles and strange new plant and animal species created through synthetic biology. In this world, the divisions between those blessed with knowledge of technology and those living in darkness of ignorance will be even sharper. It is in this brave new world that we must make our mark, as Singapore and China have done. This requires a complete overhaul of our judicial system, as well as the introduction of a presidential system of democracy.

The writer is the former chairman of the HEC, and president of the Network of Academies of Science of OIC Countries (NASIC).

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/683580-for-a-knowledge-economy>

Pakistan, China hail Afghan govt efforts for peace process

ISLAMABAD: With the Afghan peace process now entering a crucial phase, China and Pakistan on Tuesday appreciated the efforts by the Afghanistan government and relevant parties in expediting the exchange of the prisoners to pave the way for the start of the intra-Afghan negotiations and called for violence reduction and humanitarian ceasefire.

“China and Pakistan will enhance cooperation with the Afghan government in support of the ‘Afghan-led, Afghan-owned’ peace reconciliation process, the launch of intra-Afghan

negotiations at an early date, the preservation of the gains since 2001, and looked forward to the early restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan,” said the Foreign Office at the conclusion of the the third round China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Vice Foreign Ministers’ Strategic Dialogue that was held via video link.

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Luo Zhaohui, Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Mirwais Nab and Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood co-chaired the dialogue.

A subtle message was sent to foreign troops withdrawing from this landlocked country when the three sides urged for an orderly, responsible and condition-based withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan to avoid potential terrorist resurgence.

The three sides agreed to continue to strengthen counter-terrorism and security cooperation, combat the “East Turkistan Islamic Movement”, and all other terrorist forces and networks posing threats to the common security.

There was commitment during the dialogue that both Pakistan and Afghanistan will take steps to work on bilateral relations. On Sunday, Pakistan’s special representative on Afghanistan Ambassador Muhammad Sadiq had announced that Head of Afghan Peace Council Dr Abdullah Abdullah would pay an official visit to Pakistan.

“Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed to further strengthen dialogue and work for continuous improvement of bilateral relations including through the effective implementation of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS). China will continue to play a constructive role in improving Afghanistan-Pakistan relations,” said the Foreign Office. Of importance for Pakistan at this stage is the return of the Afghan refugees and the three sides agreed that the return of Afghan refugees should be part of peace and reconciliation process and underlined the role of international community for a time-bound and well-resourced roadmap for the return of Afghan refugees to their homeland with dignity and honor.

The three sides expressed readiness to carry out trilateral practical cooperation in flexible manners, and keep exploring new fields of cooperation, with a view to accumulating outcomes for the 4th China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers’ Dialogue.

On July 7, 2020, the three sides conducted in-depth discussions and reached consensus on cooperation against COVID-19, the Afghan peace and reconciliation process, and trilateral cooperation.

All three attach great importance to the China-Afghanistan-Pakistan trilateral cooperation and would continue to vigorously implement the outcome of the third China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers’ Dialogue. The three sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening communication and coordination and enhancing mutual trust and cooperation under the trilateral cooperation mechanism.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/683792-pakistan-china-hail-afghan-govt-efforts-for-peace-process>

July 09, 2020

Dawn News

Chinese pledge to cooperate with security agencies

LAHORE: The Primary Joint Working Group (PJWG) on Chinese Security at a meeting on Wednesday decided that the Chinese Consulate would ensure that their nationals extend cooperation to law enforcement agencies in security measures, besides complying with the coronavirus SOPs and security protocols.

The PJWG meeting chaired by Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Momin Agha discussed various steps to improve the security of Chinese nationals working on CPEC and other projects in the province and to enhance bilateral cooperation between China and Pakistan to control coronavirus.

The meeting was held at the civil secretariat and was attended by Chinese Consul General Long Dingbin, foreign ministry director-general China Mudassar Tipu, DIG Special Branch Abdul Karim, Additional Secretary Health Dr Asif Tufail, Additional Secretary Chinese Security Arshad Manzoor, Chinese Consulate officials in Lahore and representative of law enforcement agencies.

Speaking at the meeting, Mr Agha said the security of CPEC and other projects continuing with the cooperation of China was not only limited to the protection of Chinese people rather it was the matter of bilateral relations between the two friendly countries. He said that all possible steps would be taken to provide foolproof security to the Chinese people in the province.

The ACS (Home) said that China, with the help of its medical experts, doctors, and paramedics, had managed to control the epidemic like coronavirus in a short period. He mentioned that Pakistan, especially the Punjab government, wanted to benefit from the experiences and expertise of Beijing in efforts to overcome the pandemic.

He also issued instructions regarding conducting coronavirus tests of security officials and private guards deployed for the security of Chinese nationals.

Expressing satisfaction over the security arrangements, Chinese Consul General Long Dingbin praised the professionalism of the federal government and its agencies, especially the ministry of foreign affairs, Pakistan Army, Punjab government, and its departments. He said that China stood by Pakistan in the fight against coronavirus and in the light of its experience would continue to provide it with technical assistance in the medical field and all kinds of cooperation.

The Chinese Consul General said that on the instructions of President Xi Jinping, China was providing medical equipment, protective gear, and medicines to Pakistan to control the coronavirus. He hoped that Pakistan and China would work together to successfully overcome the epidemic.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1567812/chinese-pledge-to-cooperate-with-security-agencies>

Online moot rejects ‘debt trap’ as propaganda, lauds CPEC

ISLAMABAD: The first non-governmental online conference on Belt and Road Initiative on Wednesday rejected the so-called ‘debt trap’ propaganda and agreed that BRI was the way forward as it promoted regional connectivity based on principles of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit.

It was highlighted at the conference that as in the case of Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the total debt of China was a very small percentage of what was owed by these two states to other countries or multilateral institutions of the world.

Convened by the Pakistan-China Institute (PCI), the conference had participants from Pakistan, China, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

The conference had a wide-ranging discussion on different dimensions of BRI, followed by a question and answer session.

Project hailed as the way forward for promoting regional connectivity

There was a consensus among participants of the conference that the coronavirus crisis underlined the need for global interdependence to forge closer cooperation to tackle common challenges.

The participants agreed that BRI was the way forward as it promoted regional connectivity, based on principles of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit.

The participants also rejected the ‘New Cold War’ tactic of demonizing or stigmatizing a country by using Covid-19 as a political weapon, or targeting BRI on geopolitical grounds.

The India factor was recognized by countries like Nepal and Sri Lanka as they were neighbors and would like to have good relations with both China and India and it was made clear that neither BRI was a military alliance nor was it directed against India or any Western country.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, in his opening remarks, termed BRI the biggest and most significant diplomatic and development initiative of the 21st century.

He said that CPEC, as the flagship of BRI, was already a success story and it had entered its second phase successfully.

He said that energy and infrastructure projects had been completed on schedule and 75,000 Pakistanis had got jobs in BRI projects and 28,000 Pakistani students were studying in China.

Janan Musazai, Afghanistan’s former ambassador to Pakistan and China gave a specific five-point plan for Kabul’s role in BRI and referred to CPEC as well, saying Afghanistan could be a land bridge for connectivity for countries of the region.

Representatives of Bangladesh, Kazakhstan and Myanmar referred to the roles of their respective countries as part of BRI and recalled how different projects were being initiated and exchange of high-level visits between these countries and China is taking place.

Prof Jayanath debunked the ‘debt trap’ theory regarding Sri Lanka. Citing facts and figures, he said that of Sri Lanka’s total debt of \$57 billion, only \$8.5bn was owed to China.

He warned that with about 120 warships in the Indian Ocean, it was becoming ‘the most militarized ocean in the world’. He underlined the need for countries to have food and medicine security.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1567863/online-moot-rejects-debt-trap-as-propaganda-lauds-cpec>

Pakistan Observer

China appreciates Imran

CHINA on Tuesday appreciated Prime Minister Imran Khan's remarks about China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and said that it had boosted Pakistan economic and social development, people wellbeing and regional connectivity. Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian, during his regular briefing, said the CPEC followed principles of joint consultations, cooperation and shared benefits. The recent pronouncements and expression of commitment to take the historic initiative of CPEC forward augur well in the backdrop of consistent pressure tactics being adopted by some foreign powers and multilateral institutions in a bid to hindering prospects for rapid socio-economic development of Pakistan. China has always shown unwavering commitment to the CPEC and its practical demonstration came during Coronavirus pandemic that either scuttled or slowed down progress on developmental activities across the globe but Beijing ensure continuation of work on CPEC-related projects. Prime Minister Imran Khan too recently remarked that the CPEC would take Pakistan on the path of rapid progress and development as its economic future relates to the completion of various energy and infrastructure projects. In a related development, the two countries have signed an agreement for construction of Azad Pattan hydropower project on Jhelum River, which would serve as a shining example of their cooperation in exploitation of hydropower potential of Pakistan. Pakistan has immense potential to generate cheaper hydropower to meet its entire energy needs for centuries but these precious resources remain untapped due to financial constraints. A part of CPEC, with an investment of \$1.5 billion, 700.7-megawatt Azad Pattan will not involve fuel import, thus enabling the country to move towards cheaper and greener power while generating local job opportunities. As the country finds it difficult to line up finances for building water reservoirs, it is high time that serious negotiations should be initiated to include such projects under the umbrella of CPEC as construction of dams is crucial for agriculture development and energy security. There is also need to widen the scope of cooperation with China for building nuclear power plants with focus on local manufacturing of small and medium-sized plants.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-appreciates-imran/>

Pak needs to expand mangoes export to China by land

Pakistan is needed to expand its mangoes export to China by land transportation, while taking effective pandemic prevention measures in wake of COVID-19. This was stated in a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Wednesday. Quoting Chinese scholar Prof. Cheng Xizhong, the report stated that Pakistan's high-quality mango is very popular in China. In order to minimize the loss of fruit farmers due to spread of the pandemic, Pakistani government may also formulate policies to encourage its own people to eat more fruits such as mango, to promote domestic consumption to make up for the loss caused by lower net exports.

It is also imperative that the fruits' deep processing is further developed. So mangoes and other fruits could be made into canned food or dry goods for exports after the pandemic. Citing Pakistani media, the report stated that due to the coronavirus, exports of mango will drop sharply this year. Experts predict that Pakistan's mango export will drop by 35-40% this year with temporary suspension of international flights, border closures, rising freight rates, especially the reduction in mango demand. According to Waheed Ahmed, head of the Fruit and Vegetable Exporters Association of Pakistan, mango exports is not expected to exceed 80,000 tons this year.

<https://pakobserver.net/pak-needs-to-expand-mangoes-export-to-china-by-land/>

The Nation

CPEC a masterpiece of development: Governor

Meetings between Nazir Chauhan and party delegations were held with Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar, while Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that we are eliminating political interference from national institutions and tax evasion will never be accepted.

In the past, merit was ignored but it will not happen now. According to details, Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar met Nazir Chauhan Provincial Parliamentary Secretary of Tehreek-e-Insaf, Chaudhry Khalid Gujjar, Member of PTI, Chaudhry Mian Waheed and others here at Governor House on Wednesday. Political and other important issues were discussed during the meetings.

Punjab Governor said that Tehreek-e-Insaf was taking steps to reform the institutions, ensuring merit and transparency at all levels as promised. He also said that institutions were being strengthened in real sense at the local level. He said that the preparation of locally manufactured ventilators is a great achievement for Pakistan.

He said, Inshallah, we will move forward with similar achievements in every field and make the country strong and prosperous. He said that the government has provided political relief to the poor families, who lost their jobs due to the corona crisis.

We have given Rs 12,000 per family through Ehsas programme without any discrimination. In this difficult time, we will not leave the poor families alone and support through every possible means will be provided. Governor Punjab said that the CPEC project is leading the economic and social development of Pakistan in a tremendous way. CPEC also is a guarantee of a bright and lasting Pakistan.

The practical manifestation of Pak-China friendship will bring this project to fruition in all circumstances. CPEC as the masterpiece of development of this country is moving ahead successfully.

He said that the government is committed to a balanced strategy to save the people from corona as well as from economic problems.

He said that the people of Pakistan, along with the government have to fulfill their responsibility to stop the spread of coronavirus and all of us together have to save Pakistan from further spread of corona in all circumstances.

<https://nation.com.pk/09-Jul-2020/cpec-a-masterpiece-of-development-governor>

The News

Pakistan, China mull opening border from next week

KARACHI: Pakistan and China have considered a proposal to resume border trade from next week with stakeholders advising restriction on the number of cargoes to avoid crowding at the dry port, it was learnt on Wednesday.

The proposal came under discussion during a meeting between Adviser to Prime Minister on Commerce Razaq Dawood and Chinese ambassador. It was proposed that the border might be opened from Wednesday (15th July) so that appropriate arrangements could be made.

Representatives from Pakistan Customs, Federal Investigation Agency and National Logistics Cell advised that not more than 10 cargo trucks might be allowed from Chinese side each day so that crowding at Sost border might be avoided, according to the ministry of commerce.

The proposal came on the heels of second wave of the novel coronavirus in China that turned out as the epicenter of the pandemic. But, its impact is not as severe as that of the previous outbreak.

The meeting particularly discussed the issues related to opening of border and release of 186 containers.

Chinese ambassador said the border could be opened on temporary basis for release of 186 containers as special arrangement until situation of Covid-19 is normalized.

When the Chinese officials were informed that the ministry of commerce invited feedbacks from Chinese embassy and customs on certain proposals of opening modalities, the envoy replied Chinese and Pakistani ministry of foreign affairs should be in direct coordination to address the issues.

Both sides may consult and mutually agree on any suitable date for opening of the border, he said, adding that the border could be operationalized at least on one week prior notice.

Border crossing usually remains closed from the November-end to April due to winter. This time around the normalcy has not yet returned even until July. Sost dry port, or Khunjerab Pass, is the only land route located in Pakistan's Gilgit region and Chinese underdeveloped Xinjiang region.

Non-government Pakistan-China Institute reported that the border trade between China and Pakistan increased 47 percent to \$856.3 million last year. The cargo shipment between two countries reached approximately 66,600 tons between January and November 2019.

China is Pakistan's largest trading partner with bilateral trade value of nearly \$16 billion with benefit oddly skewed to Chinese side. Phase I of the China-Pakistan free trade agreement came into operation in 2007 and was widely criticized for failing to provide preferential access for Pakistani exports into the large Chinese markets.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/684099-pakistan-china-mull-opening-border-from-next-week>

July 10, 2020

Business Recorder

Pak companies participate in China Int'l Tea Expo

BEIJING: In order to export tea culture and products, Pakistani tea enterprises actively participated in China (Sichuan) International Tea Expo for four consecutive years in recent days, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday.

The China (Sichuan) International Tea Expo was held in Chengdu, Sichuan province, China. The expo is reckoned as one of the most important events in tea sector with great scale and influence in China.

On this occasion, Pakistani tea enterprises displayed their products, including tea, tea wares, jade art wares and so on. Meanwhile, tea enterprises from other countries also bring their own products and distinctive culture to Sichuan International Tea Expo, such as Britain, Russia, Japan, Sri Lanka, Nepal etc.

“It is an effective opportunity for not only seeking commercial cooperation, but also communicating different tea cultures of each country,” an Expo’s manager said.

Affected by Covid-19, Pakistani exhibitors couldn’t attend this event directly, companies entrusted their agents in China to display their products.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/10/15-page/843911-news.html>

Dunya News

Kohala, Azad Pattan Power projects to produce 1800MW hydel power: Asim

Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Raja Farooq Haider and the Chief Executive Officers of China Three Gorges and China Gezhouba separately held meetings with China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) chairman Lt. General (retired) Asim Saleem Bajwa in Islamabad.

They discussed Kohala Power and Azad Pattan power projects and further coordination for their execution.

In a tweet, the Chairman CPEC Authority said the projects will produce 1800 megawatts of hydel power and generate eight thousand jobs.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/553679-Kohala-Azad-Pattan-Power-projects-produce-1800MW-hydel-power-Asim>

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan, China to enhance coop to fight Covid-19: Lijian

Pakistan and China have agreed to enhance technology exchange, experience sharing and vaccine development cooperation to fight COVID-19 and uphold public health security, Chinese Foreign Ministry’s Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said on Thursday. “The two countries held a video meeting for medical experts on COVID-19 pandemic yesterday and agreed to continue mutual

support and cooperation,” he said while sharing some details of the meeting while responding to a question in this regard during his regular briefing held here. He informed that the Chinese experts talked about their experience and practice against novel coronavirus and vaccine development and answered questions from Pakistani sides. He said that the two sides agreed to continue mutual support and cooperation and added, “This meeting helped enhance mutual understanding and going forward the two sides will enhance technology exchange, experience sharing and vaccine development cooperation to fight the disease and uphold public health security. ”Zhao said, the video meeting between medical experts of the two nations was co-chaired by Deputy Director General of the Asian Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, Executive Director of Pakistan Institute of Health (NIH).

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-china-to-enhance-coop-to-fight-covid-19-lijian/>

BNM propagating fake news about CPEC

Sultan M Hali

CHAIRMAN of Baloch National Movement (BNM), Khalil Baloch has given a provocative but false statement denigrating the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which has been picked up by Indian media and is being proliferated widely. Indian news agency, WION, has published an article based on the same fiction titled ‘BNM Slams China for its Imperialist Ambitions in Balochistan’. Labelling the mega development project as a strategic one for China, the BNM chief claims that Pakistan has mortgaged Balochistan and the port of Gwadar to maintain occupation and crush the Baloch independence movement. He further insinuates that CPEC will have far-reaching political and military consequences for the region. Khalil asserts that China is shifting the balance of power and increasing its influence in the Indian Ocean which would also affect India.

Khalil’s figment of imagination spins a yarn that China is developing naval bases in Balochistan at Jiwani and Gwadar. To support his lie, the BNM chief quotes an article from the Forbes journal titled, ‘China’s New High-Security Compound in Pakistan May Indicate Naval Plans’. The article itself is based on murky twists of facts. The only piece of evidence Forbes can present in support of its tall claims that China is building its naval presence in Gwadar are recent satellite images that appear to show that several new complexes have been built in the last few years. One of them, identified as being used by a Chinese company involved in port development, has unusually high security. The Forbes article informs that the high-security compound is being used by the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC Ltd). This is a majority state-owned company that is heavily involved in many Chinese civil engineering projects. While some degree of security is normal in the region, the level of security seen here is extensive. It has anti-vehicle berms, security fences and a high wall. Sentry posts and elevated guard towers cover the perimeter between the fence and the inner wall. This suggests armed guards with rifles.

The article itself provides the rationale that in the near past, the Chinese Consulate in Karachi and the Pearl Continental Hotel in Gwadar were targeted by terrorists on 23 November 2018 and 11 May 2019 respectively. The protagonists for both attacks were Baloch miscreants but their

handlers turned out to be none other than the famous Indian spy agency RAW. If the projects in the vicinity of Gwadar have heightened security, it should not come as a surprise. In the modern era of satellites and other methods of imagery, it would be nigh impossible to hide a naval presence.

Pejorative comments from the ilk of Khalil Baloch are nothing new. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced in India's Republic Day address to the nation while astride the ramparts of Delhi's Red Fort that it is his moral duty to help the liberation movement in Balochistan. Numerous retired Indian army analysts appearing on Indian TV Channels have admitted having deep contacts with Baloch separatists. Commander Kulbhoshan Sudhir Jadhav, a senior RAW operative apprehended from Balochistan while masquerading as Hussain Mubarak Patel had exposed Indian heinous plans to sabotage CPEC. The disgruntled BNM chief appears to be mouthing slogans fed by his RAW handlers, claiming falsely that Pakistan Army has bombarded the route of CPEC project forcing families to migrate. He then goes on to declare that Balochistan has paid a high price and will defend its land in future. He announces that the Baloch are willing to unite with any power against Chinese ambitions. In a bid to secure international sympathy and build a negative consensus against China, Khalil states: "Today, China is swiftly shifting the balance of power in the region. This is not only a catastrophic move for Balochistan but other countries in the region will not be spared of its effects. India will be directly affected by Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean and Chinese military presence near the Strait of Hormuz could lead to war in the region." He said that China is gaining ground in Balochistan and becoming a new colonial power in the region. "Thousands of Chinese are already in different areas of Balochistan, including Gwadar and Saindak to complete the CPEC and Saindak projects," he asserted. "Several large military bases are being built. In future, the Chinese invasion of the entire Baloch coast will be the most significant concern for the Baloch national existence and identity after the occupation of Pakistan," he added. The truth is that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), of which CPEC is a flagship project has been open to the entire world and scores of countries including most of Europe have come on board. Only India, Japan, Australia and the US remain outside its fold. China and Pakistan have invited international observers to visit the projects and satisfy themselves to the efficacy and fruitfulness of the mega project. Majority of the Baloch have welcomed CPEC because they are cognizant of the fact that it will provide them with employment opportunities and enhance the medical, educational and communications resources of the once deprived and neglected province. Only a handful of misinformed Baloch youth, recruited by the RAW are trying to bring insurgency into the region. Slowly and gradually their numbers too are diminishing but the detractors of China, Pakistan and the economic uplift of the region would like to destabilize it for their own nefarious goals.

The writer is retired PAF Group Captain and a TV talk show host.

<https://pakobserver.net/bnm-propagating-fake-news-about-cpec/>

BRI moot calls for joint strategy to address Covid-19 challenges

ISLAMABAD Representatives of eight countries while participating in first-ever Non-Governmental Online Conference on Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) pledged that they will work

closely to address the common challenges of COVID-19, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday. According to the report, they agreed that the coronavirus crisis had underlined the need for global interdependence to forge closer cooperation to tackle the socio-economic challenges. The conference, organized by Pakistan China Institute (PCI) on Wednesday was participated by eight countries: Pakistan, China, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka. They also agreed that BRI is the way forward as it connects the whole region, representatives from eight countries including Pakistan and China concluded Wednesday. They highlighted the significant role of BRI, of which the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the flagship, for tackling the common problems, particularly after post-COVID-19 period. The meeting reached the consensus that the BRI is the way forward as it promotes regional connectivity based on the principles of equality, reciprocity, and mutual benefit while acclaiming CPEC as 'BRI success story'. The propaganda about the so-called 'Debt trap' was rejected by participants as in the case of Pakistan and Sri Lanka, total debt from China was a very small percentage of what is owed to other countries or multilateral institutions. They rejected the 'New Cold War', demonization, or stigmatizing any country using COVID19 as a political weapon or targeting BRI on geopolitical grounds. Chairman Pakistan Senate Foreign Affairs Committee Senator Mushahid Hussain, in his opening remarks, termed BRI as the biggest and most significant Diplomatic and Developmental initiative of the 21st century. He said that CPEC, as the flagship of BRI, was already a success story and has entered its second phase successfully. Energy and infrastructure projects have been completed on schedule, with 75,000 Pakistanis got jobs in BRI projects and 28,000 Pakistani students studying in China. He also thanked China for support to Pakistan during the COVID-19 crisis and he mentioned the two resolutions passed by the Pakistan Senate, February 12 and May 14, in which the parliament of Pakistan appreciated China's role and support.

<https://pakobserver.net/bri-moot-calls-for-joint-strategy-to-address-covid-19-challenges/>

Chinese technology helps promote maize-soybean production

Maize-soybean intercropping will be the best system in terms of income and ecological sustainability if total benefits are calculated," says a report published by Gwadar Pro quoting Muhammad Ali Raza, a Pakistani student of China's Sichuan Agricultural University. Under the University's Prof. Yang Wenyu's support and guidance, he brought this technology from China to Pakistan. It was noted that there is a lack of soybean production in Pakistan. Till now Pakistan has relied on imports to meet the soybean needs. "Now increasing soybean area is encouraged in Pakistan. For farmers who are not ready to reduce their maize area, the best available option is to use the intercropping tech," Prof. Yang is satisfied with the yield data and provides his professional advice for future planting, Ali said. Maize yield could have been lifted more if double amount of fertilizer was applied to each unit length because in the intercropping filed the number of maize plants is twice as many as that in the pure maize field. Furthermore, selecting shade-resistant soybean varieties is also a key point, and the yield of soybean can reach a new high. It's also learned that after COVID-19 pandemic ends, specialized machinery such as planters and harvesters will be introduced to Pakistan to further boost the production efficiency.

According to the report, the maize-soybean strip intercropping demonstration in Bahawalpur, Punjab completed harvest last week. The yields of soybean and maize reach 1,304 kg/ha and 8,596 kg/ha respectively, which exhibits satisfactory results. This is indeed inspiring news for local farmers who want to grow soybean without curbing the cultivation of maize. Maize harvest in this intercropping field outdistanced the country's average maize yield which is only around 5,000 kg per hectare. Meanwhile, farmers get considerable soybeans as an additional return. As the selling price of soybean is 2 to 3 times as that of maize, when viewing the two crops as a whole, the overall economic benefit has significantly been improved, the report added.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-technology-helps-promote-maize-soybean-production/>

The Express Tribune

ML-1 will control railway accidents: Rashid

Railways Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said on Friday the Main Line (ML)-1 project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would help control railways accidents and generate hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Speaking at a press conference in Islamabad, the minister said the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) was expected to approve the ML-1 project this month and the work on it would start this year.

“Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa have worked hard on the ML-1 project,” he told reporters. “It is a revolutionary project. It will revamp the entire structure of the Pakistan Railways.” The minister said the ML-1 would be a crossing-free track and reduce the travel time from Karachi to Lahore to seven hours and from Lahore to Rawalpindi to two hours. “The ML-1 is very important for reducing railway accidents,” he added.

The \$9 billion project, according to the minister, would allow trains to ply at a speed of 160 kilometers per hour. However, he added that the speed could be increased later. “The ML 1 will later become a bullet train track.” He said 150,000 people would work on this project, out of which 90% construction workers would be locals. “Only 10% of the engineers will come from China. This is the part of the deal,” he said. “Retired employees can also join the construction project.”

Referring to Thursday's ruling by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmad on a suo moto case, the minister said Pakistan was going to change after the decision of the chief justice. “The superior judiciary is right, whatever it says and whatever it does,” he added.

Commenting on the political scenario, he said that Prime Minister Imran Khan will complete his five-year term in office, adding that the only neat and clean people would contest the next general elections. He said that July was an important month in this regard.

The minister said that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) would get more powers. He added that the opposition did not have the strength to go beyond talk shows on the TC channels. “The whole game will be over in 120 days,” he said.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2254280/ml-1-will-control-railway-accidents-rashid>

The Nation

SAPM Asim Bajwa meets AJK PM Raja Farooq today

Chairman China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Lt Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa said Friday that the Kohala Power and Azad Pattan power projects will generate 8,000 jobs and an investment of \$4 billion over the years.

SAPM Bajwa tweeted that Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider, CEOs of China Three Gorges and China Gezhouba visited him separately to thank the CPEC Authority for helping realize the projects and further improve coordination for execution of it.

Earlier this week, Pakistan and China signed an agreement for the construction of the Azad Pattan hydel power project as part of the CPEC project.

With an investment of 1.5 billion dollars and 700.7 megawatts of electricity, the Azad Pattan project will involve no fuel import, enabling the country to move towards cheaper and greener power generation while creating local job opportunities.

The project is located at River Jhelum roughly 7km upstream of Azad Pattan Bridge in the Sudhanoti District of Azad Kashmir and is expected to be completed in 2026.

While last month, a tripartite agreement was signed on Thursday between a Chinese company and the governments of Pakistan and China for construction of a 1,124 megawatt hydropower project in Kohala costing \$2.4 billion.

The hydropower plant, being built on Jhelum River in AJK under CPEC, has been awarded to Kohala Hydropower Company Ltd (KHCL), which is a subsidiary of China Three Gorges Corporation (CTGC).

<https://nation.com.pk/10-Jul-2020/kohala-azad-pattan-power-projects-to-generate-8-000-jobs-sapm-bajwa>

July 11, 2020

Business Recorder

CPEC project: Various proposals for new industrial estate/zone discussed

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Planning & Development and Islamabad based businessmen Friday discussed various proposals for the establishment of a new industrial estate/zone in Islamabad to promote industrialization under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project.

A delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) led by Muhammad Ahmed Waheed President called on Mathar Niaz Rana, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Planning & Development and discussed with him various proposals for promoting industrialization in the region covering key areas of infrastructure, logistics network and trade routes.

Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President ICCI and Malik Sohail Hussain Chief Coordinator UBG FPCCI were in the delegation.

Welcoming the delegation, Mathar Niaz Rana, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Planning & Development briefed them about the various initiatives of his ministry and shared details of CPEC projects that offered great opportunity for JVs and investment to the private sector.

He said ICCI could play a role to bring more investors from the private sector in order to exploit the potential opportunities of business partnerships in CPEC projects. He said an industrial zone had been planned in Islamabad under CPEC project and desired that ICCI should share its proposal for the industrial zone that would be given due consideration. He further said that sector-specific industrial clusters were required in Islamabad to facilitate the potential foreign and local investors in exploring JVs and investment opportunities in such clusters.

Speaking at the occasion, ICCI President Muhammad Ahmed Waheed said ICCI had been making efforts since long for the establishment of a new industrial estate in Islamabad to promote industrialization as there was no more space in existing industrial areas to set up new industries due to which the potential investors were facing problems.

He stressed that Planning Ministry should cooperate for materialization of that important project that would give boost to industrial activities and create plenty of new jobs in the region.

Muhammad Ahmed Waheed said ICCI should be taken on board for the establishment of industrial zone in Islamabad under CPEC project and added that ICCI would send its proposal for the said project to make it an industrial zone that could exploit the comparative advantage and human talent of the area and emerge as a hub of industrial activities in the region.

Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President ICCI and Malik Sohail Hussain Chief Coordinator UBG FPCCI also shared various proposals for industrial development in the region.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/07/11/3-page/843951-news.html>

Daily Times

CFPD to boost Pakistan-China cooperation in education sector

China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School sponsored by China Foundation for Peace and Development (CFPD) will open new educational opportunities for the local people to join the main national mainstream of socio-economic development, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday.

The expansion work of the school has successfully been completed, giving the young generation an opportunity to make a difference in their life. “It’s a much-awaited project for local teachers and students,” said Amjad Basham, the principal of China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School, adding that the expansion project of the school built in Gwadar under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework will empower local kids to receive quality education.

Xu Jianguo, Secretary-General of CFPD, believes that education is the best gift one can give to a child. “Our foundation has funded projects to help improve the level of local basic education, improve local labor quality, promote local economic and social development, and maintain social stability,” he noted. “China and Pakistan are iron-clad friends that share a good tradition of mutual assistance,” he said, adding that after the completion of the school expansion project, CFPD will carry out educational material donation projects for the school and organize culture/education tour for local teachers and students to visit China. On top of that, CFPD will

continue to carry out projects on basic education and vocational training under CPEC, so as to benefit the locals, he further said.

“The project has been welcomed and supported by the governments, enterprises, individuals, Medias from both countries,” said Zhang Baozhong, honorary rector of China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School and Chief Executive Officer of China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC), which operates Gwadar Port and Free Trade Zone. He noted that the expansion project of the middle school has become the flagship project of CPEC in terms of people’s livelihood, and the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad has funded scholarship for the school.

Covering an area of 1,600 square meters, the middle school is equipped with two teaching buildings and supporting facilities after the expansion.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/638818/cfpd-to-boost-pakistan-china-cooperation-in-education-sector/>

Pakistan Observer

New hospital to help Pakistan fight against Covid-19: China

China on Friday reiterated a continued support to Pakistan’s fight against COVID-19 pandemic and said the newly inaugurated Isolation Hospital and Infections Treatment Center (IHITC) would enhance the country’s capability to combat the coronavirus and other infectious diseases. “China will not forget the valuable support Pakistan offered at our most difficult time. We will continue to support Pakistan’s fight to the best of our capability,” Chinese Foreign Ministry’s Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing in a response to a question regarding completion and inauguration of IHITC in Islamabad. The 250-bed hospital having five different wards and maximum facilities to diagnose and treat infectious disease was built in 40 days in the capital city with cooperation of China. Zhao said that helping Pakistan to build an isolation hospital for COVID-19 patients is an important consensus reached between the two leaders during President Dr. Arif Alvi’s visit to China in March this year. “With the joint efforts of the two countries, the hospital was recently completed and inaugurated on July 9,” he said.

<https://pakobserver.net/new-hospital-to-help-pakistan-fight-against-covid-19-china/>

July 12, 2020

Daily Times

Balochistan political parties voice support for CPEC

Pakistani and Chinese leaders agreed that Balochistan is important to both the all-weather friends and the province was a key part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Emerging Policymakers’ Institute (EPI) an Islamabad based independent public policy think tank which conducts wide-ranging research & analysis on the issues of governance, security, social development, and regional connectivity organized a webinar on ‘Balochistan’s Political Parties’ Dialogue: CPEC and China’s Global Leadership during Covid-19’.

According to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Saturday, the dialogue engaged speakers from most of the mainstream political parties of Balochistan to reiterate their commitment towards making CPEC a success and to discuss China's achievements in tackling the Corona Virus pandemic at home and abroad.

The dialogue also aimed to discuss the opportunities for Balochistan under cooperation mechanism on COVID19 to uplift its health care system, among other important agenda items. Governor Balochistan Justice Rt Amanullah Khan Yasinzai and China's Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Yao Jing addressed the forum as keynote speakers.

Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing in his keynote address highlighted the importance of Balochistan to Pakistan and China. He explained the achievements of China in tackling COVID19 faced by and also appreciated the efforts of Pakistan in the war against the pandemic. Moreover, he assured that china will stand beside Pakistan through thick and thin. China has helped Pakistan in establishing a 1000 bed isolation hospital and is continuing to help Pakistan. Yao said CPEC is not all about China-Pakistan friendship rather it is just a small part. China Pakistan Friendship is much beyond the CPEC.

Governor Balochistan Amanullah Khan Yasinzai in his address said that both China and Pakistan need each other. "If they have the technology we have the resources. So we should use the technology to extract resources and get a mutual benefit." He further added that CPEC is not being digested by India and other powers and they are trying to sabotage it.

Moreover, he said, "Balochistan needs much attention in all spheres of society. We, Bloch, are the true representatives of the Balochistan and not the BLA type organizations"

The governor said the provincial government and the federal government were committed to making CPEC a huge success in the interest of Pakistan, China, and the region. "There have been issues (among the Baloch people) in the past but not anymore. We are united on CPEC," he said. Other participants believed CPEC was a lifeline for Pakistan and the region. They agreed that iron brother China had injected money to improve Pakistan's economy.

All the participants acknowledged China's help over the years to promote Pakistan's economy and position on international issues. They regretted that India had been trying to sabotage the CPEC and create confusion, and made a joint pledge that "We will not let India create misunderstandings. China is our friend. We love China."

Earlier, Chairman EPI Ahsan Hamid Durrani gave the opening remarks by explaining the purpose of holding the dialogue. He said that the dialogue is an important effort by his organization to bring together the Chinese government and the political leadership of Balochistan to discuss the CPEC and COVID19.

All the speakers reaffirmed their commitment towards CPEC and appreciated the responsible role that China played in combating COVID19 at home and abroad. Speakers stressed for expanding the role of Balochistan and increasing opportunities for Balochistan in CPEC. They also urged for conducting more such interactions with the Chinese Embassy to increase cooperation.

Representatives of Chinese Companies in Balochistan, Din Deputy Manager Sandark Chinese company, and Zhang Baozhong Chairman and CEO and China Overseas Ports Holding Company Pakistan (Pvt.) Ltd. also addressed the forum and highlighted the projects their companies have been undertaking in Balochistan.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/639315/balochistan-political-parties-voice-support-for-cpec/>

The Nation

Punjab CM inspects Orange Line Metro Train progress on a surprise visit

Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar paid a surprise visit to Orange Line Metro Train (OLMT) at Dera Gujran station on Saturday and reviewed preparations for the launch of the train service.

The chief minister also inspected the latest facilities, being provided in the Orange Line Metro Train, automatic equipment and different sections of the project.

Managing Director (MD) Punjab Mass Transit Authority gave a detailed briefing to the chief minister about the current status of the project. Usman Buzdar, while directing the authorities concerned to make the Metro Train functional, said that the train was part of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, construction work of Metro Train had almost been completed and government was waiting for favorable conditions for its launch. The train service would be formally started soon after removal of hurdles caused due to the pandemic.

The CM said that by making the OLMT functional, the government would be ending the tradition of closure of previous government's projects. Metro train was being made functional for the welfare of people and for their convenience. He said that the government was determined to provide the best transport facilities to citizens of the metropolis. He said that it had been decided that the standard operating procedures (SOPs) to prevent passengers from COVID-19 would be strictly followed in the Orange Line Train.

The MD Mass Transit Authority apprised the CM about the progress on the initiatives taken for making OLMT functional.

He said that electrical, mechanical and civil works of the project had been completed. He said that services of officials and experts of Chinese companies including Norinco, GMG and Daewoo had been hired.

Secretary Transport, DG LDA, Chief Engineer LDA, Deputy Commissioner Lahore Division, GM PMA, MD NESPAK, and others were present on the occasion.

<https://nation.com.pk/12-Jul-2020/punjab-cm-inspects-orange-line-metro-train-progress-on-a-surprise-visit>

July 13, 2020

Dawn News

13 Punjab SEZs to create million jobs: CM

LAHORE: The Punjab government has started work on establishing 13 special economic zones and industrial estates on more than 10,000 acres of land.

Chief Minister Usman Buzdar says this government started these projects in just two years, while only three economic zones (SEZs) were established during the last 73 years.

He said the Allama Iqbal Industrial City to be established in Faisalabad would be stretched on more than 3,000 acres of land and generates employment opportunities for 300,000 youths.

He said the Punjab government was bringing international companies to Pakistan and a one-window system was being introduced in the industrial estates to facilitate the firms in making investments.

He said there would be capacity for setting up more than 550 industrial units in the industrial city. Mr. Buzdar stated that this project would prove to be a game changer and help set the wheel of economy rolling that would create one million employment opportunities in the sectors concerned. He said the industrial reforms of the Punjab government would pave the way for the economic revival in the backdrop of Covid-19.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1568652/13-punjab-sezs-to-create-million-jobs-cm>

Pakistan Observer

China enhances its support to Pakistan in health sector under CPEC

China has recently enhanced its support to Pakistan in health-care sector to control COVID-19 epidemic, Gwadar Pro reported. “This is going to create a great image of China as till now it has mainly invested in energy sector and a lot can be done in Medical Education and Medical Tourism,” said Dr. Muhammad Shahbaz who had initiated the conception of Health Corridor in 2017. According to the report, later cooperation between Chinese and Pakistani institutes was initiated leading to the realization of the healthcare goals. Health Corridor establishes telemedicine, virtual classrooms. Meanwhile, this healthcare project focused on sharing medical data and experience, doctors training. In addition, several mechanisms were built, such as Belt & Road Health Fund, Belt & Road Medical Force (BRMF), Silk Road Higher Medical Education forum (SRHMEF) and connectivity via Medical Tourism (BRM). As a surgeon and PhD scholar at Shandong University, and having spent more than a decade in China as a medical student, he hopes that the CPEC will also bring about healthcare facilities and infrastructure cooperation in Pakistan and China. “I have re-named it the CPHC – the China Pakistan Health Corridor or simply ‘The Health Corridor’,” he said. He highly praised the actions and measures that Chinese government taken to cope with pandemic. “COVID-19 pandemic has brought huge opportunity for the BRI countries specially China and Pakistan for better cooperation. Frequent online meetings between the two sides are very important. Chinese experts can train Pakistani doctors

in order to better combat the pandemic. Data sharing is very important. Pakistani hospitals should be digitalized. Big Data centers can be established in top 20 hospitals in the first stage, tracking and keeping record of patients will be easy in this way. Telemedicine joint sessions can be held frequently,” he added. Muhammad also mentioned the importance that Pakistan cooperates with China in medical sector. Pakistan has conceived its medical system from Britain. The Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America (APPNA) is highly respectable and well recognized in western countries. “The cooperation will create opportunities for private sector, meanwhile, friendship between both countries public will be fatherly enhanced,” he said.

Muhammad said, China has progressed in medical field especially for the technology. As a developing country, Pakistan lacks resources to establish the medical corridor. The potential of cooperation with China is huge. Regarding the diagnostic labs and medical treatment are expensive in Pakistan, medical cooperation will reduce the burden on Pakistan medical system. Cooperation with Chinese medical companies will create a healthy competition and common people will have access to inexpensive facilities, he added.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-enhances-its-support-to-pakistan-in-health-sector-under-cpec/>

Nawaiwaqt

سی پیک منصوبے کے تحت ہاؤسنگ ڈویژن کیلئے 473.55 ملین روپے مختص

اسلام آباد (وفاقی نگار خصوصی) حکومت نے سی پیک منصوبے کے تحت ہاؤسنگ ڈویژن کے منصوبوں کے لیے رواں مالی سال میں 473.55 ملین روپے مختص کیے ہیں۔ وزارت ہاؤسنگ و تعمیرات کے حکام کے مطابق وفاقی حکومت نے سی پیک منصوبے کے تحت قانون نافذ کرنے والے ادارے انٹیلیجنس بیورو کے دفاتر سست، گوادر، خضدار، تربت، مانسہرہ اور گلگت میں تعمیر کے لیے رواں مالی سال میں 473.55 ملین روپے مختص کیے ہیں تاکہ سی پیک منصوبے کی سیوریٹی کو مزید بہتر بنانے کیلئے اقدامات کیے جاسکیں جبکہ سوات یگانورہ سنٹرل ہسپتال کے آپریشن تھیٹر کے لیے بھی 50 ملین روپے مختص کیے گئے ہیں۔ ہاؤسنگ و تعمیرات کے ایک اور منصوبے کوئٹہ میں گرلز کالج کی تعمیر کے لیے 400 ملین روپے مختص کیے گئے ہیں۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/13-Jul-2020/1187943>

July 14, 2020

Daily Times

215 more Chinese technicians arrive to build CPEC projects

A total of 215 Chinese technicians arrived here on Monday by a chartered plane which is the third batch of builders sent by China Gezhouba Group Corporation (CGGC). According to Gwadar Pro, these technicians were sent for various projects under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Upon the completion of quarantine, the 215 Chinese technicians will be dispatched to Dasu Hydropower Project, Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Station, Suki Kinari Hydroelectric Project and Mohmand hydroelectric project. Due to the

impact of the COVID-19, various projects are generally facing tight deadlines. The CGGC sent these technicians to facilitate the construction and make contributions to the timely completion of CPEC, the report added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/640263/215-more-chinese-technicians-arrive-to-build-cpec-projects/>

The News

PIA special flight airlifts Pakistanis from China

BEIJING: PIA's special flight PIA-6852 left Tianjin Binhai International airport on Sunday night to airlift 249 returning Pakistani nationals from Tianjin Municipality and adjoining areas to Pakistan.

In view of the disruption of commercial flight operations, it was PIA's fourth special flight from China to transport Pakistani nationals back home. In pursuance of instructions of Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Embassy had shortlisted passengers with urgent travel requirements for early return. The returning community members and students continued staying in China after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

The Embassy remained in close contact with the Pakistani nationals in China and extended all possible assistance to them. Special arrangements were made by the Embassy of Pakistan for the flight operation due to the prevalent quarantine requirements.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/686561-pia-special-flight-airlifts-pakistanis-from-china>

July 15, 2020

Dawn News

RCCI asks govt. to expedite work on CPEC economic zones

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) on Tuesday urged the government to accelerate work on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) special economic zones (SEZs).

In a statement, RCCI President Saboor Malik said the industrial parks would be developed aligned with local available resources.

He said Covid-19 had affected the national economy on many fronts. However, keeping in view the package announced for the construction industry by the government, there is a big opportunity to kick start trade activities via SEZs. Unemployment can only be addressed if the private sector be given more incentives and engagements, he further added.

The RCCI president said: "We recognize CPEC as a game changer and we urge the government to focus on the 4th part of CPEC plan, which is Industrial Zones Development."

He further said that the CPEC is the flagship project of multi-billion dollar One belt one road and the success of this key mega project will bring the economic revolution in the country and the region.

He said Pakistan's economy offered great potential to Chinese investors for joint ventures and investments.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1569009/rcci-asks-govt-to-expedite-work-on-cpec-economic-zones>

Pakistan Observer

CPEC & Pakistan's economy correlated

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

CHINA-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and macro-economy of Pakistan is directly correlated and it has multiplier effects on its stability, sustainability, immense social development and, of course, regional connectivity because it is indeed a game and fate changer mega project. Various Pakistan Economic Surveys have already acknowledged positive contribution of the CPEC in the national economy in terms of increase in bilateral trade volumes, attraction of investment especially in energy, infrastructure and development projects, start of various joint ventures and immense rise to energy production and supplies. It is further estimated the CPEC project will create some 700,000 direct jobs during the period 2015-2030 and add up to 2.5 to 4 percentages to the country's GDP.

Even Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan appreciated colossal contributory role of CPEC in the development of Pakistan's economy which has already brightened its future prospects. Prime Minister upheld that CPEC would take Pakistan on the path of rapid progress and development as its economic future closely related to the completion of various ongoing energy and infrastructure projects. Most recently, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian while addressing a regular briefing mentioned remarks of Premier Khan and reaffirmed his statement about the strategic importance of the CPEC in overall macro-economy of Pakistan. Zhao Lijian elaborated that the CPEC has been followed principles of joint consultations, cooperation and shared benefits. The CPEC being an important flagship program of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), aimed at promoting shared development of China and Pakistan.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson briefed about CPEC's grand achievements during last six years which has boosted Pakistan economic and social development, people's wellbeing and regional connectivity. He reassured that China would firmly support CPEC development and work together with Pakistan. He said the Chinese side will work for promoting infrastructure development and also promote people's livelihood, industries and agriculture cooperation and turn this corridor into a demonstration project of high quality BRI development to promote benefits to the two peoples and countries.

Most recently the Centre for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) a prime think-tank, Islamabad, organized a detailed live interview entitled "CPEC: Prospects & Constraints and Way Forward" during which being prominent regional expert of CPEC & BRI, I suggested to form a "Council of Intellectuals" from the two countries to deter propaganda of the West against CPEC. I upheld that CGSS would be an ideal platform to disseminate national narratives to regional as well as international community's which have unfortunately, borrowed ideas of enmity, bigotry and

disinformation against CPEC through visible and invisible means. During my detailed interview I termed CPEC “life-line” and “engine” of growth to our national economy which must be nurtured. Furthermore, I suggested that pseudo intellectuals, fake researchers/think tanks and cheap journalists have already proved “wall of sand” which should be reconstructed with the help of “genuine scholars” and “prominent” think-tanks like, “CGSS” which has diversity, credibility, vast network and intellect to project real motives of CPEC through logic and wisdom. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Chairman Lieutenant General (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa, while attending the signing ceremony of the Azad Pattan Hydel Project, said it is a giant step towards greener power generation with an investment of \$ 1.5 billion. It will generate 1,800 megawatts of cheaper electricity with 8,000 jobs. Moreover, Kohala hydropower project (1124 MW) costing (\$2.5 billion) has also been signed with Chinese companies under the framework of CPEC. The two hydro-projects will be completed with an investment of \$ 4 billion. China has signed an agreement with Gezhouba Group, a construction company in China, for the construction of the project.

Most recently, China Renewable Energy Engineering Institute (CREEI), Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in its report (July, 2020) highlighted strategic importance of BRI and CPEC which helped Pakistan attract substantial investment in hydropower projects. According to the report that by the end of 2019, China had participated in 24 hydropower projects in Pakistan, with an installed capacity of about 12,282MW. It is pertinent to note that nine projects are under construction with an installed capacity of 6680MW, 15 projects have been built with an installed capacity of 5602MW.

The CPEC will widen immense economic opportunities not only to Pakistan but will physically connect China to its markets in Asia, Europe and beyond. It is estimated that CPEC energy projects would provide up to 16,400 MW of energy altogether. As part of infrastructure projects worth approximately \$11 billion and 1,100 kilometer long motorway will be constructed between the cities of Karachi and Lahore, while the Karakoram Highway between Rawalpindi and the Chinese border will be completely reconstructed and overhauled.

CPEC has now entered into the educational sector of the country by signing of National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and Pakistan Science Foundation which both have approved preliminary plans for 130 joint research projects in the context of climate change. According to this the fourth Call of Proposals between PSF and NSFC is open from April 22, 2020 to June 3, 2020 in the 4 categories i.e. fossil energy conversion and materials, utilization of renewable energy and resources, scientific ground of new energy utilization and technologies and safety evaluation and adaptive mechanism research on water-energy-food nexus under CPEC in the context of climate change.

Regional (India & lobbyists) as well as international media has been purposefully projecting Baluchistan’s dissident of CPEC. In order to make better understanding about CPEC among the different stakeholders belonging to Baluchistan the emerging policymakers’ Institute (EPI) an Islamabad based independent public policy think tank conducted a wide-ranging research & analysis on the issues of governance, security, social development and regional connectivity

organized a webinar on “Baluchistan’s Political Parties’ Dialogue: CPEC and China’s Global Leadership during COVID19.” Pakistani and Chinese leaders agreed that Baluchistan was important to both the all-weather friends and the province was a key part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It engaged speakers from most of the mainstream political parties of Baluchistan which reiterates their commitment towards making CPEC a success.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-pakistans-economy-correlated/>

Impelling the Sino-Pak cultural ties through CPEC

Hafsa Mustansar

Cultural ties are a considerable source of regional stabilization since ancient times. For any country, cultural ties are a source of economic as well as social development. The region of South Asia has immense scope in establishing the coordination among regional countries due to having shared history. Since the time of antiquity, this region has crossroad linkages mainly ancient silk route (now Karakoram Highway), Khunjerab Pass, Wakhan Corridor and many more. China-Pakistan Economic Corridors (CPEC), a flagship project of China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has a great potential for not only strengthening the cultural ties between Pakistan and China but also with other regional countries.

The CPEC has the motto of regional connectivity by improving all means of transportation, infrastructure and enhancement of cultural and academic knowledge for the aspirations of global harmony and development. It is not merely an economic booster for Pakistan; it has also insight to give opportunities to the people of different continents for sharing cultural knowledge. Under the BRI, China aspires to enhance cultural ties among countries in the South Asian region, Central Asia, West Asia and other adjacent regions Middle East and Africa. Without cultural harmony and understanding at people-to-people levels, the regional connectivity and economic cooperation would not bear the fruits.

The geostrategic significance of Pakistan is linked to its landscape and location. This significance becomes more profound because the landscape had one of the first urban civilizations. This makes Pakistan a land of great historical heritage. Being a land of prehistoric, proto-historic and historic monuments, it offers great potential of cultural tourism. Pakistan’s cultural heritage comprises diverse culture and multi-ethnic groups. In this respect, there is a great potential of expanding tourism in Pakistan along the CPEC route which has several historic and religious places.

Ancient Indian subcontinent now Pakistan and India still have a greater amount of Buddhist sites that under the umbrella of CPEC may achieve global prominence and attract the Buddhist people from across the world if properly preserved by the concerned authorities. To make collaborations based on cultural ties; this idea would play a vital role in understanding the cultural heritage of both countries, their food recognition, their traditions, rituals and living style that are main ingredient of multiculturalism. In this connection, people to people contact is necessary that would lead towards the understanding of multicultural phenomena. Under the guise of CPEC, the creation of multicultural phenomena would be appreciated.

As the people of China have great aspirations towards raising the tourism industry, protected their tourists sites in their region. To make harmony amongst the different countries of world cultural education is very much important. After the establishment of CPEC, a plethora of Pakistani people is learning Chinese language to excel in the peak of CPEC. Language is the nucleus of any culture, by knowing the language of other cultures one can easily know the cultural traditions of others. Learning the language of other countries is the main step towards strengthening cultural ties with that country.

Pakistan and China both have a glorious history of friendship. Therefore, they are recognized as iron brothers. For China, Pakistan has great potential of religious tourism. Pakistan has the largest Buddhist monastery of South Asia in Taxila, which is known as Dharmarajika stupa and monastery. Other than this, Pakistan has Buddhist stupas and monasteries in abundance along the historical routes and sites of the Gandhara region. These Buddhist sites are not preserved due to having no awareness about cultural heritage in Pakistan. The field of cultural heritage is wholly neglected by the authorities of Pakistan. Moreover, if the Buddhist sites in Pakistan are preserved, the move can create a possibility of opening up the world largest religious tourism.

In the light of UK Travel advisory, that has changed and allowed their citizens to visit Northern Areas of Pakistan through road due to improved security situations. After the comprehensive review of Pakistan's situation, they announced to visit Pakistan without any danger. Similarly, the USA in its revised advisory also acknowledges the improved security situation of Pakistan. On 31 January 2020, Pakistan's Foreign Office welcomed revised US travel advisory in which US State Department acknowledged that Pakistan's security situation has improved. Furthermore, in recent months Pakistan has been declared one of the top travel destinations for 2020 by the major travel magazines such as Conde Nast traveler, and Forbes magazine.

Concerning cultural tourism, Pakistan's romance is timeless. It started from the ruins of Mohenjo-Daro and continues with Mughal's historical monuments and ends with British colonial period expansions. Government of Pakistan with collaborating the Chinese divert their interests on cultural heritage promotion that would lead to economic prosperity in the region. It is high time for Pakistan and China to give due attention to promote cultural heritage or religious tourism through their projects which has the potential to uplift socio-economic development. It may also help in building a soft image of Pakistan and China.

<https://pakobserver.net/impelling-the-sino-pak-cultural-ties-through-cpec/>

Sino-Pak coop on cotton germplasm of great pith and moment

The cooperation between China and Pakistan in the collection and identification of cotton germplasm resources is of great pith and moment," said Prof. Du Xiongming, Director of Cotton Germplasm Resources Division, and Institute of Cotton Research (ICR) of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS). "For now the two countries have exchanged over 300 cotton germplasm resources, China Economic Net reported on Tuesday quoting Dr. Du. As per Prof. Du, China and Pakistan have been co-working for many years in the field of collecting and identifying cotton germplasm resources. ICR has joined hands with Cotton Research Institute (CCRI), Multan, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) and some other universities and

scientific research institutions to identify cotton germplasms' resistance to heat, drought, diseases and insect pests in different places and environments, and jointly published scientific research papers on that. In addition, through the Industry-University-Research (IUR) cooperation, ICR has been devoted to the training of talented Pakistanis in the field of basic cotton research. Prof. Du's laboratory has trained 11 Pakistani doctoral students (including 5 graduates), 2 postdocs and 2 visiting scholars so far. Cotton germplasm resources are the material basis of basic and applied research of cotton. "Pakistan's Asiatic Cotton (*G. arboreum*) is different from China's *Gossypium hirsutum* Linn in term terms of genetic characteristics. China's cotton is known for its high yield, high quality and precocity, while Pakistan's cotton is famous for its resistance to heat, drought, saline-alkali and Cotton Leaf Curl Virus (CLCV)," noted Prof. Du, who received China's National Award for Excellence in Innovation in May. He is of the view that the cooperation between China and Pakistan in the collection and identification of cotton germplasm resources is of great pith and moment.

<https://pakobserver.net/sino-pak-coop-on-cotton-germplasm-of-great-pith-and-moment/>

HRs, ties with Pakistan, China on EU-India Summit's agenda

Human rights and India's relations with two of its neighbors, Pakistan and China, as well as better relations for peace and elimination of border tensions for normalcy, are on the agenda of the upcoming 15th EU-India Summit. It also includes a discussion on the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations. However, there is no mention of a free-trade agreement between the European Union and India on the Summit's agenda. The meeting, scheduled for today (July 15), would be held via video conference. Charles Michel and Ursula von der Leyen, the presidents of the European Council and the European Commission, respectively, would participate in 15th EU-India Summit, while New Delhi would be represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The conference would also talk about global, regional, and other bilateral issues.

<https://pakobserver.net/hrs-ties-with-pakistan-china-on-eu-india-summits-agenda/>

The Nation

China happy with Pakistan consensus over CPEC

China is happy with the consensus in Pakistan over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as the two allies continue to implement the multi-billion-dollar plan, the country's top diplomat said.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told The Nation that both countries were satisfied with the CPEC progress. "China is satisfied with us. There can be no misunderstandings between the iron brothers," he said.

Last week, a webinar was conducted in which all political parties in Balochistan were represented by their mainstream leadership. The Balochistan leadership highly appreciated the role of China in overcoming the global pandemic and helping Pakistan amid Covid-19.

Chinese ambassador in Pakistan Yao Jing assured 100% support in all aspects to the party leaders.

The Balochistan representatives expressed satisfaction with the CPEC plan.

Earlier, Pakistan dispelled the false impression that the CPEC was being slowed down. “Some detractors are giving false impression that CPEC is being slowed. Not only the pace of work on projects has picked up recently, a great deal of ground work has also done to launch phase-2,” Chairman of the CPEC Authority in Pakistan Asim Saleem Bajwa said on Twitter.

Bajwa, who is also the special assistant to the prime minister on information and broadcasting, said the scope of CPEC had actually been enhanced as work on hydropower projects, special economic zones and agriculture was also being done.

The Pakistan Economic Survey 2019-20, the country’s annual economic survey, has said that nine SEZs will be established under the CPEC portfolio, which will create tremendous job opportunities and technological transformation.

Work on CPEC projects, with the help of China, was in full swing, said the economic survey adding the CPEC was a long term project negotiated through a multi-layered process.

Foreign Office spokesperson Aisha Farooqui said CPEC had helped Pakistan “address development gaps in energy, infrastructure, industrialization and job creation.” She said it should be perceived in terms of enormous economic benefits for the people of Pakistan and social economic development.

“We believe it is also beneficial for regional connectivity and prosperity. Pakistan and China are all weather strategic cooperative partners. The CPEC is a transformational project for Pakistan and its expeditious completion is our top priority. In this regard, a CPEC Authority has been established to oversee completion of the projects,” she added.

Aisha Farooqui said that twelve corridor related power projects have either been completed or were under construction with the total capacity of 7240 megawatts with an investment of \$12.4 billion. “Another nine power projects are at an early stage with the capacity of six thousand three hundred and ninety megawatt,” she said.

<https://nation.com.pk/15-Jul-2020/china-happy-with-pakistan-consensus-over-cpec>