



For Better Understanding on China-Pakistan and CPEC

Gleanings from the National Press

July 16-31, 2019

A pilot project of PICS

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Data collected and compiled by Almas Noor and Rabeeha Safdar

July 16, 2019

Daily Times

China appreciates Pakistan for its support on Xinjiang issue

A spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Geng Shuang, appreciated Pakistan and other countries for their outright support to China on the issue of human rights' situation in Xinjiang.

He noted that 37 countries including Pakistan took a logical and fair position of the issue. He told reporters at a regular news briefing here on Monday that recently, the ambassadors from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Russia, Cuba and other countries jointly sent a letter to the President of the UN Human Rights Council and the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In the letter, the ambassadors positively evaluated the development achievements of China's Xinjiang human rights cause and counter-terrorism and de-extremism achievements.

They appreciated that China has repeatedly invited national envoys, officials of international organizations, and media people to visit Xinjiang, pointing out that people visiting Xinjiang generally expressed what they saw and heard from the West. The ambassadors also urged some countries to stop using unconfirmed information to blame China for unwarranted information without ever visiting Xinjiang.

Faced with the severe threat of terrorism and extremism, the Xinjiang Autonomous Region has adopted a series of anti-terrorism and de-extremism measures, including the establishment of a teaching and training center, to reverse the security situation in Xinjiang.

In the past three years, there have been no violent incidents in Xinjiang. Social stability, national unity, and the people live and work in peace. The sense of gain, happiness, and security of the people of all ethnic groups has greatly improved, and they sincerely support the government's policy initiatives.

Facts speak louder than words and are fair to others. The countries that have signed this letter come from various regions such as Asia, Africa and Latin America, many of which are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Many of them have sent personnel to Xinjiang to visit and witness the truth. This joint letter is a powerful response to a few Western countries that blame China for no reason.

The spokesperson added, "China is committed to working with all parties to promote multilateral human rights mechanisms to abide by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, to deal with human rights issues in an objective, fair and non-selective manner, and to promote the healthy development of the international human rights cause through constructive dialogue and cooperation.

We oppose the use of the Human Rights Council and other platforms to interfere in other countries' internal affairs, blame other countries for unwarranted accusations, attacking filth and public pressure.

We urge the countries concerned to change their positions immediately, abandon politicization and double standards, and stop interfering in the internal affairs of other countries through the name of human rights.”

Dunya News

China Overseas Holding build modern industrial park in Gwadar

BEIJING (APP) – The China Overseas Ports Holding Ltd has invested nearly US\$250 million and built a 25-acre modern industrial park in Gwadar port free zone.

The free zone is equipped with roads, water pipes, electricity, communications, security fence and waste disposal facilities, according to a report of China.org.cn. More than 30 Chinese and Pakistani enterprises have moved in the free zone, with three billion yuan of direct investment.

These include hotel, bank, insurance, financial leasing, logistics, overseas warehousing, grain and oil processing, aquatic product processing, and home appliances assembly. Their yearly output value will exceed five billion yuan once they all come into operation.

Both China and Pakistan agreed to build the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) during Premier Li Keqiang's visit to Pakistan in May 2013 to promote energy and transportation infrastructure development, among other projects.

During President Xi Jinping's visit in April 2015, a closer bilateral cooperation was again highlighted.

A key element of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and an essential component of the Gwadar Port development project, the free zone aim to improve trade logistics, facilitate processing trade, and promote warehousing and financial services.

According to the project plan, the free zone will occupy an area of 923 hectares and be developed in four phases. The first phase opened for operation in January 2018.

The free zone will be modeled after the Shekou Industrial Zone in Shenzhen, China, comprising a port, an industrial park, and residential and business areas. Once completed, the free zone will spur economic growth in Balochistan and the rest of Pakistan.

Pakistan Observer

Omar lauds commissioning of 660MW Thar Coal power project under CPEC

The Minister for Power Omar Ayub Khan while presiding the 124th meeting of the Board of Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) congratulated and appreciated the combined

efforts of Power Division, PPIB and Government of Sindh and expressed his pleasure on commissioning of Pakistan's first ever indigenous Thar coal based 660 MW EngroPowergen Thar (Pvt) limited under the early harvest component of CPEC framework and labeled it an historic development towards realization of nation's dream of utilizing indigenous Thar coal for power generation.

The Minister further stated that all efforts are being made by the present government to generate indigenous, reliable and affordable electricity through different means. He explained that Pakistan has enormous resources of coal and hydro which if utilized properly for power generation, substantial amount of foreign exchange can be saved as Thar coal has potential of generating thousands of megawatts for decades to come.

Detailed deliberations took place on various agenda items presented before the Board by the Managing Director PPIB Mr. Shah Jahan Mirza. Performance of various ongoing IPPs was also evaluated and necessary way forward was guided to PPIB for further processing. In order to facilitate the development of 700 MW Azad Pattan Hydropower Project, the Board agreed to grant extension in Financial Closing deadline of the Project.

Targeted to be completed by June 2026, Azad Pattan Hydropower Project is being built on Jhelum River near Sudhnoti, AJ&K by M/s China Gezhouba Group Company. The Board also granted extension in Financial Closing deadline of Thar coal based 330 MW Project by ThalNova Power Thar Pvt. Ltd which is amongst the fleet of "Prioritized Projects" under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and committed to supply electricity to national grid by March 2021.

The Minister commented that the efforts for improving the efficiency of this crucial sector are afoot and GoP has so far bagged tremendous success. He further added that the GoP is determined in developing a competitive energy market in Pakistan that on one hand provides a fair return on investment, while adequately protect the rights of consumers through a robust regulatory regime on the other.

The Nation

Multan-Sukkur Motorway from next month: Murad

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Murad Saeed on Monday revealed that the Multan-Sukkur Motorway (M-5) would be made operational from August. He said this during a meeting with Acting Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Zhao Lijian. Head of Chinese State Construction Company and Special Assistant of the Prime Minister on Media Iftikhar Durrani were also present in the meeting. The M-5 is an under-construction north-south motorway in Pakistan, which will connect Multan with Sukkur. The motorway is 392 km long and it is a component of the multi-phase Peshawar-Karachi Motorway planned under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. According to the PTI Media Department, Chinese acting ambassador Zhao Lijian called on Murad Saeed. Both sides exchanged views on matters pertaining to bilateral ties

of the two countries exclusively focusing CPEC projects. During the meeting, Murad said that they appreciate China's contribution towards Pakistan's economic progressive in the form of CPEC. He added that CPEC is an alluring reflection of the Pak-China strategic partnership.

Chinese envoy acknowledged the ministry's commitment and diligence towards completion of the projects. Meanwhile, UAE envoy to Pakistan Hammad Obaid Ibrahim Al Zaabi also called on Murad Saeed here. In the meeting, the envoy lauded policies of the incumbent government. It has been decided that a joint team of Ministry of Communications and Motorway Police will visit UAE in the ongoing month.

Pakistan proud of China friendship: Rehman Malik

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan People's Party leader Senator Rehman Malik yesterday said that Pakistan was proud of its ties with China. Speaking to Lijian Zhao at a meeting here, acting Ambassador of China in Pakistan, he said every Pakistani was proud of Sino-Pak friendship as China had always extended timely support to Pakistan in every difficult time.

Senator Malik thanked China for its strongest support to Pakistan. He said that Pakistan will ensure that China Pakistan Economic Corridor continues to progress with full speed as CPEC was a great bond between China and Pakistan. "This route will benefit both Pakistan and China and the whole region," he added.

Chinese acting Ambassador Lijian Zhao said that he was happy to visit Senator Malik as the relationship between China and Pakistan and the tie between the Communist Party of China and the PPP had always remained ideal. He said that CPEC was initiated when Asif Ali Zardari was the President of Pakistan and fully supported the project for the benefit of the people of both countries and whole region.

Senator Malik said that the recent production added to our national grids has facilitated to overcome the shortage of electricity which was impossible without support of China government and companies. He appreciated the efforts of Chinese acting Ambassador Lijian Zhao in facilitating Pakistan mangoes to China which is one of the popular fruit of Pakistan. Both discussed that both China and Pakistan need to have some more cultural interaction and exchange of students within both countries, said a statement released after the meeting.

The Nation

Budget 2019-20, CPEC and growth trajectory

The incumbent government presented its first formal budget of 2019-20 in June. The total budget outlay is Rs- 8,238.1 billion with 38.9 % higher than the size of previous budget. The target for expenditures is set at Rs 8,238.1 billion and Rs 3,462.1 billion for net revenues. For Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) the budget allocates Rs 1,613 billion out of which provinces share is Rs 912 billion. While Federal PSDP has been given the budget of Rs.701 billion where Federal Ministries/Divisions will receive Rs 348.2 billion. Considering the

prevailing macroeconomic situation, the government has set somehow realistic targets for the year 2019-20. To achieve the growth target of 4 % the sector contribution is projected as 3.5 %, 2.3 % and 4.8 % for agriculture, industry and services sector respectively.

Current budget has been given in the background of complex economic situation where the primary focus is to stabilize the economy and combat inflationary pressure through tight demand management policies (monetary and fiscal policies). The major challenges economy at present is facing include spiraling inflation, dollar hikes, twin deficits and slow progress of industry.

The year 2018-19 remained economically challenging year where all the key macroeconomic and fiscal indicators somewhat not satisfactory. The real GDP in the year 2018-19 recorded at 3.3 % than its target of 6.2 %. Nearly all sectors failed to meet their targets. Agriculture as considered the backbone of country only contributed 19 % to GDP and performed way far below its target. It grew only 0.8 % against the target of 3.8 % mainly because of stagnant growth of major crops such as cotton, rice and sugarcane. Climate change, low quality inputs and less water availability were the main reasons behind declined production as per recent Economic Survey Reports. Similarly, industry which is the second largest sector showed unsatisfactory performance. In the last year the target for industry was set at 7.6 % but achieved 1.4%. Large- and Small-Scale manufacturing registered meager growth rates where mining and quarrying sector has witnessed negative growth rate (1.96%) mainly because of reduction in natural gas and coal (Economic Survey 2018-19).

Service sector provides steady support to Pakistan's GDP. Although last year its growth was not at par with the target of 6.5 %, the sector performed comparatively better than agriculture and industry. The segments of Transport, Wholesale and Retail Trade showed positive trends and conferred overall positive impact on the sector. However, services performance is not impressive, and downturn of the sector can be a major risk to growth as it usually contributes significantly to GDP.

Keeping in view the sector performance and recent decelerating growth trend, Pakistan needs a major economic breakthrough. In this regards China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) can potentially stimulate economic growth and may provide cushion to achieve the set growth target of 4 % through reviving the industrialization in Pakistan by synergizing through Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as well as aligned activities in various CPEC development projects. The decline in import bill for power generation and electrical machinery was observed on the completion of early harvest projects of CPEC. To ease the worsening trade deficit, CPEC can further improve the trade balance through import substitution and export promotion in priority SEZs (pSEZs).

The government seems to be very much committed to the CPEC as it has broadened the scope of initial project from 1 + 4 portfolio to "One Door Many Corridors" encompassing Trade & Market Access, Industrial Development & Global Value Chains, Socioeconomic Development & Poverty Alleviation, Agriculture Modernization & Marketing, Gwadar oil City & Blue Economy and Regional Connectivity & Third Country Participation. The Rs. 200 billion are reserved for

CPEC plus other relevant projects in total budget. The CPEC is considered as a long-term development project spanning over 15 years period with multiple doors connecting China with Central Asia, Middle East, Africa and Europe. The budget has been increased by 30 percent more for CPEC as compared to ongoing fiscal year. It is believed that CPEC can act as major driver of growth in this current economic situation the country is passing through.

Pakistan is investment depressed economy. The country desperately needs investment led growth. In this regard, CPEC induced gross fixed capital formation can play important role. Huge inflow of US \$60 billion investment under Employment Generation CPEC Program will generate massive economic activities and thereby employment opportunities. Apart from focusing on energy, infrastructure and Gwadar projects, 9 Special Economic Zones are being established under CPEC portfolio that will revive industrialization process through Knowledge Spillovers, innovative businesses and entrepreneurial practices from foreign/Chinese's businesses and possible technology transfers and transformation. To enhance productivity and develop human resource priority will be given to line up technical institutions and demand driven training with CPEC related skills and Special Economic Zones. The government has also planned development and investment projects under CPEC for other sub-sectors of industry such as management of the Mining Industry.

In agriculture more focus should be on crop diversification, valued crop cultivation, precision farming, mechanization, efficient irrigation system, reduction of water intensive crops in water deficient areas. Accordingly, possible business alliances/JVs with Chinese and foreign investors will set forth economies of scale in the sector. The presence of animal transboundary diseases namely Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD) seriously undermine the livestock production, the only sector achieved its target. Initiative of National FMD Control Program worth Rs.763.9 million can effectively be utilized under CPEC as China has shown interest to help overcome the FMD in Pakistan.

In budget the scope of CPEC has been extended including the socio-economic uplift of the society. The multidimensional CPEC projects will potentially boost the leading sub-sectors of the services namely transport, storage & communication, housing services (ownership of dwellings), finance & insurance and tourism & hospitality. Notably tourism sector will be strengthened through conducive environment owe to CPEC that will ultimately raise the socio-economic status of ingenious community.

The current budget is presented in very tough conditions and to bring the economy on right track and achieve the decent growth seems challenging. However, CPEC can turn out to be savior and can potentially stimulate the wide-ranged economic activities in the country and trigger economic growth. The effective utilization of allocated funds in the budget and proper implementation of CPEC projects can put the country on the path of sustained inclusive economic growth so that CPEC emerges as a "Gateway of Prosperity" both for Pakistan and China as well as the region at large.

The authors are Senior Research Fellow and Research Assistant respectively at Centre of Excellence for CPEC, Islamabad. Pakistan is an investment depressed economy. The country desperately needs investment led growth. In this regard, CPEC induced gross fixed capital formation.

Jang News

سی پیک ترقی پذیر ممالک میں شراکت داری کی روشن مثال ہے، علیحدہ لودھی

اسلام آباد (نمائندہ جنگ) علیحدہ لودھی کا کہنا ہے کہ سی پیک ترقی پذیر ممالک کے درمیان شراکت داری کی روشن مثال ہے، ترقی پذیر ممالک میں سرمایہ کاری سے عالمی ترقی کی رفتار میں اضافہ ہو گا۔ خطے میں خوشحالی آئیگی، سرمایہ کاری سے عالمی ترقی کی رفتار میں اضافہ ہو گا، تفصیلات کے مطابق نیویارک میں اقوام متحدہ میں پاکستان کی مستقل مندوب علیحدہ لودھی نے خطاب کرتے ہوئے کہا سی پیک سے خطے میں خوشحالی آئے گی۔ علیحدہ لودھی کا متوسط آمدنی والے ممالک کو درپیش چیلنجز پر اقوام متحدہ میں کہنا تھا کہ دنیا کی 73 فیصد غریب آبادی متوسط آمدنی والے ترقی پذیر ممالک میں رہتی ہے، غربت کا خاتمہ کئے بغیر پائیدار اور دیر پا ترقی کا حصول ممکن نہیں، ترقی پذیر ممالک میں سرمایہ کاری سے عالمی ترقی کی رفتار میں اضافہ ہو گا۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ پاکستان معاشی چیلنجز کے باوجود عالمی سطح پر طے شدہ پائیدار ترقی کے اہداف کے حصول کے لئے اقدامات جاری رکھے گا۔ ان اہداف کا مقصد غربت کا خاتمہ، عدم مساوات کے خلاف جنگ، جدت کے ذریعے موسمیاتی تبدیلی سے نمٹنا اور تمام شعبوں میں مخصوص اور مقررہ حکمت عملیوں پر عملدرآمد کرنا ہے

July 17, 2019

The Express Tribune

More Pakistani students granted Master's degree in China

NANJING: The first batch of Pakistani students fully financed by China Road & Bridge Corporation (CRBC) has graduated from a Chinese university in Nanjing, capital of east China's Jiangsu Province.

The ten students, majoring in transportation in Southeast University, were granted Master's degree last week. After returning to Pakistan, they will join the efforts to build the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the Belt and Road, according to the CRBC. In 2017, the CRBC announced that it would fully finance 100 Pakistani college graduates, government workers and technicians to take a two-year postgraduate program, so as to train talent and make them specialist in infrastructure, construction and management.

Under the Belt and Road Initiative, China is becoming a growingly popular study destination for Pakistani students. Statistics show that in 2012 there were 9,630 Pakistani students in China, while the number surged to 28,023 in 2018.

CPEC provides companies opportunity to adopt latest technology

FAISALABAD: The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has provided an opportunity to Pakistani companies, particularly in the Faisalabad region, to reconfigure their operations and re-strategize their product-based competencies to be able to serve national and global markets in a better position, said University of Cambridge Institute for Manufacturing (IfM) Industrial Associate Dr Arsalan Ghani.

He was speaking to a delegation of the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI), which visited the University of Cambridge, led by FCCI Standing Committee on CPEC Chairman Ahmad Hassan. He was of the view that companies that had transformed their business by incorporating latest technologies and business models would not only grow but would also contribute positively to the national exchequer.

Ghani stressed that either company could continue traditional practices of low-quality manufacturing or could step up and benefit from advanced manufacturing strategies to proactively transform their business and be globally competitive. Talking about IFM, he said knowledge outputs including those on advanced technologies and latest manufacturing processes were disseminated through a dedicated university-industry platform within the IFM.

“The institute has been working for over 50 years with leading organizations in all sectors including food and agriculture, automotive, aerospace, textile, chemical, pharmaceutical, defence, banking and finance, ICT and many more,” he said. “It is particularly helping smaller manufacturers achieve objectives by working with them directly and providing support.”

He added that IFM had developed a set of fast and effective workshop-based frameworks and intervention support tools, which had been used with more than a thousand organizations over the years, leading them to a sustainable growth path.

During the meeting, it was felt that in the changing national and international environment, company executives and senior management within Faisalabad and surrounding areas had to be equipped with knowledge of latest international practices in manufacturing and services. Speaking on the occasion, Hassan said there were around 7,000 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large companies linked to the FCCI.

Speaking about the chamber, he highlighted that it was a platform which had an essential duty to provide valuable services to its members, who often faced challenges due to changing economic and political environment in the country. Hassan stated that the FCCI was planning to enhance its portfolio and incorporate international perspectives for its members so that they could transform their business according to best global practices.

Pakistan Observer

CPEC is Central to the Economic Integration of South and Central Asia

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a flagship project of the Belt and Road (B&R) mega initiative of China. The B&R initiative along with six proposed corridors, including the CPEC is meant to interconnect China, South Asia, West Asia, Central Asia, Russia, Middle East, Africa and Europe for an easier and less time consuming flow of trade and investment. The CPEC is a project worth US \$ 62 billion to connect Kashghar city of China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region with Gwadar port of Pakistan. The project comprises a network of roads, railways, airports, fibre optic-based communication systems and Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

China has started the B&R and CPEC projects with the purpose to enhance its investment to develop the infrastructure and industry of the neighbouring countries and regions as part of the shared destiny to increase its own trade and also enable the neighbouring regions and countries to increase their industry and trade capacities. With their increased production capacities with the Chinese investment, the countries of South Asia and Central Asian Republics (CARs) will be able to trade within their own regions, with China and between both the regions using the CPEC as a quick means of communications.

But, to reap the above-mentioned CPEC-related economic benefits of regional economic integration and development it is necessary that peace and harmony is preferred by the countries of South Asia, and they cooperate with each other to resolve the contentious issues that are plaguing their mutual economic cooperation, as SAARC's mutual trade is only 5 percent of its total trade, which is minimum as compared with other trading blocs, like ASEAN, NAFTA and EU. The two major issues in South Asia are the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India and the Afghan war. Because of these two disputes, the South Asian countries have suffered a lot in leading peaceful life and achieving economic development and integration through mutual investment, trade and tourism and also in carrying out trade with the CARs.

Now that China is investing in the CPEC on a large scale to improve infrastructure and industrial capacities of these regions, it is necessary that the countries of South and Central Asia start preferring geo-economics over geopolitics, and mutually cooperate to resolve the Jammu & Kashmir dispute and establish peace in Afghanistan and realize the CPEC-related intra-regional and inter-regional connectivity to reap economic benefits.

In the context of resolving the above-mentioned two major disputes, while Pakistan and India should hold sustainable and result-oriented mutual negotiations to resolve the Jammu & Kashmir dispute, the other SAARC countries should support them to bring peace and harmony in South Asia, which will facilitate South Asian countries' mutual connectivity, investment and trade relations and their economic relations with other regions by joining the CPEC. In this context, Pakistan and India have to realize that economic benefits of investing and trading within South Asia and with China, the Central Asia and the other regions of the world far outweigh than

lingering on with the Jammu & Kashmir dispute to disrupt their mutual relations and connectivity.

To connect with the Central Asia by joining the CPEC, it is also necessary that an early peace is achieved in Afghanistan. In this regard, it is important that the South Asian, Central Asian and other regional countries support the Pakistan-facilitated ongoing peace process between the US and the Taliban which will subsequently also include the talks with the Afghan Government. It is encouraging to note that the US-Taliban talks are progressing well and there is a need that the Afghan Government and other Afghan political stalwarts also show flexibility to hold successful negotiations with the Taliban to strike an early peace deal for the good of the Afghan people, who have suffered too much and for too long.

If an early peace is established in Afghanistan and the Jammu & Kashmir dispute is resolved by Pakistan and India, then not only all the South Asian countries will be able to connect with each other to share their investment, and industrial technology and carry out mutual trade in the agricultural and industrial goods, energy, natural resources, manpower and tourism, they will also be able to use the CPEC as the shortest route to carry out aforementioned economic activities with China, Central Asia, West Asia and Europe to earn huge economic benefits to alleviate poverty. Hence, it can be concluded with a firm conviction that the CPEC is central to the economic connectivity and integration of South and Central Asian regions and China with each other and with the other regions of the world.

July 18, 2019

Business Recorder

Govt not shared documents of CPEC with IMF: Senate panel told

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was informed on Thursday that the government had not shared any document relating to CPEC with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Briefing the meeting, Secretary Planning Zafar Hassan said “Neither ministry of Planning nor finance has shared any such document of CPEC with the Fund”.

Chairperson of the committee, Senator Sherry Rehman said the government’s statement was in contradiction to some media reports which stated that the government had shared details of debt incurred on account of CPEC projects besides other sensitive information.

“I am stating on record that no such information had been shared with IMF”, Zafar Hassan stressed. Sherry Rehman directed the ministry that there should be no ambiguity with respect to the CPEC projects and transparency in all projects must be ensured.

Minister for Planning and Development Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar on the occasion said the Senate panel should play role in economic development of the country by embarking upon such agendas and ideas which could motivate the government machinery to work diligently for the

country. He said the senate committee should look into issues through the prism of national interest rather than paying heed to the false media reports.

The minister informed that so far, the government to government loans under CPEC were only \$6 billion while the rest were either commercial loans or were under Independent Power Producers (IPP) mode. He pointed out that the government was now focusing on developing business to business contacts with China to promote public private partnership in the country.

In order to boost the country's exports, the minister said special incentive packages would be offered to specially the International investors. He informed that as many as 70,000 direct jobs had been created so far under various CPEC projects while the National Vocational Technical Training Center (NAVTTTC) was doing a great job in preparing thousands of skilled workforce required for second phase of CPEC industrial sector.

With regard to Special Economic Zones, Khusro Bakhtyar said ideally Dhabeji and Gwadar SEZs should be the main focus as it was the International practice that where there was economic activity, development was also focused on those areas.

He said up-gradation of Railway Main Line (ML-1) was an important project under second phase of CPEC, which after completion would help safe, economically viable and speedy transportation of goods from North to South. He said a railway connection between MazarShareef in Afghanistan and Peshawar was also under consideration. Talking about Gwadar Master Plan, the minister said the Gwadar Master Plan would be finalized by end of next month.

“It is not just a matter of land use but it is a whole framework with multi-sector issues, therefore we are taking time to finalize the project,” he added. Officials from all provinces and Gilgit Baltistan also briefed the committee about various social and agriculture projects approved under Chinese grant of \$1 billion.

Dawn News

China starts direct import of Pakistani mangoes from Lahore

BEIJING: A flight carrying 1030 kilograms of Pakistani mangoes from Lahore reached Urumqi International Airport, the first direct import of Pakistani fruit in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

The direct import from Pakistan is expected to reduce the retail price by 20%-30%, such as mango and other fruit types with higher loss rate during transportation, People's Daily quoting Urumqi Customs officials here on Thursday.

The News

Chinese diplomat recalls how China, Pakistan helped each other in times of need

PESHAWAR: A Chinese diplomat during her visit to the University of Peshawar on Wednesday highlighted how China and Pakistan have helped each other in times of need and said their friendship was strong and everlasting.

Bao Zhang, the director general media at the embassy of the People's Republic of China in Islamabad, visited the China Study Centre and the Area Study Centre, Russia, China and Central, at the university and interacted with the members of the faculty and other guests.

Accompanied by six other Chinese diplomats, she also paid a visit to the Peshawar Museum before returning to Islamabad.

For all of them it was their first visit to the University of Peshawar and they took keen interest in its academic activities, architecture and research work. Bao Zhang also planted a sapling at the Area Study Centre to mark her visit.

In her talk at the China Study Centre, the Chinese diplomat recalled how Pakistan had steadfastly backed China's demand to secure its rightful place as a member of the Security Council. She said Pakistan played a pivotal role in the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the US. She also mentioned Pakistan's help for the earthquake victims in China's Sichuan province.

Bao Zhang said China had made efforts to help Pakistan overcome its challenges on the diplomatic front, in the energy sector and in replenishing its foreign exchange reserves. "We in China describe our two neighbouring countries as iron brothers. Our friendship was already higher than the mountains, deeper than the seas and sweeter than honey," she remarked.

She noted that 11 early harvest projects under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had been completed in less than five years while the remaining 11 would be completed soon. She said after focus on overcoming energy shortages and building roads and other infrastructural projects, the stress under CPEC was now on industrial cooperation to create jobs and also upgrade social initiatives in the education, health, agriculture, irrigation and other sectors.

Bao Zhang felt there was need for providing information and guidance to private sector Chinese investors about Pakistan's Islamic culture, business regulations, security situation, tourism potential, etc. She added the University of Peshawar and other universities could play a role in providing this kind of information.

Zhang Jiegen, another Chinese diplomat working as second secretary at his country's embassy in Pakistan, talked about the cooperation between the universities in China and Pakistan in the field of higher education. He said two conferences bringing together universities of the two countries have already been held in China and the next one is being planned in Islamabad in November.

Dr Mohammad Abid, senior journalist Rahimullah Yusufzai and the China Study Centre director Dr Zahid Anwar also spoke on the occasion.

At the Area Study Centre, its director Dr Shabir Ahmad Khan briefed the Chinese diplomats about his centre and also the international conference on CPEC, One Belt One Road and Regional Integration in September this year. He said 13 scholars from China, Russia and Central Asian countries had already confirmed their participation in the conference in Peshawar. Bao Zhang assured of support by the Chinese embassy for organizing the conference.

Nawaiwaqt

سی پیک منصوبہ اور نئی ملازمتوں کے مواقع

سی پیک سینٹر آف ایکسیلینس کی رپورٹ سی پیک بلاشبہ پاکستان کی اقتصادی اور معاشی ترقی کا بے مثال منصوبہ ہے۔ اس منصوبے کے مکمل ہونے سے توانائی، ریلوے اور سڑکوں کی تعمیر کے مختلف منصوبوں سے اور اسی طرح پلاننگ کمیشن کی رپورٹ کے مطابق نو صنعتی زونز کی تکمیل سے 8 لاکھ سے لاکھ سے زیادہ ملازمتوں کے مواقع پیدا ہونے سے ملک میں خوشحالی آئے گی۔ اور معاشی صورتحال بھی بہتر ہوگی۔ اس ضمن میں ضرورت اس امر کی ہے کہ حکومت ان ملازمتوں میں مقامی افراد کو بھرتی کے لئے تیار کرے اور افرادی قوت کو تربیت یافتہ بنانے کے لئے ابھی سے ضروری پالیسی بنائے تاکہ مارکیٹ میں ہنرمند اور تربیت یافتہ افراد مطلوبہ تعداد میں دستیاب ہوں جنہیں باسانی نئی ملازمتوں میں کھپایا جاسکے۔ اس وقت دنیا بھر میں نوجوانوں کی فنی تربیت پر خاص توجہ دی جاتی ہے جو باآسانی مطلوبہ معیار کی ملازمتوں کی رسد پوری کرتے ہیں۔ پاکستان میں بھی سی پیک سے حاصل شدہ ملازمتوں میں مقامی افراد کی بھرتی کیلئے حکومت کو سنجیدگی سے فنی تربیتی اداروں کو فعال بنانا ہو گا تاکہ مقامی ہنرمند افراد کو ضروری تربیت دے کر روزگار فراہم کیا جاسکے اور ملک سے بیروزگاری کا خاتمہ ممکن ہو جو حکومت کا منشور بھی ہے

July 19, 2019

Pakistan Observer

Country Director Xiaohong Yang calls on Hammad Azhar ADB committed to expand partnership with Pakistan

Ms. Xiaohong Yang, Country Director, Asian Development Bank (ADB) called on Muhammad Hammad Azhar, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs. Ms. Yang congratulated Mr. Azhar on his appointment as Federal Minister. Minister for Economic Affairs acknowledged the ADB's support for Pakistan and discussed key priority areas and new avenues for future interventions.

The Minister reiterated that the Government was keen to explore innovative financing models and mobilize investment in infrastructure & social sectors. These initiatives will not only provide fiscal space to the government but also help boost economic activities in the country.

He also urged the ADB to scale up its lending to Pakistan including programme lending and project financing. Ms. Yang said that ADB and Pakistan had successfully met many development challenges. She assured the Minister of the Bank's support in the priority sectors as identified by the present government.

Ms. Yang also briefed the Minister on ADB's ongoing interventions and pipeline projects. She updated the Minister about the ADB's Programme Lending and Special Policy-Based Loan including Trade & Competitiveness Programme, Energy Sector Resilience Programme and Capital Market Reforms Program. ADB is committed to expanding this partnership to increase prosperity of the people of Pakistan, she added. The Country Director thanked the Minister and reiterated ADB's commitment to further strengthen and expand its partnership with Pakistan.

The Nation

10 Pak students graduate from China in transportation engineering

ISLAMABAD - First batch of Pakistani students of transportation engineering under China Road and Bridge Corporation scholarship programme completed their masters' degrees, a statement said on Thursday.

The Higher Education Commission in a statement said that the graduation ceremony for the first batch of Pakistani students of transportation engineering was held at the College of Transportation, Southeast University, China. The higher Education Commission and China Road and Bridge Corporation had inked a document of understanding for this programme for Pakistani students in 2017.

It is the first postgraduate level plan in transportation sector for countries along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and is strongly supported by the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission and the HEC, the statement added.

Ye Chengyin, Deputy General Manager China Road and Bridge Corporation, Ren Lijian, Vice Principal, Southeast University and other guests attended the ceremony wherein 10 Pakistani students were issued graduate certificate and were awarded special souvenirs.

Currently, the second batch of 29 Pakistani students is also studying in the SEU while the third batch of another 29 students is planning to study for masters degrees from September 2019. Speaking during the ceremony, Chengyin said that under the guidelines of BRI, the CRBC would try its utmost to be a pacesetter in infrastructure connectivity as well as pioneer and contributor in enhancing people-to-people ties.

China Road and Bridge Corporation started cooperation with HEC and Southeast University in 2017, initiating the programme, "Inherit Pak-China Friendship, Hundred Talents Study Financing Programme" which will fully fund 100 people including in-service staff members for higher education in China.

It aims at developing professionals in transportation field in Pakistan and cultivates senior technical and management personnel for CPEC construction. Lijian said that the SEU was a first-class university in China, which paid great attention to cooperation and exchanges with countries along the Belt and Road Initiative.

Representative of Pakistani students, Qamar Zaman Bhatti said that the SEU was his second hometown where he was kindly treated by teachers and students; learnt many new skills and made new friends. He said that he would make all-out effort to contribute for development of CPEC as well as China-Pakistan friendship.

July 20, 2019

Daily Times

Italian and Chinese majors vie for Pakistan's mega LNG tender

The country's biggest supplier currently is Qatar, with which it signed a deal in 2016 for 3.75 million tons of LNG a year for 15 years.

Italian oil major Eni, China's overseas energy unit PetroChina and two trading houses are vying to supply liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Pakistan in a tender worth billions of dollars. The 240-cargo 10-year tender, worth up to \$6 billion according to Reuters was issued last month and closed on Thursday.

Pakistan is expected to be a significant top-five growth driver in global LNG demand, with WoodMac estimating the country will need 25 million tons a year as domestic supplies dwindle and its economy grows. Eni, the trading arm of Azeri state oil company SOCAR, PetroChina International Singapore, a unit of PetroChina Co. Ltd. and global trading house Trafigura have reportedly all made offers.

"The technical bids for our long-term LNG supply tender were received and opened yesterday. Evaluations are underway," Pakistan LNG said in emailed comments to Reuters.

The tender is keenly watched due to its size and because Pakistan, gripped by an anti-corruption drive under the government of Prime Minister Imran Khan, is expected to publish the lowest prices offered by the companies. This will give a valuable insight into the opaque LNG market, which is characterized by closed bilateral trades, secret long-term supply agreements and an over-the-counter spot market.

Commercial offers are expected to be opened on Aug. 2, said a source, which is when tender issuer Pakistan LNG is likely to announce the prices. Pakistan, like most Asian buyers, purchases LNG priced against Brent crude oil expressed as a price slope.

The country's biggest supplier currently is Qatar, with which it signed a deal in 2016 for 3.75 million tons of LNG a year for 15 years. It also has a separate 15-year agreement with Eni.

Pakistan Observer

China's agri trade with BRI states \$77 billion

China's agricultural trade with the Belt and Road (B&R) countries totaled 77 billion U.S. dollars in 2018, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. China has launched more than 650 agricultural investment projects in B&R countries, with an investment of 9.44 billion dollars, up 70 percent compared with five years ago, said Ma Hongtao, an official with the ministry, at a press conference. These projects promoted the development of local industries such as grain, cash crops, animal husbandry and agricultural processing, Ma said.

Chinese-funded agricultural enterprises have built public welfare facilities in the B&R countries, employing more than 100,000 workers in the regions. Ma said that the ministry has signed agricultural and fishery cooperation documents with more than 80 B&R countries.

Trade from goods with B&R countries totaled 1.3 trillion dollars in 2018, up 16.3 percent year on year and outpacing the growth rate of the country's total foreign trade last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce—Xinhau

July 21, 2019

Dawn News

Senate panel objects to reallocation of funds from CPEC

ISLAMABAD: A parliamentary committee on Friday expressed concern over reallocation of Rs24 billion under the head of "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and other initiatives".

The Senate Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Reforms met to discuss a calling-attention notice moved by Senator Mian Raza Rabbani regarding reallocation of Rs24bn out of Rs27bn under the head of special initiatives of the CPEC towards other programmes.

Members of the committee argued that the government could not reallocate funds dedicated to the CPEC. "Not only does this mean the CPEC is not being given priority but this also leaves room for corruption," said Senator Talha Mahmood.

Committee seeks details of the projects towards which the money was transferred

The committee sought details of the projects towards which this money was reallocated and directed the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms to collect information from the cabinet division and submit before the next meeting.

Planning ministry's secretary Zafar Hassan clarified to the committee that Rs27bn had not been allocated for CPEC projects but was targeted at other projects of national development under the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The secretary explained that during the rationalization exercise, with the deletion of unapproved projects, Rs55bn allocation was available for these projects. Of the Rs55bn, Rs27 billion was allocated for CPEC and other initiatives.

“Of the Rs27 billion, Rs24 billion was allocated for special initiatives taken by the government for development at grass-roots level and ensure achieving SDGs known as the SDGs Achievement Programme (SAP). The balance Rs3bn was kept as block to meet the requirement of CPEC projects during the year, if needed,” Mr Hassan informed the committee.

He explained that with this amount — already submitted to the Senate — there was neither reduction in the allocation for CPEC projects nor were any funds meant for CPEC re-allocated to any other project.

He also explained that of the Rs167.2bn allocated for CPEC projects during 2018-19, Rs193bn was authorized for release — which was 18 per cent higher than the allocation.

The committee was also briefed on the role of the Alternative Energy Development Board to enhance investment opportunities in renewable and alternative energies, especially in CPEC projects.

According to the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms, 24 wind power projects were in place under the 2006 policy and these projects were in Thatta district of Sindh. The committee was informed that some areas in Balochistan had high potential of wind power generation but were still not connected with the grid. It was told that 15 more projects were under development. In Balochistan, surveys had been conducted in the last three years and six solar power projects and eight biomass projects are functional at present.

The committee members recommended incentivizing the private sector and overseas Pakistanis. The committee was told that renewable energy projects to be completed in future included 19 projects of 531MW, 22 projects of 1,199.3MW and 104 projects of more than 6,000MW.

The committee asked the Alternative Energy Development Board to submit province- and district-wise segregation of future wind and solar power projects. It also directed the board to provide details of the project of converting the existing tube wells in Balochistan into solar power as it was considered to be inefficient.

During the briefing on the M-8 Ratodero-Khuzdar Motorway project, the committee was informed by the NHA that 90pc work was completed with seven out of eight bridges functional. The committee was told that the initial cost of the complete project from Gwadar to Ratodero was Rs23bn for 900km stretch.

July 22, 2019

The Express Tribune

SCO provides Pakistan new opportunity for economic development

ISLAMABAD: Rapid changes were seen in the global economic, social and diplomatic landscape in the past decade. The changing power structure was led by the changing economic landscape and powerhouses.

China has appeared as a powerful economic player and has taken lead in refining the global economic and governance system. It is not a surprise as emerging powers always steer change in the existing system.

However, the approach taken by China is different from others. It is trying to do so by building partnerships and by not creating fuss. It is building platforms, which should be beneficial for all the participants and contributors, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is one such platform.

SCO was created to resolve issues related to border management and security but later its scope was widened. At present, SCO is the biggest regional organization in terms of its size and population. Its members constitute about 45% of the world population, 23% of land mass and 25% of gross domestic product (GDP) of the entire world. The total worth of GDP is \$14.5 trillion.

The focus of this organization is gradually shifting towards economic linkages and development of member countries. Chinese prime minister in 2004 urged all SCO countries to work for free trade among member states. At the heads of state meeting in 2018, it was emphasized that the trade procedure should be simplified for intra-regional trade.

In 2019, the SCO's declaration again asked member states to accelerate efforts for wider economic cooperation and enhancing trade. China is championing the cause. It has already been noted that China has increased its trade with SCO members in the past few years. At present, the total trade of China with SCO members is worth \$337 billion – including countries having the status of observer and dialogue partner – exhibiting 19% growth.

China's major trade partners are Russia and India with trade worth \$106.65 billion and \$95.87 billion respectively. India is the biggest export destination with shipments worth \$77.02 billion and Russia is the biggest exporter to China in the SCO group with exports of \$58.58 billion.

SCO's two leading members – China and Russia – have presented their visions of future economic development and trade through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Eurasia Economic Union (EEU). These two initiatives present excellent prospects for economic development in future.

Forging links with SCO bloc

Being a member of SCO, Pakistan has an excellent opportunity to revive its economy with the help of the regional bloc, its platforms and member states.

However, to capitalize on the opportunity, Pakistan will have to devise a relevant policy. First, it should learn from the past. Earlier, Pakistan made many mistakes and the prominent ones included ignoring SCO countries, missing the dynamics of Central Asian states and too much reliance on western markets.

Although in recent years Pakistan has increasingly focused on the Chinese market, it lacks any major policy for developing economic and trade ties with Russia and Central Asian states.

Central Asia provides an opportunity for two-way trade. Pakistan has the potential to export finished products and some agricultural commodities. On the other hand, it can benefit from energy and mineral resources of Central Asia. Russia can help Pakistan develop scientific knowledge and adopt new technologies. Pakistan can benefit from the Russian market too. Russia is also interested in using Gwadar Port for trade.

Unfortunately, current trade statistics are very poor with SCO members, except for China. Pakistan's exports to Uzbekistan are worth only \$17 million and imports are valued at \$33.31 million. In trade with Kazakhstan, Pakistan's exports and imports stand at merely \$86 million and \$33.11 million respectively.

Trade with Tajikistan is also not encouraging as Pakistan's exports stand at only \$94.06 million and imports are valued at \$33.45 million. Although Kyrgyzstan is a very vibrant economy of Central Asia, Pakistan's trade with it is very low. Pakistan's exports to Kyrgyzstan are worth \$15.11 million and imports stand at \$0.121 million.

In trade with Russia, the statistics show a very discouraging picture. Russia is one of the leading economies and a developed country. Owing to the troubled history of relations between the two countries, Pakistan's trade with Russia is very slim.

According to international trade statistics, Pakistan's total exports to Russia are only \$157 million and imports are worth \$375 million. Of late, Pakistan and Russia are trying to improve their economic relations. SCO and China have provided an opportunity to both countries to break the ice and now they are working on further improvement with high hopes.

Lastly, economic linkages with India are very weak. Though both countries are neighbours, bilateral trade is very low compared to the potential. At present, Pakistan's total imports from India are worth \$1.8 billion and exports are valued at \$350 million.

It means Pakistan has not been able to benefit from the potential of Indian market. Moreover, there is also a huge volume of illegal trade. However, there is hope that SCO will help to break the ice and pave the way for better ties between the two neighbours.

In the case of Central Asia, major reasons for insignificant trade includes low priority attached to the region and self-perceived assumptions. Pakistan has consistently ignored the region and has not tried to learn the governance system and market structure of these countries.

Lessons

The discussion presents two important lessons for Pakistan. First, Pakistan should exploit these markets for economic revival. Second, SCO provides an excellent opportunity to create linkages as the bloc has proposed that all countries should try to simplify trade procedures and work for a free trade agreement.

We should learn from China. China has many issues with India but its trade volume is approaching a staggering \$100 billion. China has also developed trade linkages with Taiwan despite massive differences.

Lastly, Pakistan must study markets and governance structure of all SCO member countries. A comprehensive understanding of markets and governance structures will help Pakistan devise a prudent policy.

Jang News

سی پیک دوسرا مرحلہ، سماجی و معاشی ترقی کے متعدد منصوبوں کو اگست میں حتمی شکل دی جائیگی

اسلام آباد (تنویر ہاشمی، کامرس رپورٹر) سی پیک کے دوسرے مرحلے کے تحت سماجی و زرعی شعبوں کی ترقی کے لیے مجوزہ منصوبوں کو حتمی شکل دینے کے لیے چینی ماہرین کا گروپ اگست میں پاکستان کا دورہ کرے گا، پاکستان نے سماجی، معاشی و زرعی شعبے کے مجوزہ منصوبوں کو چین کو پہلے ہی ارسال کر دیا تھا یہ منصوبے چاروں صوبوں، آزاد جموں و کشمیر اور گلگت بلتستان حکومتوں کی طرف سے تجویز کیے گئے ہیں، ان کو آئندہ ماہ اگست میں حتمی منظوری دی جائیگی جس پر عملدرآمد کا آغاز کر دیا جائیگا، دستاویزات کے مطابق سماجی شعبے میں تعلیم، صحت، فنی تعلیم و تربیت، تخفیف غربت، پینے کے صاف پانی، مقامی حکومتوں کی استعداد کار میں اضافے اور دیہی ترقی کے منصوبوں کو ایک سال کی مدت میں مکمل کیا جائے گا۔

Nawaiwaqt

چین کا کوئٹہ میں بیٹھے پانی کی قلت دور کرنے کیلئے شمسی توانائی کا منصوبہ

پاکستان میں چین کے سفارت خانے نے کوئٹہ میں بیٹھے پانی کی قلت کو دور کرنے کے لئے کئی کنویں عطیہ کئے ہیں۔ چائنہ ریڈیو انٹرنیشنل کے مطابق اس سلسلے میں گزشتہ روز کوئٹہ میں ایک تقریب منعقد ہوئی۔ پاکستان میں چین کے سفارت خانے کے کونسلر جاو لی جیان نے اس تقریب میں شرکت کی۔ اس موقع پر خطاب کرتے ہوئے انہوں نے امید ظاہر کی کہ یہ منصوبہ چین پاک تعلقات کے فروغ میں اہم کردار ادا کرے گا۔ چین کی جانب سے عطیہ کئے گئے یہ کنویں شمسی توانائی کے مدد سے کام کریں گے۔ ان کنویں سے پانی نکال کر پائپ لائن کے ذریعے کوئٹہ سٹی ہیلتھ اور واٹر سپلائی ڈیپارٹمنٹ کے پانی اسٹورج کرنے کے مقامات تک پہنچایا جا رہا ہے جہاں سے یہ کوئٹہ کے شہریوں کو تقسیم کیا جا رہا

ہے۔ پاکستانی جسٹس موومنٹ پارٹی کے سیکرٹری بائیزید کاسی نے کہا کہ یہ پہلی بار ہے کہ کوئٹہ شہر کی صحت اور پانی کی فراہمی کے شعبے نے شمسی توانائی کے پینل کا استعمال کر کے بجلی پیدا کی ہے اور اس بجلی سے زمین سے پانی نکالا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ ہر کنویں سے 190 لیٹر پانی فی منٹ نکالا جاسکتا ہے، اور پانچ کنویں کی روزانہ کی پیداواری صلاحیت 456 ٹن ہے۔ ورلڈ ہیلتھ آرگنائزیشن کے مطابق ایک آدمی کے لئے ہر روز کم از کم 20 لیٹر پانی کی ضرورت ہے۔ یہ منصوبہ کوئٹہ میں 22,800 افراد کی روزانہ پانی کی ضروریات کو پورا کر سکے گا۔ کوئٹہ کے مقامی افراد نے امید ظاہر کی ہے کہ اس منصوبے سے استفادہ کرنے والوں کی تعداد مذکورہ تعداد سے دگنی ہوگی۔

July 23, 2019

Dawn News

China keen to improve agriculture sector in Balochistan

QUETTA: Deputy Chief of Mission of Chinese Embassy in Islamabad Lijian Zhao said on Monday that his country wanted to help improve the agriculture sector in Balochistan by imparting training to the farmers about latest technology, proper usage of seeds, irrigation and capacity building.

During a meeting with Agriculture Minister Zamarak Khan Piralizai, the Chinese diplomat said that under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor the second phase of investment would be in several sectors, including agriculture. He assured the minister that China would assist the Balochistan government in durable development of its agriculture sector. He said that Chinese investors would also invest in the agriculture sector of Balochistan.

The two sides discussed the importance of the agriculture sector, Chinese cooperation in capacity building of farmers, awareness about better use of latest technology, augmentation of production and investment in this sector.

The minister thanked the Chinese diplomat for showing interest in the development of agriculture sector and assured him that the Balochistan government would fully cooperate with Chinese investors and provide them all necessary facilities. He said the agriculture played a crucial role in the economy of Balochistan as approximately 80 per cent people were linked with this sector. Mr Piralizai said the provincial government was taking steps for the promotion of agriculture, providing training to farmers, spending on researches despite lack of resources.

The News

HBL and CRBC sign a MOU to collaborate on development of Rashakai SEZ

KARACHI: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between HBL and China Road & Bridge Corporation (CRBC) on 19 July 2019 at the HBL office in Karachi. Under the MOU, both organizations will collaborate on development projects in Pakistan, especially the Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

CRBC is the concessionaire of the Rashakai SEZ. HBL and CBRC will work towards the development of the Rashakai SEZ and attract international and domestic investors. HBL will also provide financial advisory and fund-raising services to the developer and potential investors. HBL will be the first bank to establish a branch in the Rashakai SEZ and the development of this zone will be an important step in the industrial progress of Pakistan.

This MOU marks another milestone in the partnership of HBL and CRBC, as both organizations are now working on projects not only in Pakistan but in other regional countries as well.

The News

Chinese reception guests discuss PM's US visit

ISLAMABAD: The reception hosted by Chinese Defence Attaché Major General Chen Wenrong to celebrate 92nd anniversary of the founding of Chinese People's Liberation Army (CPLA) on Monday in a local hotel where Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Zubair Mahmood Hayat was the chief guest was an impressive show.

The guest kept discussing the ongoing visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to the United States and incidentally the timing of the reception was coinciding with the meeting between the prime minister and US President Donald Trump in Washington DC White House.

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, ISI DG Lieutenant General FaizHameed and ISPR DG Major General AsifGhafoor are in Washington and part of the delegation of the prime minister. Since senior officers of the three services attended the reception in a large number and they signified the presence of General Bajwa in the White House, and his engagements in the US capital.

The guests were of the view that military leadership inclusion in the prime minister's delegation greatly helped in producing positive and meaningful outcome of the visit.

Large number of the guests expressed their dismay about the restriction on media in the country, and they were expecting that being the flag holder of democratic norms US leadership will agitate the matter with the visitors from Pakistan. The guests also discussed political developments inside Pakistan as Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani is going to face no-trust move by the opposition while Deputy Chairman SalimMandviwala is confronting similar move by the government next week.

The united opposition has planned to observe black day throughout the country on Thursday which will be first anniversary of the polls of 2018. The opposition has been discarding the results of the general elections calling them widely rigged. The grand rally and public meeting of Maryam Nawaz Sharif in Faisalabad despite artificial hurdles and health issues of the most popular leader of the country and Quaid Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) in Lahore's prison were discussed by the guests. They expressed concern about it.

Former federal minister and builder of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Prof Ahsan Iqbal had brief discussion with Chinese ambassador in Pakistan Yao Jing regarding the CPEC. He appreciated Chinese leadership's generous assistance and converting CPEC as flagship project of the Belt and Road initiative of President Xi Jinping.

Prof Ahsan Iqbal was of the view that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif rightly termed the corridor as game changer for the region that will change fate of the millions downtrodden of Pakistan and adjoining countries. Ambassador Yao Jing eulogized the contribution and role of Prof Ahsan Iqbal in executing important schemes of the CPEC.

Indian High Commissioner Ajay Absaria also turned up in the reception and the fellow guest tried to gather his impression about the visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to the United States and possible reaction about it by his government.

Former Chief of Air Staff (CAS), retired Air Chief Marshal Tahir Rafiq Butt, retired Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman, former Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), retired Admiral Muhammad Asif Sandheela, Federal Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad were also among the guests. They thoroughly enjoyed the evening and hospitality of Chinese Embassy's Defence Wing. General Zubair Mahmood Hayat, in his address, made it clear in implied manner that Pakistan and China's cooperation would not allow any one as new monster in the region. He didn't take name of any other country in this regard, but it was obvious reference was about India.

The Nation

Pakistan pays rich tribute to Chinese Army

ISLAMABAD - Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Zubair Mahmood Hayat on Monday paid rich tributes to the People's Liberation Army (PLA) for its productive and leading role in promoting peace, stability and development world-wide.

Speaking at a reception held here at a local hotel on the occasion of 92nd anniversary of founding of the PLA, he said the Chinese army under the leadership of President Xi Jinping was playing an important role in the country's defence and the socio-economic development.

The reception was hosted by Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing. It was largely attended by the high-ranking officers of the Pakistan Army, Air Force and Navy as well as representatives of the civil city. Federal Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmed was also present on the occasion.

On the occasion, Major General Chen Wenrong, the Defence Attache, gave a brief introduction of the development of Chinese military in the new era, elaborated on the deepening of reforms by PLA as well as enhancement of foreign exchanges and cooperation, and its outstanding contribution in maintaining world peace.

He noted that with the fruitful results of practical military cooperation achieved, the military relations between China and Pakistan have grown closer year by year.

The two countries have forged the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, and China highly values the efforts made by Pakistan in anti-terrorism and other fields. China-Pakistan brotherhood will stay evergreen despite the ever-changing international situation.

He eulogized the role of Pakistan's army in providing due security to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. He was confident that the strategic relationship between the two countries will meet the common aspirations and interests of their people.

In his speech at the reception, General Zubair Hayat, on behalf of all members of Pakistani military and the people of Pakistan, extended warm congratulation to President Xi Jinping and Chinese military and lauded the great achievements by the PLA in deepening reforms.

He reiterated that Pakistan-China friendship is highly valued by Pakistani government and every political party of Pakistan. Hence, he said, with the friendship deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of Pakistani people, not only have the military relations of the two countries withstood the tests over time, but also high-level exchanges and cooperation in defense and training have progressed continuously.

He said that he will be soon paying a visit to China to hold talks with the Chinese leadership to further strengthen their bilateral ties in defence sector. He said he was proud of having close relations with China and its military both at personal and professional level.

While expressing heartfelt gratitude to China for its support and help for Pakistan and its strengthening of its military, he pledged that regardless of the changes in international and regional situations, Pakistan will firmly stand by the Chinese side, working together against various kinds of security challenges for mutual interests. During the reception, guests watched a video displaying the spirit of Chinese military in the new era. They expressed congratulation on the great achievements of Chinese military and appreciation for its contribution to world peace as well, wishing that the military relations between China and Pakistan would be elevated to new heights. General Zubair Hayat and Ambassador Yao Jing also cut a cake on the occasion to the mark the occasion.

July 24, 2019

Pakistan Observer

New Chinese investment, stability & CPEC

AS many as fifty five heads of different small and medium size Chinese companies recently assured Prime Minister Imran Khan for their investment worth five billion dollars in Pakistan during next three to five years. Prime Minister Imran Khan has welcomed the interest of Chinese Companies from the core of his heart. The investment and transfer of industrial set-up by

Chinese Companies will generate over fifty thousand jobs in Pakistan during the first year. In economic crisis-like situation it is not less than a blessing that the Chinese corporate leaders with their businesses in multiple areas, including small and medium enterprises, have shown keen interest to invest in Pakistan. The meeting was the follow-up of Prime Minister IK's visit to China in April 2019 where the leadership of the two countries agreed to strengthen bilateral relationship in key areas, particularly trade and investment. Inspired by the strategy of Chinese leadership on peace, governance and poverty alleviation, Government of Pakistan is learning from these experiences to achieve the goals of national prosperity. China always has sided with Pakistan in tough times, adding that the two peoples are tied with a strong bond of friendship.

On China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the project would prove a game changer in exploring the true potential of bilateral small and medium level trade relations ahead. These small and medium size investors will definitely change the mindset of investors from different parts of the world. This tendency of investors will surely help alleviate poverty in parts of Pakistan. Implementation of CPEC-related initiatives is a priority of Pakistan. China would extend full cooperation to Pakistan in promoting business activities and establishing strong trade links for Pakistan's economic stability. In fact government's lucrative incentives will attract foreign as well as local investors to invest in Pakistan. Economic policy makers and revenue collectors will set the future lines of economy of Pakistan.

As a matter of fact economic development of any country is based on political stability. Politically stable countries send positive indicators to the foreign investors. Investors all over the world invest in those countries where incentives regarding duties and taxes are made lucrative and procedures are made simple. Stable conditions ensure protection of their businesses. During 2013-18, procedural matters of Government of Pakistan have been quite easy and accommodating but now the situation is not the same. Government of Pakistan needs to review its working style with the foreign investors. The minimum the investors face difficulties in any country the maximum they focus on the development and production.

During Premier IK's official visit to America suicidal attack by a young girl in Dera Ismail Khan has once again jolted the roots of already fragile economy of Pakistan. This attack has sent strong negative message to the foreign investors. Terrorists have designed this attack keeping in mind the positive tendency of the investors of China and America. After meeting Chinese investors in Islamabad, Premier IK has been meeting with American and Canadian investors.

The recent terrorist attack in D I Khan has dented image of secure Pakistan once again. Foolproof security is the dire need of foreign investors. It is true that Pakistan has controlled terrorism up to maximum extent but it is not controlled completely. This suicidal attack also indicates that politically the country is still unstable. Terrorism flourishes in unstable countries. It also indicates that enemies of Pakistan are still very strong. Government of Pakistan needs to review its political working style and policies so that terrorists could not find any loose passage to get in. Government will have to pay attention on all corners around to cordon tight security. It will have to address all reasons of terrorism. Our enemies are very strong and professional.

Government needs to be more vigilant than the terrorists. Vigilance of the security forces will get control over still shaky situation. If this unfavorable situation continues, it will push Chinese investors back. If Pakistan is willing to make itself one of the leading economic powers of the region, it will have to focus on political stability and foolproof security. After the achievement of these factors no one can stop Pakistan from making gigantic matchless development.

STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF CPEC

The geographical location of a country determines its role in the world politics. It denotes that critically how beneficial or non-beneficial one country is to the others in terms of the social, economic and political aspects. Strategically, Pakistan is located at a very significant geo-strategic place on the globe. It is situated at the juncture of energy proficient to the energy deficient countries. The geo-strategic importance of Pakistan is evident from the fact that it is bordered by the emerging economic giants of the world i.e. India and China, and by the countries rich in abundant natural resources i.e. Afghanistan and Iran. Historically, it is evident that the very concept of a corridor has been a cause of development in different parts of the world. In the post-1945-time, European Economic Community was formed in 1957, which was later incorporated and renamed as the European Community (EC) in November 1993 and then reformed to the European Union (EU) in 2009, based on the pillars of free movement of people, goods, services and capital. The idea of establishment of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) encompassing Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar under the Greater Mekong Sub-Region Economic Cooperation Programme is also parallel to the concept of establishment of economic corridor for promoting trade and people-to-people contact by interaction. Economic corridors have emerged in the recent years as an important tool of regional cooperation, integration and development in a globalized world under reciprocity.

Following the experience of economic integration at the regional level through a network of transnational economic corridors in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, similar initiatives have now been stimulated in different parts of Asia to speed up economic growth by linking backward regions with more established industrial centres and to improve access to markets through the incorporation of trans-border production networks. The idea of building mega projects through Pakistan is not novel. In the late 1990s an earlier American proposed project under consideration, in which the oil and gas would have been transported by a pipeline from the oil-rich Central Asian Republics (CARs) through Afghanistan and Baluchistan Province of Pakistan was dropped due to the security concerns. It demonstrates the capacity of Baluchistan to play a pivotal role in the overall economy and the enhancement of the objectives of national interest of Pakistan.

Keeping in mind the changing geo-strategic environment, Pakistan is looking forward to improve security of its largest province. Russia, which had a cooled relationship with Pakistan at one time in history, is now warming up and has shown keenness in the Corridor, besides building Karachi-Lahore gas pipeline. China as being the neighbor of South Asia has a special significance in enhancing the agenda of constructive engagements, which is now evident from the active involvement of Chinese leadership in South Asian region. President Xi visited South Asian

countries and announced huge investment packages and trade enhancement programmes for mutual benefits and regional integration. China is going to build its leading role in Asia and beyond for economic and political cooperation through “One Belt One Road (OBOR)” initiative.

The “One Belt One Road” plan integrates an area with a population of 4.4 billion people and a total economic volume of US \$ 21 trillion, being 29 percent of the world’s total. OBOR project consists of two major components: first, the network of land-based ‘New Silk Road’; and secondly, the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The aim is to create a Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) altogether through a huge network of transportation corridors, oil & gas pipelines, ports and fibre-optic cables spreading across the entire Eurasian landmass linking East Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, Middle East and parts of Europe. Chinese Premier Mr. Li Keqiang during his visit to Pakistan from 22 to 23 May 2013, wished for a China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in relation to connect Kashgar in China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region with the Southwestern Gwadar Port of Pakistan. The strategic bonds between Pakistan and China have been on an upward trajectory with moved thrust on economic interaction after the initiation of CPEC project since 2013. Under CPEC, China would invest billions in Pakistan for the development of transportation infrastructure and energy projects. CPEC is a futuristic socio-political and economic object oriented dimension of Pakistan in the 21st century.

This multi-faceted project has opened new vistas of Pakistan’s rebalancing options from geopolitics to geo-economics. It comprises four pillars namely, the infrastructure, the energy requirements, workforce development and economic progress. CPEC project is not an economic and financial aid given to Pakistan but an investment for the next 15 to 30 years. This time-frame is significant for Pakistan as it is the period in which Pakistan by the utilization of its resources and manpower could bring Pakistan in line to the mainstream of global economies. It has been anticipated that if CPEC has been utilized properly, it would bounce the economy of Pakistan from three to four times. It is appropriate to mention here that CPEC is a long-term broader framework with multiple dimensional proposed projects, which would be accomplished in different phases through bilateral agreements approved by the two sides as a win-win equation.

It might be possible to acquire a deeper understanding of the New Silk Road by looking at how CPEC develops and influences Pakistan and its neighboring countries. The major aim of the Corridor is to enhance the well-being of people throughout the country and to bring about long-term socio-economic prosperity and political stability. The Corridor emphasizes to facilitate multi-dimensional economic collaboration in finance, trade, energy and industry. The leadership of both countries has built an all-weather friendship and close political relationship over the previous years. (Courtesy: International Journal of Social Sciences, Humanities and Education).

The Express Tribune

Trade war, SEZs and Pakistan

How can Pakistan optimally benefit from the ongoing tariff war between the US and China? This is a basic query requiring specialized focus and analysis of the export-led dynamics responsible

for the virulent trade conflicts. The ‘reciprocity framework’ of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT/WTO), as explained under Articles XXVIII and XIX on ‘renegotiating concessions’, seems to provide legal justification for the turgid trade frictions worldwide. Moreover, tensions between major international trading partners are not a new phenomenon. Back in the 1980s, a similar trade tug-of-war was witnessed between the US and Japan. An exponentially high volume of the Chinese exports has been alarming the US pundits since 1990s.

In a World Bank’s policy research working paper titled “US-Japan and US-China trade conflict: Export growth, reciprocity and trading system”, Chad Bown and Rachel McCulloch underline similarities and dissimilarities between the US trade friction with Japan and China. They argue that Japan, from 1950s through 1990s, and China, since 1970s, have posed vitiating challenges to the GATT/WTO trading system because of their unusually high shares of world exports and bilateral trade imbalances with the US. Such trade imbalances have been viewed, by the US policymakers, as a threat to the GATT/WTO principle stressing market-access concessions for quixotic players in the trading system.

Against this backdrop, the US continued to put pressure on the voluminous export of Chinese products. Taking offense at the US actions, according to media reports, many Chinese companies have started shifting their businesses to low-cost countries. Since Chinese companies are facing prosaic business challenges at the local level, such as rising wages, labour crunch, and the pressure of additional tariffs, Chinese companies are considering manufacturing their products in other countries in attempts to dodge the US in the ongoing tariff war. The querulous trend suggests that the trade tug-of-war between the US and China has created many business opportunities for low-cost countries such as Pakistan.

In the aftermath of the additional tariffs imposed by the US, Chinese exporters are facing a welter of business pressures to cope with the ongoing trade challenges. Prima facie, as per reports, they have three main options: increasing consumption of their products indigenously in China; diversifying their client base thus relying less on the US; and moving manufacturing of their products to other low-cost countries. If they focus on consuming their products indigenously, it may have vociferous consequences for their Open Door Policy in the long run. Given the US tariff vitriol that has followed China, Chinese exporters will also face the current trend of high wages and labour crunch locally. These factors will not allow Chinese exporters to focus on the local market for consumption of their products. The second option is to diversify the market for Chinese products internationally, thus bypassing the challenges posed by additional tariffs by President Trump. However, this is also not a plausible idea because the US is a major trading partner in the world and it is very hard for any country to bypass it. The third option of moving manufacturing to low-cost nations has several tangible merits. By doing so, Chinese exporters can easily manipulate their exports into the US by doing away with their ‘Made in China’ tag, as their products will be manufactured in other low-cost countries and labeled accordingly.

Meanwhile, reports suggest that the Chinese government has denied that companies have started moving their businesses outside China. However, it is argued that if Chinese exporters choose to manufacture their products outside China, their businesses may be at risk because the US and China may strike a deal through which China can contain the additional tariffs imposed by the US. In this scenario, the investments made by Chinese exporters in other countries may face huge losses. This creates a business conundrum for Chinese businessmen regarding whether they should shift their product production to other low-cost countries or not.

This is a time for Pakistan to keep a close eye on the ongoing international trade developments. The influx of the Chinese businessmen to other countries needs to be monitored systematically by collecting data regarding products that are high in demand in the US. Pakistan has the advantage of having geographical contiguity with China. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is another trade advantage. These comparative advantages should naturally mark Pakistan as the best option for the Chinese exporters where they can produce their products. In this regard, the location of proposed Special Economic Zones (SEZs) will have a crucial role to play as reflected in our article “Promoting SEZs: the location factor” that appeared in this newspaper on April 18, 2019.

This is the right time for Pakistan to come up with a policy plan, based on extensive research. It is not just trade, it is the entire international political landscape that will determine the future of trade between the US and China. Pakistan needs to prepare itself to accommodate the Chinese exporters willing to manufacture their products in other low-cost countries for onward export to the US. The spillover effect of the rising trade tensions between the US and China can indeed be a ‘quantum leap’ for Pakistan’s languishing economy. Responding with a pique to the US safeguards, if Chinese companies were to move to Pakistan, the products produced will be labeled as ‘Made in Pakistan’, creating a trend to promote a culture of business entrepreneurship and innovation in Pakistan.

Anticipating future trade variables, particularly the ripple effects of the additional tariffs imposed by President Trump on the \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods, Pakistan must be prepared to welcome Chinese companies and exporters. It is a good time to attract Chinese investors, businessmen, industrialists and exporters directly affected by US tariffs. It may be noted that during the US-Japan trade tensions in the past, many low-cost nations benefitted. The US protection targeted at Japan, according to Bown and McCulloch, promoted the export growth in textiles, steel and semiconductors in several newly industrialized low-cost economies such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and South Korea. India, Bangladesh and Vietnam have also been the beneficiaries of the US-China trade conflicts in the textiles and apparel sectors.

Currently the investors in China are closely watching the government policies and the depreciation of Yuan to counter the additional tariffs imposed by the US. Many of them may also be double-minded either to move their factories to other countries or not, because the two countries may enter into some kind of trade agreement that can offset the tariff pressures. In these circumstances, Pakistan could be an attractive destination for Chinese exporters aiming to

bypass the tariffs imposed by the US. In the wake of ongoing trade frictions, Pakistan must devise a robust policy capable of accommodating the Chinese exporters, affected by the US tariffs, alongside establishing SEZs at locations of optimal advantage to both Pakistan and China.

The News

The belt and its buckle

With strong integration of globalization and economic forces, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) seeks to forge a common destiny for Asia Pacific and beyond. At this critical juncture when economies are slowing down and regional politics is overtaking regional economics, the BRI offers a beacon of hope for the participating states.

It is projected that the BRI, when fully realized, will reduce travel times by up to 12 percent, reducing trade costs amongst its partner countries. The Belt and Road Initiative mainly focuses on connectivity of policies for unimpeded trade which will resultantly increasing trade up to three to eight percent. As predicted by economic pundits, the next decade will witness new supply chains and new regional trade lines despite the hovering clouds of the US-China trade war.

Along with relocation of Chinese industries, there will be diversification in investment coming from the West with industries shifting to new destinations like Laos, Indonesia Cambodia, Vietnam and other South East Asian countries. Pakistan too can become a preferred destination for foreign industry relocation – provided that it does well on the targets set by the prime minister on the ease of doing business, and crafts the right match of incentives.

While many rightly term the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as the game-changer project for Pakistan and the icon project of the Belt and Road Initiative, I see it as the ‘Buckle of the Belt’. It is widely understood that the BRI is incomplete without CPEC, which has manifested its real strength as a comprehensive transportation corridor thereby stimulating economic, trade, and industry cooperation for socioeconomic development.

Pakistan, therefore, must seize favorable opportunities in the second phase of CPEC through opening-up of the BRI and mutual gains in collaboration with Chinese hi-tech industrial and capital advantage. In doing so, Pakistan needs to expand and rebuild existing industrial infrastructure, modernize railroad infrastructure through the Mainline (ML-1) project and develop the Gwadar Port as a smart and safe port city with correct hybrid governance structure in place to achieve tangible outcomes. As discussed during the recent World Economic Forum (WEF), the US-China trade war may be a beginning of the opening up of China in the field of advance sciences and technologies which in itself may be an opportunity for Pakistan if carefully factored in the cooperation mechanism under CPEC. While the bottleneck of energy has largely been removed in the early harvest phase, completion of work on the western corridor and all-weather yearlong connectivity through the Karakoram Highway (KKH) should be done in the ongoing phase. As it is commonly known in logistics, “a chain is no stronger than its weakest

link”, at the same time, we also need to look at the clearance processes and establish customs special supervision areas at the SUST border post and Gwadar Port where time delays can cost the national economy significantly. Seamless connectivity through fast speed internet via optical fibre needs to be ensured to realize the true potential of the corridor.

The time is ripe for Pakistan to benefit from the regionalization of Asia and assume a leading role as the transshipment hub for the region. We must capitalize on the opportunity the BRI offers. On July 17, a freight rail route was established between Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and Xian, China marking the opening up of the China-Europe freight route. A similar route can be established within South Asia if serious efforts are made.

In the second phase of CPEC, the government is gearing up to uplift less developed areas of Pakistan, and promising greater regional integration. However, the biggest dividend can only be earned through the industrial cooperation phase by exploring new policy reforms and incentive packages to maximize the pull factor.

The government is also taking steps to encourage private-sector participation and creating an enabling environment by reducing risks and promoting complementary policies to strengthen trade, logistics and business cooperation and improve business-to-business (B2B) links. The second round of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement also offers enormous opportunities. If Pakistan succeeds in capturing even one percent of the Chinese market share through the BRI, this can increase Pakistan’s exports to new records.

The CPEC Business Forum and the China-Pakistan Business Council, therefore, have a huge task ahead of them. Joint business bodies and provincial business chambers should create and manage trade and business links and strengthen the channel of communication between the business communities of the two countries.

All in all, alongside enormous economic opportunities from the BRI, there are certain challenges that require pragmatic handling. One of the major challenges is to achieve synergy and harmony in policy implementation and execution so that economic reforms are achieved in shortest possible time for mutual gains. The establishment of the CPEC Authority will, it is believed, address these issues of coordination and fast implementation.

K2 News



July 25, 2019

Dawn News

Chinese firm to invest \$20m in cab, cargo services

ISLAMABAD: A Chinese firm is working on comprehensive business plan to provide five important services in Pakistan, initially investing \$20 million, with future prospects of \$600m.

Chinese company Timesaco intends to provide a rapid services platform to citizens by launching five special services including a taxi service, heavy cargo delivery, orders delivery, moving automated teller machines (ATM) and vehicle advertisement facilities, Chief Operating Officer Timesaco, Donald Li said on Wednesday.

Initially these instant services would be launched in the six major cities including Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Peshawar and would be extended to other urban centers, he added. Mr. Li said Timesaco had already held its pre-launch event in Islamabad a week ago and introduced instant services including Buraq (taxi service), Fema (instant delivery) and Cargo+ (city freight).

He said that modern technology and innovative methods of E-commerce would be utilized in delivering these services. For Timesaco services, customers should download application from Google Play Store for instant services in all five major areas, he explained.

Mr Li said that people interested in working with the taxi services could register their vehicles with the company without any precondition. Buraq drivers will get 97 per cent share of their earring and company will get only 2pc from drivers while 1pc would be invested in Drivers Club for providing health and education services to families of drivers.

He said people could register their bikes, cars, rickshaws, pickups, Qingqi loaders, and trucks with the company and get multiple ways for earning.

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan, China delegations discuss border security matters

Senior officials from Gilgit-Baltistan Police and Xinjiang General Station held a meeting at Police Headquarters Gilgit to discuss various issues pertaining to Pak-China border security. Gilgit-Baltistan and Xinjiang regions share over 500-kilometer-long border from eastern tip of Wakhan Corridor to Karakoram Pass near Siachin glacier. The Pak-China border is regulated under the Sino-Pakistan Boundary Agreement of 1963.

The delegation of the Gilgit-Baltistan Police was led by Inspector General of Police Sanaullah Abbasi whereas the Director General of Xinjiang General Station of Immigration Inspection We Chang Fu led the six-member delegation of Xinjiang General Station.

The meeting deliberated upon security concerns and issues of the Pakistan-China border. The meeting reiterated to strengthen the bilateral cooperation in order to prevent illegal border crossings, arms, drug, and human trafficking.

The meeting agreed to train and improve the performances of border security forces. They further agreed on improvement of bilateral cooperation through communication and regular meetings. IGP Abbasi told the Chinese delegation that GB is a peaceful region with over 90.

CPEC Authority to expedite development work in Pakistan

The decision of the government of Pakistan to set up CPEC Authority will help to speed up socio-economic development work in the country, says a report published by China Economic Net on Wednesday.

Pakistan, China are agreed on formation of CPEC Authority. It is a welcomed step, that CPEC authority will get constitution cover to play an anchoring role in spurring expediting progress of different development projects. It has been very rare in the history of Pakistan that mega projects and organizations enjoy complete national consensus. If evaluated and analyzed, CPEC authority is perfectly among of them.

The proposed Authority has gained currency expeditiously, and it will soon get the approval of the Parliament. Among other development projects, Gwadar Master Plan and ML-1 Rail track will be immediate beneficiary of CPEC authority. It is expected that the Authority will get established in next four to five months.

According to the report, both strategic partners China and Pakistan put a complete weight behind it. Reason is that the iconic authority offering vibrant “One Window Platform” is termed as a master key to fix all critical issues and hiccups bedeviling rapid pace and development trajectory of all ongoing projects. Creating a centralized mechanism to facilitate multi-faced and multi-dimensional tasks on a fast-track, hopefully stimulate cohesion among different departments and institutions from Pakistan as well as Chinese side to ensure steady and smooth flow of synergic collaboration, execution and implementation of projects under CPEC. It is being designed to integrate all stakeholders under one roof to open an era of ease of doing business so that modern investment mechanism may thrive.

According to Green Book 2018 published by Pakistan Army, an academic paper titled CPEC challenges and opportunities says “for CPEC to progress smoothly, a one-window platform needs to be created to override the bureaucratic bottlenecks that impair the progress of the project. Keeping in view Pakistan’s complex, tedious and lethargic system as well as decentralization of powers between provincial governments and central government, formation of CPEC authority is cure. It is long awaited to do wonder.

Since 2013, a number of energy and infrastructure projects out of total 22 projects amounting approximately \$ 28 b have been completed under CPEC. Remaining ones are on various stage of completion. In the absence of CPEC authority, some projects could not pick the pace as they

were supposed to gain. Somehow they hit the snags suffering traditional bureaucratic hitches and glitches.

Departmental lack of coordination and misunderstandings also played their parts. Although governments of both countries spared no efforts to streamline the procedures & processes and finally succeeded in acceleration of work but few delays festered the momentum to some extent.

Chinese diplomatic offices to support PCJCCI efforts to strengthen bilateral ties: Peng

PengZhengwu, Deputy Consul General of Chinese Consulate has applauded services of Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry to promote bilateral economic relations between China and Pakistan.

He was addressing as chief guest of a Capacity Building Seminar of the PCJCCI on taxation and the challenges related with its enforcement. The key speaker of the seminar was an eminent Leader of Advocates' community and Former Commissioner FBR Mr. Jahangir Ahmad. Peng said that PCJCCI had been working on different grounds which had created opportunities for the young entrepreneurs. He applauded PCJCCI's vibrant role in promoting bilateral trade and business between both the nations. He assured of the fullest support of Chinese Diplomatic offices to the PCJCCI's initiatives for strengthening the trade, investment and cultural ties between Pakistan and China.

The speaker Mr. Jahangir Ahmad spoke on basic theme of the seminar; Current changes in tax laws; Compliance and Enforcement challenges". He said, Tax is a basic instrument of fiscal policy, which is useless if it does not play significant role to maintain flow of wealth from "haves" to "have nots". While highlighting the Compliance and Enforcement Challenges of taxation, he said that sovereignty is the main objective of Statesmen for implementing taxes within the State". "The State" means the Federal Government, a Provincial Government, a Provincial Assembly, and such local or other authorities in Pakistan as are by law empowered to impose any tax, he said adding that tax plays a significant role to maintain the flow of cash and flow of wealth between "haves" and "have not's".

While commenting on the current changes, Mr. Jahangir said, the taxes on import will curb the rush of foreign goods and open new spheres for local manufacturers, as the increase in demand will force them to launch such products through which government will generate revenue.

The Express Tribune

Bureaucracy reluctant to fast-track ML-I approval

ISLAMABAD: As the anti-corruption watchdog launches an inquiry into another mega road project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the federal bureaucracy has expressed reluctance to fast-track the process of approval for the multibillion-dollar Mainline-I (ML-I) strategic project of CPEC.

The issue of slow progress on ML-I was also discussed at a meeting last week between Federal Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmad and Federal Minister for Planning and Development Makhdoom Khusro Bakhtiar, sources told The Express Tribune.

They said in order to allay concerns of the bureaucracy, Rashid proposed to get the project vetted from the newly constituted National Development Council (NDC). Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Bajwa is also a member of the NDC. Prime Minister Imran Khan has lately made former Finance Minister Asad Umar a member of the NDC.

But the planning ministry bureaucracy was alarmed by the increasing scrutiny of CPEC projects by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). After firming up the design and scope, the Ministry of Railways has submitted the third proposed PC-I (Project Cycle-I) of the ML-I project with the Ministry of Planning for review and placement before the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) for clearance.

The railways ministry has estimated the cost of package-I of the project at \$2.4 billion, showed official documents. The original cost of the full project had been estimated at \$8.2 billion. The project has now been split into three phases besides reducing its scope. ML-I is the only project of CPEC that has been declared “strategically important” by both China and Pakistan but it has faced delay of at least four years.

Sources said the federal bureaucracy was reluctant to process the ML-I project without first seeking clarification after NAB recently launched an inquiry into another CPEC project – the Rs134-billion Thakot-Havelian scheme.

Sources said NAB was looking into the role of Shahid Tarar, who was then chairman of the National Highway Authority (NHA), and questioned certain bureaucrats of the planning ministry about Tarar’s role. Tarar – one of the competent officers from the Pakistan Administrative Service – is currently serving as Pakistan’s Executive Director at the World Bank.

NAB spokesman did not reply to a question on its inquiry into the Thakot-Havelian project.

It is the second big road project of CPEC that NAB has picked for inquiry. It is already looking into the Rs315-billion Sukkur-Multan CPEC project. Both of these projects have been undertaken under the framework agreement signed between China and Pakistan in April 2015.

Sources said NAB’s decision to investigate CPEC road projects has also raised questions over the viability of ML-I framework agreement that Pakistan and China signed in May 2017, also during the tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government.

The Multan-Sukkur project and Havelian-Thakot project of CPEC had been approved by all the relevant authorities but NAB was looking into individual roles. It has obtained the list of members of the CDWP and the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec), the sources said. The planning ministry would move ahead with the ML-I project only after seeking input of the Prime Minister’s Office, Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) and other agencies concerned, according to an official who has been involved in the approval process.

They said the NDC was not the constitutional forum to approve such projects as the only constitutional forum was the National Economic Council (NEC), which is headed by the prime minister and comprises provincial chief ministers and three federal ministers. The version of the federal minister for planning and development could not be obtained before filing of the story.

Package one of the ML-I costing \$2.4 billion pertains to the upgrade of four segments of the mainline from Karachi to Peshawar in addition to the upgrade of Walton Railways Training Academy.

Pakistan Railways has dropped the Karachi-Hyderabad track from the ML-I project scope, which will now be built under the public-private partnership mode and help cut the overall cost by \$1 billion, according to the ministry.

According to the original framework agreement of May 2017, China will provide 85% of the project cost as a concessionary loan. The project design has been prepared by Chinese consultant CREEC. A review consultant comprising MMP, Canarail and Crimson has vetted the design.

After coming to power, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government leveled serious allegations of corruption in CPEC deals. The focus of these allegations has so far remained on the Multan-Sukkur project. China State Construction Engineering Corporation, which is executing the scheme, has expressed “extreme shock over the baseless allegations” of Rs50 billion kickbacks in the Multan-Sukkur project.

Sources said the Chinese embassy is also irritated over the delay and corruption allegations and has given presentations to various government ministries to address their apprehensions. The Multan-Sukkur project was approved by Ecnec in its meeting held on July 3, 2014 at a total cost of Rs259.4 billion with 90% credit financing through Chinese Exim bank loan. The original project cost was based on NHA’s scheduled rates of 2014.

After adding Rs20.6 billion as the overhead cost, the final cost of the revised PC-I went up from Rs259.4 billion to Rs315 billion – a 21.44% increase over the original cost.

Nawaiwaqt

گواڈر کو بین الاقوامی معیار کا سمارٹ پورٹ سٹی بنانے کیلئے جامع منصوبہ بندی کی جا رہی ہے، حکام سی پیک

اسلام آباد (اے پی پی) سی پیک کے تحت گواڈر کو جدید طرز پر تعمیر کیا جائے گا، اسے بین الاقوامی معیار کا سمارٹ پورٹ سٹی بنانے کے لئے جامع منصوبہ بندی کی جا رہی ہے جس سے یہ خطے کی اہم ترین بندرگاہ بن کر ابھرے گی۔ سی پیک اتھارٹی کے حکام کے مطابق گواڈر ماسٹر پلان اپنے آخری مراحل میں داخل ہو چکا ہے۔

Nawaiwaqt

اسلام آباد انٹرنیشنل پراجیکٹ پر کام کرنے والے چینی باشندوں کی حفاظت کو یقینی بنا جائے

راولپنڈی (اپنے سٹاف رپورٹ سے) نیو اسلام آباد انٹرنیشنل انٹرنیشنل پراجیکٹ کے منیجر نے امن و امان کی صورتحال کیلئے راولپنڈی کی پولیس اور انتظامیہ کے حکام سے فول پروف سیکورٹی مانگی اور وہاں کام کرنے والے چینی باشندوں کی سیکورٹی کیلئے خصوصی اقدامات کی سفارش کر دی جس کے بعد کمشنر راولپنڈی کیپٹن (ر) ثاقب ظفر اور آر پی او محمد احسان طفیل نے اس سلسلے میں کمشنر آفس میں اعلیٰ سطح کا اجلاس منعقد کیا جس میں نیو اسلام آباد انٹرنیشنل پراجیکٹ پر کام کرنے والے چینی باشندوں کی حفاظت کو یقینی بنانے کیلئے فول پروف سیکورٹی انتظامات کرنے کیلئے احکامات جاری کر دیے اس غیر معمولی اجلاس میں ڈپٹی کمشنر راولپنڈی چوہدری محمد علی رندھاوا، سٹی پولیس آفیسر رانا فیصل، ایڈیشنل کمشنر کوآرڈینیٹیشن طارق سلام مروت، ایڈیشنل ڈپٹی کمشنر جنرل ملیحہ جمال و دیگر سیکورٹی افسران کے علاوہ انک، جہلم اور چکوال سے ڈپٹی کمشنر زاور ڈسٹرکٹ پولیس افسران نے

ویڈیولنک کے ذریعے اجلاس میں شرکت کی پولیس اور انتظامیہ کے ڈویژنل سربراہان نے حکم دیا کہ اسلام آباد ایئر پورٹ پر اجیکٹ پر کام کرنے والے چائینز کی حفاظت کو یقینی بنانے کے لئے فول پروف سیورٹی کا انتظام کیا جائے۔

عوامی سطح پر رابطوں میں اضافہ پاک چین دوستی کو مزید مستحکم کر سکتا ہے، سپیکر قومی اسمبلی

اسلام آباد (واقع نگار خصوصی) اسپیکر قومی اسمبلی اسد قیصر نے کہا کہ چین پاکستان کا بے مثال دوست ہے۔ پاکستان کو چین کے ساتھ اپنی منفرد دوستی پر فخر ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ دونوں دوست ممالک میں دوستی کا یہ رشتہ باہمی اعتماد اور احترام کے مضبوط دیواروں پر استوار ہے اور دونوں دوست ممالک ہمیشہ ہر مشکل وقت میں ایک دوسرے کے شانہ بشانہ کھڑے ہیں۔ انہوں نے ان خیالات کا اظہار پاکستان میں چین کے سفیر یاؤ جنگ سے گفتگو کرتے ہوئے کیا۔ جنہوں نے پیر کے روز پارلیمنٹ ہاؤس میں اسپیکر سے ملاقات کی۔ اسپیکر نے دونوں دوست ممالک کے مابین پارلیمانی رابطوں میں اضافے کی ضرورت پر زور دیتے ہوئے کہا کہ پارلیمانی رابطے دوستی کے رشتے کو مستحکم بنانے میں اہم کردار ادا کر سکتے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ موجودہ حکومت ملک میں زراعت کی ترقی پر خصوصی توجہ دے رہی ہے اور اس مقصد کے حصول کے لیے حالیہ بجٹ میں خطیر فنڈز مختص کیے گئے ہیں علاوہ ازیں خصوصی پارلیمانی کمیٹی تشکیل دی گئی ہے جو کسانوں کے مسائل کو حل کرنے اور زراعت کے فروغ کے لیے کام کر رہی ہے۔ انہوں نے دونوں ممالک کی پارلیمانی کمیٹیوں کے مابین رابطوں میں اضافے کی ضرورت پر زور دیتے ہوئے کہا کہ ان رابطوں سے دونوں ممالک کے اراکین پارلیمنٹ کو ایک دوسرے کے تجربات سے مستفید ہونے اور ایک دوسرے کو سمجھنے کے مواقع فراہم ہوں گے۔ اسپیکر نے کہا کہ پاک چین اقتصادی راہداری (سی پیک) منصوبہ دونوں دوست ممالک کے مابین سدا بہار دوستی مظہر ہے۔ اسپیکر قومی اسمبلی اسد قیصر سے پی این پی کے سربراہ سردار اختر جان مینگل نے ملاقات کی۔ بلوچستان کے مسائل کے حل کے لیے پارلیمنٹ کی خصوصی کمیٹی تشکیل دینے پر اتفاق کیا گیا ہے۔ کمیٹی کے ذریعے بلوچستان کے عوام کے احساس محرومی کا ازالہ کیا جائے گا۔ سردار اختر مینگل نے بلوچستان کے مسائل کے حل کے لیے کمیٹی قائم کرنے کی تجویز دی تھی۔ بلوچستان کے عوام کو درپیش مسائل سمیت ملک کی مجموعی سیاسی و معاشی صورت حال پر تبادلہ خیال کیا گیا۔ اسد قیصر نے کہا کہ بلوچستان کی پس ماندگی کا خاتمہ موجودہ حکومت کی اولین ترجیح ہے۔ مسائل کے خاتمے کے لیے قومی یکجہتی اور اتفاق رائے انتہائی ضروری ہے۔ ہم سب کو مل کر بلوچستان کی تعمیر و ترقی کے لیے کام کرنا ہو گا۔ میں یقین دلاتا ہوں کہ بلوچستان کے مسائل کو ترجیحی بنیادوں پر حل کیا جائے گا۔ موجودہ حکومت بلوچستان کے عوام کی ترقی و خوشحالی کے لیے ضروری اقدامات کیے جائیں گے۔ پی این پی کے سربراہ نے کہا کہ رقبے کے لحاظ سے ملک کا سب سے بڑا صوبہ اور قدرتی وسائل سے مالا مال بنیادی سہولیات تک سے محروم ہے، اختر مینگل نے کہا کہ بلوچستان کی عوام کو موجودہ پارلیمنٹ اور حکومت سے بڑی توقعات وابستہ ہیں۔

July 26, 2019

Daily Times

BRI: Overconfidence or Practical Embodiment?

China's growing economic muscle helped chalk out the global vision of build-out infrastructure around the world officially spelled as the Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime Silk Road, referred to as One Belt, One Road (OBOR). The idea of Silk Road carries many dimensions but economics is the key driving force, primarily to improve the connectivity through Chinese massive engineering prowess, construction expertise, and investment, aware that the potential of building infrastructure abroad promotes development at home.

One of China's major pillars of economic development approach and President Xi Jinping's signature diplomacy, OBOR, serves as the embodiment in contemporary Chinese foreign policy, reflected in his speeches often, however, became the major theme of the conferences across the world. The concept of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that promises to create the vast network of corridors—officials refer to them as 'corridors of shared destiny'—through development are likely to affect the lives of 63 percent of the world's population. That accounts for 29 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product.

China's global strategy for building-out infrastructure and investment also known as the BRI, pledges over a trillion dollars of investment and have attracted 80 countries since it was launched in 2013. Despite negativity about China in some parts, Chinese official sources view the BRI to carry an altruistic approach, an approach that offers mutual benefits and a win-win arrangement. The initiative, arguably, is endorsed by political pundits, analysts and scholars from all parts of the world, as one of the most significant and ambitious geo-economic and geopolitical move of the twenty-first century.

The fact that adds more value and significance to the Chinese initiative is pressing global infrastructure demand in critical sectors indispensable to economic growth. Considering the significance of infrastructure requirement as a backbone of modern economies, world needs an estimated \$94 trillion in infrastructure by 2040, out of which 59 percent of estimated global infrastructure spending needs relate to Asia, which means that Asia alone requires \$1.7 trillion per year to maintain growth. China's willingness to take the herculean task of building-out infrastructure and implement through the OBOR enterprise in sectors that are considered the backbone of modern economies literally fills the vacuum that has continued to emerge with the birth of isolationist forces in America, Europe, and elsewhere in the West.

Beijing's vision of BRI relatively fills the void of infrastructure gap, while the United States has failed to create any alternative to address the critical global infrastructure challenge. The US, rather, is trapped in conflict behavior. China's RMB brings the much-needed investment to satisfy the appetite for improved infrastructure in developing countries to help keep pace with radical demographic, environmental and economic changes.

From late 1960s onward, the United States has managed to remain an unchallenged sole economic juggernaut in the Pacific region until it faced the newly emerged economic behemoth, the People's Republic of China. The obvious US geostrategic paranoia that views China a revisionist power fears that China would fundamentally reshape the balance of power in Indo-Pacific region, a region that is of enormous strategic value to the US. The US is, hence, unable to see geo-economics offerings of the BRI.

Therefore, the BRI is kind of a bitter pill to swallow for the United States, China's peer competitor. The US considers the initiative a greater challenge to its economic and security interests in the world, particularly in the geographic regions of importance. The major reason to the US tacit opposition to China's BRI is its own strategic imperatives. Eswar Prasad, the author of the book titled, *The Dollar Trap*, and the former head of the International Monetary Fund's China division, described the growing erosion of distrust between the US and China saying, "The US doesn't trust the Chinese, and China doesn't trust the US."

The distrust between the two major powers has only seen a rise under the Trump administration, followed by a trade war, which the US president declared as a bargaining chip to get a better deal in order to 'Make America Great' Again. It is yet to be seen who wins the war of being great, whether America becomes great again, or China pursues its dream of 'great rejuvenation'.

China's global strategy for building-out infrastructure and investment pledges over a trillion dollars of investment, and has attracted 80 countries since it was launched in 2013

China's rise has not just outperformed the United States in building hard infrastructure but in digital infrastructure as well. Beijing takes the decisive lead in the emerging field of fifth-generation (5G), and that further annoys America. A greater ambition and power projection is being displayed even in space; Beijing catches up in the space race with the US, surprising the world by landing on the far side of the moon, interrupting the domination enjoyed by the United States and Russia for a long time.

Moreover, economic investments abroad help China win the network of allies and partners, and connectivity efforts help make Beijing new friends and reinforce old bonds. One such old bond is realized through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It is one of the six corridors under BRI's flag; it epitomizes success in varying degrees, but sustainability of CPEC depends entirely on governments' will to utilize Chinese renminbi to foster inclusive and sustainable socioeconomic growth.

CPEC, definitely, has paved the way in cementing bilateral relations between the two all-weather friends, Pakistan and China; they have become closer than at any other point in the history of their friendship. Pakistan is one of the few countries along the Silk Road that sits at a critical nod on OBOR, much to the dismay of one of US' close allies, India. President Xi Jinping made it clear at the 2017 Davos summit, "Our real enemy is not the neighboring country but hunger, poverty, ignorance, superstition, and prejudice." Yet the Indian deep-rooted 'Sinophobia', and India's

suspicious about the BRI are far from over, and have been intensified by west's idea of String of Pearls.

As the BRI moves forward, so grows the suspicion. Not all suspicions are inconsiderable; some vis-à-vis the BRI are not without merit. The positive sign is that Chinese officials have not just recognized the lacunas in the BRI but have also expressed interest to improve their areas of structural inefficiencies and bad practices, which cause reputational damage, and affects China's soft image internationally.

As the founding president of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has indicated, there would be willingness to adopt. It is ensured that the institute will be "lean, clean and green", thus showing China's adaptability in line with global financial standards.

It might be too irrational to predict the scale and scope of the still evolving, loosely-defined initiative, yet a practical assessment of the BRI suggests that regional infrastructure demands and China's appetite to invest are likely to raise the likelihood of success, better prospects of growth, and opening up economic opportunities to the regional countries. But what is certain is that the east will continue to shine. Closeness to Silk Road would add shine to a country.

The Nation

Chinese Services Company to provide 250,000 new jobs

ISLAMABAD - Chinese upcoming investment in transport and Informational Technology (IT) sector will provide 250,000 new employments in local market at different level of skilled and innovative side for local youth.

"We would hire around 200,000 drivers and other relevant staffers for our new 'Buraq' taxi service in six big urban centres in different cities including Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Peshawar," Chief Operating Officer (CEO) Timesaco, Donald Li told APP in an exclusive talk. He said that around 50,000 jobs would be offered in other services. He said that his company would work out on a comprehensive business plan to provide five important services to citizens of Pakistan in six big cities, initially investing \$20 million, with future prospects of \$600 million.

Replying to a question, he said that PM Imran Khan had announced to provide 10 million jobs to the world largest chunk of local youth in different sectors including the services and Information's Technology (IT).

For supporting, PM Imran Khan's vision "We are committed for providing the jobs in services and Informational technology sector, which has big source for creating jobs opportunities for skilled and hi-tech professional".

He said that Pakistan economy had full potential to create the 10 million jobs for local youth in different spheres and adding that in modern world, jobs trends had totally been changed from rational to the innovation and automated mood in the era of fourth revolution. He said that in

fourth industrial revolution, world had become more digitalized and urged the local youth to get technical education and work on innovation for earn more in market. The CEO said that modern technology and innovative methods of E-commerce would be utilized to provide rapid services to the masses in Pakistan.

Replying to question, he said that in second phase, his company would intervene in rural areas, where ‘We will provide skills to the rural youth at their own region’.He added this model would be disclosed in coming month and the company’s experts were working on this model to execute this successfully.Replaying to question, regarding the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of Company, he said “we have a plan to work for promotion of health and education sector of Pakistan.”

He said that like “Forbes Magazine” our company had a plan to highlight the struggle of 100 successful people of the Pakistan, who progressed in very difficult situation.Punjab Govt to introduce tax payment through mobile application. Mobile application will allow customers to pay their dues from their homes.

July 27, 2019

Daily Times

Chinese Sheer Growth and Lessons for Pakistan

Throughout the past, nations have strived to seek knowledge from each other. In order to enhance the society and uplift its standards, lessons from past ventures of one society proved beneficial for the others as well. Whether it be the military tactics or economic programs, every civilization as well as nation has much to edify others. Dr. Mehbub-ul-haq, 14th minister of finance, revenue and Economic affair devised a five year development plan which was implemented by Korea and it successfully uplifted their society. Unfortunately, plan was not implemented by Pakistan. Dr. Haq also was a chief architecture of UNDP’s Human Development Index. In order to tribute Dr. Haq, UNDP established the Mehbub-ul-haq award given to world figures who contributed towards the human development progress.

Pakistan-China shares a historic affinity and brotherly bond, which has poured the baskets for each country. Pakistan was benefited from its neighbor in various modules whether it is diplomatic or economic. CPEC is one of those modules that is proving to be a table turner in favour of Pakistan.

However, the question here rises is that is CPEC all in the entire bond or there are more avenues which can be explored in order to overcome the socio-economic challenges which Pakistan is facing? What Pakistan can get from the experience of China in order to find solutions to its maladies?

Since the new government got the throne in July of 2018, it met with new challenges. The foremost challenge was to boost the living standards of base. Government is still staggering to

vanquish these challenges. Prime minister Imran Khan seems to be desperate and promising in order to move these stumbling blocks. In order to coup-up with the world dynamics Pakistan needs robust progress in its social sector.

Chinese progress graph is not obscured to anyone. Country which seemed nowhere in the economic realms back in 20th century is now leading in the 21st. China had overcome all the challenges to its social and economics and became what it is today. The country which had GDP of merely \$200 billion in 1980 crossed up to more than \$12 Trillion in 2017.

Pakistan after a long wait is now looking to be in right path from where it was once shattered by the terrorism and security threats it is now getting up on its knees. However, it needs proper plan to reform the society and to do so it can take help from the Beijing. In order to become self-sufficient, Pakistan needs to improve every sector in a self-reliable manner where it then continues to grow by itself. In order to do that Pakistan needs to invest in human capital like Chinese did.

Jointly Pakistan and China can cooperate other than CPEC to enhance the societal structure or even under the CPEC, measurements can be taken to uplift the social progress. Through youth engagement programs and giving them vocational training under the expertise of Chinese, things can turn into our favor.

Collaboration in educational sector, which is already happening, but will be more helpful if Chinese top ranking university operate here so that the young populous can have and experience the education standard other than their own to be more productive. Economic survey of Pakistan showed that literacy rate in Pakistan is just 58% in 2018. Whereas China's literacy rate is, near to absolute. Hence, 95% literate population is contributing towards the building of society. This all happened not just because of having large number of universities but because of educational engagements other than the academic ones such as vocational training, capacity building, youth engagement and many more.

Pakistan has a great room for improvements in social strata. It can utilize the help of China to improve it and empower its populous. In order to carve a prosperous nation out of population, Pakistan needs to improve the base level population standards.

Dunya News

Eight Chinese companies keen to invest in Pakistan's textile sector

(Web Desk) – Eight Chinese companies have evinced keen interest in making investments in Pakistan's textile sector. The interest was shown when a delegation of eight leading Chinese textile companies led by Shanghai Yuanyi Industry Chairman Huang Weiguo called on Prime Minister Imran Khan in Islamabad.

Speaking on the occasion, the premier reiterated the government's commitment to provide enabling environment to investors and business community in undertaking profitable business

ventures in the country. He said the government was fully focused on improving ease of doing business and implementing policies which encourage investors to invest in various sectors of economy.

The PM also highlighted lucrative business opportunities, geo-strategic location of the country, a large consumer market and the availability of cost-effective and skilled labor in the country. He also assured the delegation that the government would provide every possible support and facilitation to the investors.

The Express Tribune

Mahmood for expediting Rashakai EZ link roads construction

PESHAWAR: In a bid to boost industrialization in the province, the provincial government on Friday directed to ensure all roads connecting the Rashakai Economic Zone are completed at the earliest apart from completing the revised development agreement while finalizing pending modalities.

Directions were also issued to move a formal summary for the transfer for 50 acres of land for the construction of the Swat Economic Zone.

This was directed by Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Chief Minister Mahmood Khan while chairing a progress review meeting of the industries department in Peshawar on Friday.

During the meeting, Mahmood stated that Industries play a key role in not only revenue generation but also in generating livelihood opportunities, which is paramount in meeting unemployment challenges.

Mahmood was briefed on the progress made in setting up eight proposed economic zones in different areas of the province along with work on 13 developmental projects related to industries.

He was told that a draft development agreement for the Rashakai Special Economic Zone has been finalized and the ground-breaking ceremony will be held immediately after its approval.

CM Mahmood directed that the required land for the project should be cleared and the provision of electricity and gas should be ensured within the set time frame so that work can start.

He further directed to finalise a workable plan, in consultation with the finance department, for procuring 1,000 acres of additional land for the establishment of the Hattar Special Economic Zone as he stressed on the need for completing all proposed economic zones in the province.

Noting that the Mohmand Marble Industrial Zone will be the first-ever industrial zone to be established by the provincial government in the newly-merged districts, he further directed that all necessary modalities should be worked out on a priority basis so that people of tribal districts may benefit from the dividends of industrialization.

With regards to Industrialization initiative in the southern districts of the province, CM Mahmood stated that the Darband Special Economic Zone will be established on 2,600 acres. The zone, he said, not only has the most feasible geographical location but will also bring about an Industrial revolution in the southern districts.

The News

BoI hails \$20mln Chinese investment

ISLAMABAD: Zubair Gilani, chairman Board of Investment (BoI) and state minister for investment on Friday welcome the \$20 million investment in services sector in the country.

"BOI is committed to support the foreign investment and also provide facilities to the foreign investment through ease of doing business," a statement quoted Gilani as saying.

He said the BoI was working on nine special economic zones (SEZs) under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) for provide one window operation facility to the local and foreign inverters.

Minister for State vowed that he will provide all possible facilities to the Information Technology (IT) sector and the government always appreciates to foreign investors.

He offered the full support to the foreign investment and hailed efforts of integrated services company Timesaco for establish the new taxi service Buraq including five other services.

July 28, 2019

The News

Chinese research centre to be named after Dr AttaurRahman

ISLAMABAD: A leading university of Chinese Traditional Medicine (CTC) in Changsha, Hunan province has decided to name its new research centre after Pakistan's known scientist and academician Prof Dr Attaur-Rahman.

According to an announcement, Hunan University of Chinese Medicine planned to hold a grand opening ceremony of its new centre named as Professor Attaur-Rahman One Belt One Road TCM Research Centre on the occasion of 5th Annual Bio-TCM International Conference scheduled on October 23, 2019. Federal Minister for Science and Technology FawadChaudhry had also been invited as the guest of honour at this special occasion, said a senior official of the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi (UoK) sharing details of the event.

He also mentioned that the largest University of Malaysia, University Technology Mara, has already established a research centre in the name of Prof Attaur-Rahman entitled Attaur-Rahman Institute of Natural Product Discovery (AuRins). Prof Atta is presently serving as Chairman of

Prime Minister's Task Force on Science and Technology, Vice Chairman on Prime Ministers Task Force on Technology Driven Knowledge Economy, and Co-Chairman, Task Force on Information Technology. However, he has also served the nation as federal minister for science and technology. Prof Atta is the first scientist from the Muslim world to have won the prestigious Unesco Science Prize (1999) in the 35 year old history of the prize. He was elected as Fellow of Royal Society (London) in July 2006. He has been conferred honorary doctorate degrees by many universities, including the degree of Doctor of Science (Sc.D.) by the Cambridge University (UK) (1987). He was elected Honorary Life Fellow of Kings College, Cambridge University, UK in 2007.

The Austrian government has honored him with its highest civil award (“Grosse Goldene EhrenzeischenamBande”) (2007) in recognition of his eminent contributions. He is President of Network of Academies of Sciences of Islamic Countries (NASIC), Foreign Fellow of Korean Academy of Sciences, and Foreign Fellow of the Chinese Chemical Society.

Prof Atta has been awarded highest award “Friendship Award of China” on September 28, 2014. He was the Federal Minister for Science and Technology (14th March, 2000 – 20th November, 2002), Federal Minister of Education (2002) and Chairman of the Higher Education Commission with the status of a Federal Minister from 2002-2008.

He is the most decorated scientist of Pakistan having won four civil awards by the government of Pakistan, including Tamgha-i-Imtiaz (1983), Sitara-i-Imtiaz (1991), Hilal-i-Imtiaz (1998), and the highest national civil award Nishan-i-Imtiaz (2002).

July 29, 2019

Dawn News

China Railway to invest in garment city project

LAHORE: A Garment City is being established over 400 acres on Kasur Road, where China Railway will invest \$500 million and generate 3,000 jobs. This was stated by Punjab Industries Minister Mian Aslam Iqbal after holding a meeting with a delegation of representatives from China’s top textile companies here on Sunday.

The Chinese delegation head, Ms Karan showed keen interest in making investments in the textile sector of Punjab. She said Punjab was a very attractive place for investment in the textile sector and the Chinese companies would invest here.

The minister said the government was focusing on promoting export-led industry and import substitution for sustained economic growth. He said China could help increase Pakistan’s exports by relocating export-oriented industries and initiating joint ventures in various fields.

“This initiative will boost industrial cooperation besides strengthening the bilateral economic partnership between the two countries,” the minister said.

Speaking to media persons, Mr Iqbal said the textile sector was a big sector of Pakistan and there were vast opportunities of investment in this sector. He said special economic zones were being set up in various parts of the province and Chinese investors might invest in these.

“We want to take benefit from Chinese technology and enhance industrial cooperation between the two countries,” he said. The minister said the delegation had also met Prime Minister Imran Khan and briefed him on their investment plans.

He said the prime minister’s efforts for bringing investment to Pakistan had started yielding results. Mr Iqbal said the investors from Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Qatar and other countries were investing in SEZs. He said steps were being taken to ensure ease of doing business.

Answering a question, Mr Iqbal said the government did not stop anyone from holding protest meetings but there was a Lahore High Court decision that prohibited taking out processions on The Mall. He said the government could not allow creating problems for the people by blocking roads with few people. He said the opposition could protest if it had any objection to the working of the PTI government but no one would be allowed to make a speech against Pakistan and its institutions.

The Nation

CPEC Authority likely before JCC meeting

Islamabad - The government is likely to establish an autonomous authority for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) prior to the next Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) meeting, it is learnt reliably here.

A summary to establish CPEC Authority has been moved to the Law and Justice Division for its nod and hopefully it will be established prior to the next JCC meeting, official sources told The Nation here. The 9th JCC is scheduled to be held in October this year.

“Although we don’t need a CPEC Authority at this stage but China and a local lobby is pursuing for establishment of such authority. Therefore, the government has decided to establish it,” a senior official of the ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms said. The idea of CPEC Authority is not new as in previous PML-N government various proposals for making CPEC a separate entity was floated but were rejected by the then prime minister Nawaz Sharif and planning minister Ahsan Iqbal, the source maintained. There was also a proposal of bringing CPEC under National Security Council but it was also rejected by the then prime minister, the source added.

The proposed authority will have a chairman and full-fledged office and the current CPEC secretariat will be merged into it, the source added

“Although in papers the CPEC Authority will work under the Ministry of Planning but actually it is being established to strip the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms of its powers to run the corridor projects,” said the source.

Summary sent to Law and Justice Division for its nod

According to the sources, the current portfolio of CPEC is around \$ 46 billion and out of that amount \$28 billion have already been materialized which was done without CPEC Authority. Similarly, majority of CPEC projects are either in Energy or Communications which will be completed by 2023 or the very next year, said the source.

“Why for just \$18 billion and less than five years period the government is making an autonomous authority?” the source questioned. It is also yet to be determined that what will be the role of the line ministries or the minister of planning, development and reforms after establishment of the CPEC Authority.

“We have the Ministry of Communication, NHA for the infrastructure projects and Ministry of Energy and Wapda for the energy projects, but even then the government wants to establish a new authority to further complicate the process,” the source said.

“In papers the authority will work under the planning minister but practically it is not possible,” the source added. The Chinese are supporting establishment of CPEC Authority and want to have the same prior to next JCC meeting on CPEC, said the source.

However, when contacted an official of the Ministry of Planning seeking anonymity said that idea of establishment of autonomous CPEC Authority will take the corridor project into new phase. For the purpose, the CPEC Secretariat will be merged into autonomous authority, the official said. The CPEC authority will facilitate coordination among various ministries and departments and implementation of the next CPEC phase, the official said. He said it was wrong to say that authority will render the Ministry of Planning powerless.

The Nation

China varsity to organize tourism conference for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD - Senior Researcher on One Belt One Road project and Deputy Dean of International Studies, Sichuan University of China Professor Dr Song Zhihui has said that a tourism promotion conference for Pakistan would be organised to highlight its tourism potential. While addressing the business community at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he said China wanted to enhance its imports from Pakistan that would increase Pakistan's exports. He said that 2nd phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was very important for Pakistan as it would give boost to industrial cooperation.

Under 2nd phase of CPEC, China would develop many Special Economic Zones in Pakistan creating new opportunities for entrepreneurs of both countries to set up JVs and investment in areas of interest. Dr. Song Zhihui said that the first phase of CPEC focused on energy and infrastructure development in Pakistan while the 2nd phase would focus on industrial cooperation that would yield beneficial results for the economy of Pakistan. He said that many companies of China were interested to invest in Pakistan and set up factories here as Pakistan

was a best place for them. Addressing the delegation, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry Ahmed Hassan Moughal, said that establishment of SEZs in Pakistan under CPEC would start a new phase of business opportunities in our country and stressed that Chinese companies should come to Pakistan with technology transfer for JVs and investment.

He said that due to rising population and emerging market, many sectors of Pakistan's economy offered great potential for investment and Chinese companies should take benefit of these emerging opportunities. He said that by investing in Pakistan, Chinese companies would be able to meet the needs of local market and export surplus products to many countries including Middle East, Central Asia and other regions.

He assured that ICCI would extend all possible cooperation to Chinese companies for finding right partners in Pakistan. Senior Vice President ICCI RafatFarid and others also spoke at the occasion and highlighted the potential areas of cooperation between the enterprises of both countries. Both sides discussed prospects for further strengthening business collaboration between the two countries for achieving win-win outcomes.

July 30, 2019

Business Recorder

Dhabeji SEZ to be energized through wind energy under CPEC

ISLAMABAD: The energy department of Sindh government is arranging alternate energy solution to provide electricity to Dhabeji Special Economic Zone in Thatta, a priority project under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through wind power generation as the land falls within the natural wind corridor.

“The request by the federal government to execute this project of wind power generation under Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode is already submitted to be placed in next PPP Policy board meeting”, an official in government of Sindh Investment Department said.

The official said that the SEZ would require 32 Mega Watt (MW) of electricity by 2021 and PC-I for the 32 MW has already been prepared in coordination with Karachi Electric (KE) and submitted to power division, government of Pakistan.

He said the preparation of bidding package of the project was at final stage and the project would be launched through international competitive bidding in August, 2019 while the developer would be finalized by December this year.

The Sindh government has already earmarked 1530 acres of land for Dhabeji Economic Zone which will facilitate the potential investors of China and other countries to either start new enterprises or transfer their facilities to Pakistan.

The SEZ will have easy access of Port Qasim enabling raw material import and finished goods export without incurring major inland transportation costs and saving time.

It will also have easy access to Karachi Airport (35 km) via national highway enabling safe travel of foreign workers and management personnel while it will have direct access to the national highway enabling the transportation of goods to upcountry and Central Asian nations utilizing the National Trade Corridor.

The SEZ would provide investment opportunities in various sectors including steel foundries, automotive and auto parts, chemical and pharmaceuticals, consumer electronics engineering, textile and garments, warehousing, building material, and fast moving consumers' goods.

Dawn News

China to help Federal Board of Revenue reduce misdeclaration

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have decided to enter into an agreement to control misdeclaration at the country's ports as the menace has been causing massive revenue losses and hurting foreign investment. The decision comes at a time when the government is taking measures to control corruption within the customs department systematically.

"We have authorized Pakistan's ambassador to China Naghmana Hashmi to sign the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)," said the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Chairman Shabbar Zaidi on Monday.

The draft for the MoU was prepared by China's State Administration of Taxes to enable tax authorities from both Islamabad and Beijing to share data and learn from each other's best practices. China has come a long way in controlling misdeclaration at ports. According to some estimates, at one stage, total misdeclaration at Chinese ports had reached \$7-8 billion per annum however that number has decreased significantly over the years.

Both Pakistani and Chinese customs authorities have yet to agree on the variations of their reported figures. The misdeclaration is usually of three kinds: value of goods, description (Pakistan Customs Tariff heading) and weight. It can also occur by availing wrong exemptions.

The FBR chairman told Dawn that under the proposed agreement, China will provide on the spot information regarding exports to Pakistan. "This cooperation on government to government level will help control misdeclaration," Zaidi hoped.

The local markets are flooded with miss-declared imported goods. An internal review of the customs department has identified a wide margin of misdeclaration in value and quantity of imported goods from China, a senior customs officer told Dawn.

"Entry of goods into the markets without passing through proper channels is not possible without the connivance of customs officers", he said while adding that the data has been shared with the Chinese authorities for reconciliation.

"We will tackle this menace through automation", the chairman said, adding that these illegal goods are now being sold in every market across the country.

China is sharing data with Pakistan in a very limited way on products covered under the free trade agreement on quarterly basis. “We need this sharing of data on the spot to control the misdeclaration”, the chairman said. The FBR had initiated action against misdeclaration after data from Web-Based One Customs System Glo (WeBOC-Glo) was analyzed.

The data showed around 62 per cent of the total 69,000 goods declarations showed differences in assessed value and declared value of goods. On the other hand, around 21pc of the misdeclaration were made in weight and quantity.

July 31, 2019

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan Mango Festival held in Guangzhou

A festival to promote Pakistani mangoes was held in Guangzhou, a southern Chinese city. The festival was organized by M/s Jaffar Group on the sidelines of the International Fruit Freedom Day held on Tuesday at the Jiangnan Fruit and Vegetable Market, Guangzhou, where Consul General of Pakistan Dr. Diyar Khan was the chief guest. The event was attended by Canjiang Ye, President of Jiangnan Fruit and Vegetable Market, local businessmen, Pakistani community members, and officials from consular corps, media representatives and a large number of general public from Guangzhou city.

In his speech, the consul general, welcomed the event at the famous Jiangnan market and appreciated the organizers for making it a high publicity event to launch and promote Pakistani mangoes. Dr Diyar Khan dwelt in detail on the superior quality, nutritional benefits and rich flavor of Pakistani mangoes. He expressed the hope that the event would introduce some of most famous varieties of Pakistani mangoes to huge market of Guangdong and southern China. The local representative of Jaffar Brothers gave a detailed presentation on varieties and qualities of Pakistani mangoes and potential of its export to China. During the event, Jaffar Brothers of Pakistan and Jiangnan Fresh of China signed a cooperation agreement under which Jiangnan Fresh Company would be wholesale distributor for mangoes exported by Jaffar Brothers.

CPEC: Dhabeji SEZ to be energized through wind energy

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Pakistan China to strengthen anti-terrorism, security coop

China stands ready to strengthen anti-terrorism, law enforcement and security cooperation with Pakistan so as to provide a security guarantee to the construction of the Belt and Road as well as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a high-ranking Chinese official said Monday. Guo Shengkun, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and head of the Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the CPC Central Committee, made the remarks when meeting with Zubair Mahmood Hayat, Pakistan's chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, China Military Online reported on Tuesday.

Hailing the two countries as 'iron friends,' Guo called for implementing the consensus reached by leaders of the two countries and strengthening the China-Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, so as to foster a closer community with a shared future. The Pakistani military will continue to make all-out efforts to ensure the security of Chinese personnel, organizations and projects in Pakistan, Zubair said.

Jang News

جزل زبیر کی چین کے نائب صدر سے ملاقات، سی پیک کے حوالے سے گفتگو

بیجنگ (آئی این پی) چیئر مین جو ائنٹ چینس آف اسٹاف کمیٹی جزل زبیر محمود حیات نے کہا ہے پاک چین دوستی پہاڑوں سے اونچی اور سمندر سے گہری ہے، پاکستان چین کی حاصل کردہ ترقیاتی کامیابیوں کو قدر کی نگاہ سے دیکھتا ہے، ”چین کے ہم نصیب معاشرے اور بیلٹ اینڈ روڈ“ کی مشترکہ تعمیر کی بھرپور حمایت، اقتصادی راہداری کی حفاظت کو یقینی بنانے کیلئے موثر اقدامات کرے گا، منگل کو چین کے نائب صدر مملکت وانگ جھی شان نے بیجنگ میں چیئر مین جو ائنٹ چینس آف اسٹاف کمیٹی جزل زبیر محمود حیات سے ملاقات کی، چین کے سرکاری ریڈیو کے مطابق ملاقات میں وانگ جھی شان نے کہا پاکستان چین کا واحد چار موسموں کا اسٹریٹجک شراکت دار ہے، چین اور پاکستان نے ہمیشہ ایک دوسرے پر اعتماد کیا اور ایک دوسرے کا ساتھ دیا، اس وقت چین پاکستان تعلقات کی ترقی مضبوط ہے، چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری کی تعمیر کے ابتدائی ثمرات اور نتائج برآمد

ہو رہے ہیں، فریقین کو چاہیے دونوں ممالک کے رہنماؤں کے اتفاق رائے پر عملدرآمد کیا جائے، اسٹریٹجک اصلاحات اور تعاون کو مستحکم کیا جائے، چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری کی تعمیر کو مضبوطی سے فروغ دیا جائے، انسداد دہشت گردی اور سلامتی جیسے مختلف شعبوں میں تعاون کو گہرا کیا جائے۔