



For Better Understanding on
China-Pakistan and
CPEC
Gleanings from the
National Press

September 01-15, 2020

A pilot project of PICS

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September 01, 2020

Pakistan Observer

COMSATS expands cooperation with China for socio-economic development of the South

Islamabad based inter-governmental organization, the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS) and its founding member country, China, are cooperating in various fields of science and technology for facilitating socio-economic uplift of the developing countries including Pakistan. COMSATS and its Centre of Excellence, the Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology (TIB), are cooperating to establish a Joint Centre on Industrial Biotechnology for COMSATS Member States in China, which would provide opportunities of experts-exchange, joint research, and training of scientists/technicians to the developing countries. Having 21 of its Member Countries and 18 Centers of Excellence situated along China's Belt & Road Initiative, COMSATS is aiming to play an active role in this mega-project in the domains of higher education, S&T and innovation. Being a member of the China-based Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO) an international S&T forum on BRI COMSATS is collaborating with various Chinese institutions for achieving the mutual objectives.

COMSATS and China are facilitating the Government of Pakistan in establishing the country's first S&T Park on Biotechnology in Jhelum. The Torch Hi-tech Industry Development Centre of the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology and TIB are playing a key role in this initiative being led by the S&T Minister, Mr. Fawad Chaudhry. The planned Biotech Park would be based on public-private partnership, and would bridge industry with academia. Utilizing the broad capability in industrial biotechnology and existing talent pool in the country, the S&T Park would realign the country's research efforts towards innovation and product development. It would house offices of local and foreign universities, research organizations and industries in order to facilitate joint ventures aimed at job creation, facilitating start-ups, enhancing exports, substituting imports, and creation of knowledge economy. President Dr. Arif Alvi, chairing the meeting regarding the establishment of Jhelum Biotechnology Park which was attended by key stakeholders including officials from S&T and Housing Ministries, Forest Department, COMSATS, etc. reviewed the project and future course of action was determined.

<https://pakobserver.net/comsats-expands-cooperation-with-china-for-socio-economic-development-of-the-south/>

The News

Pakistan, China have rich potential in agri sector

BEIJING: Pak-Sino agricultural cooperation is still in the initial stage, with plenty of potential in technology, product processing, trade and infrastructure construction, says latest study done by

Zhang Wenli and Zhai Xueling from Research Center, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China.

The Chinese study published by Gwadar Pro on Monday stated that Agriculture is the largest sector of Pakistan's economy in terms of labor participation. Meanwhile, Pakistan has a trade surplus with China in agricultural products. The volume of bilateral trade in this area has been growing strongly in recent years.

From \$181 million in the year of 2010 to \$476 million in 2019, China's imports of agricultural products from Pakistan had increased by 163.1%, with an average annual growth rate of 11.3%.

Pakistan's agriculture calls for increased productivity. According to the study, the natural resource endowments between Pakistan and China are mutually complementary, which lays a solid basis for expanding cooperation as well as driving Pakistan's agricultural progress through adopting advanced technologies in the future.

China has strengths in agricultural science and technology, mechanization, water conservancy engineering, etc. In 2019, the contribution rate of science and technology to China's agricultural growth recorded 59.2%, and the mechanization level of crop cultivation and harvest in China exceeded 70%.

Simultaneously, the innovation of seed industry has been continuously promoted, and the coverage rate of improved seed varieties has been greatly improved. Pakistan is rich in many agricultural production essentials like land and manpower. The per capita cultivated land area in Pakistan is twice that of China.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/708384-pakistan-china-have-rich-potential-in-agri-sector>

September 02, 2020

Business Recorder

Two power projects

BEIJING: More than 200 Chinese personnel of the Harbin Electric International (HEI) have been airlifted from Tianjin Binhai International Airport to Pakistan by a chartered flight to resume work on Jamshoro Power Station Construction Project and Binjiaseng Phase III Power Station and Power Transmission and Transformation Project.

After the arrival of the charter flights of Harbin Electric International and its partners to Pakistan, they have been quarantined for 14 days in strict accordance with the epidemic prevention requirements, according Sina.com, a Chinese news portal

After the quarantine period expires, they will immediately enter the site and start the project construction after confirmation their health status.

According to the report, since the end of January, Harbing Electric International has dispatched personnel in a timely manner during the early stage of the novel coronavirus epidemic in China for overseas to support market development and project implementation,

Since the outbreak of the global pandemic, HEI as the general contractor of the project, has resolutely implemented various deployment requirements for epidemic prevention and

formulated strict epidemic prevention and control measures and emergency plans, and spared no effort to protect the health and safety of overseas employees.

It said, the construction of the "Belt and Road" projects progressed in an orderly manner, and excellent answers were handed in during resumption of work and production.

Especially at present, after the resumption of travelling between some of the projects in the country and China, HEI has given full attention to its general contracting role, timely organized and coordinated various cooperation units, and sent additional personnel to various overseas sites.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/02/15-page/850022-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

CPEC and greater Pakistan

Malik Muhammad Aslam Awan

HAVING realized the manifold and marvelous advantages of CPEC and its ancillary projects, power generating, revamping the railway tracks, construction of SEZ's along with a vast network of Link CPEC Roads, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Iran and Russia are getting closer to form a most potential Bloc. World is changing with unprecedented velocity and new Divine world order is going to be implemented. World events are taking a concrete incarnation, leading the world towards a comprehensively changed scenario. World Horizon is going to see the renaissance of the Muslims all around the globe. US has managed a peace treaty and got realized a long cherished dream of Israel "Greater Israel".

But the world scenario is not bound by any means to drift towards the direction dictated by the USA, the country which accepted the sinister creation of Israel immediately after it emerged on the world map. It did not wait even for a single day to pass. Israel is the stooge of USA, to act like a robot upon its dictations. USA is making viable efforts, in its own thinking, to make Israel an undisputed entity acceptable to all the world countries. USA has manipulated to destroy Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon and Libya and the economy of these countries had shrunk to an alarming state, which had made their existence a hard nut to crack. Unbearable annihilation in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Lebanon is the phenomenon of USA malignant policy towards world peace. World peace means the amelioration of humanity and USA is ever hostile to world amelioration.

Why USA and India clamor against CPEC, because both countries had foreseen the getting closer of Pakistan, China, Russia, Iran and Turkey and natural formation of a strongest bloc of the world, which would endeavor hard and make hectic efforts for other nations to have advantages and fruits of the fast moving CPEC economic acceleration. Russia, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and China would be major beneficiaries of the progress ensuing as greatest blessing to the fortune of their people and the aggrandizement of state.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan has initiated visionary plans to boost the economy of Turkey. Turkey under his charismatic leadership is getting near the destination of economic stability with unprecedented velocity. Mammoth reserves of natural gas have been unearthed which would

give unmatched boost to Turkish economy. Turkish currency Lira is gaining stability against the US Dollar and in future Lira may have great attraction for world investors; more than US Dollar. From now world investors have started purchasing Lira to replace their dollar reservoirs. Turkey's economic growth rate has rung the bell of danger for US dollar. USA is making hectic efforts to destabilize Turkey but Recep Tayyip Erdogan is sensitive enough to apprehend American plans and to thwart these sinister motives, he seems to be in full bloom to counter policies antagonistic to Turkish interests. Recep Tayyip Erdogan has vision to chalk out a policy in the best interest of Turkish population as well as the whole Muslim Ummah. In the hearts of Muslim Ummah he enjoys the position, not less than our pride heroes, Salah-ud-Din Ayubi, Noor-ud-Din Zangi, Khalid bin Waleed, Musa bin Nusair, Muhammad bin Qasim, the souls of these Generals who fought for the glory of Islam with undaunted valor might be happy in the heaven to see rise of a leader in the Muslim world who feel the pain for all Muslims equal to that of Turkish masses. Recep Tayyip Erdogan is of the opinion that there might be the renaissance of Islam, and to realize his most valued intentions is endeavoring hard to awaken Muslims all around the globe. He has smacked that USA and Israel are making joint and concerted efforts to cause unbridgeable rifts between the Arabs and Turkey, Iran, Pakistan to make them devoid of national unity. Erdogan has rightly realized that USA is not the sincere friend of Muslims, and in this perspective he harbors visionary approach towards the formation of a bloc comprising Russia, Iran, Pakistan and China, which would soon be a world leading bloc not to follow but lead the whole of world.

China and Pakistan have embarked upon a program of joint intelligence sharing. China is entrusting the Bidro System to Pakistan, which is the best alternative to American GPS system and entails the results more accurate than American GPS satellite system. Pakistan's SUPARCO in collaboration with China will install Bidro network and after its installation China and Pakistan would have joint technology to target missile and aircraft ventures. Moreover Mosad and CIA don't have the caliber to hack this unique system.

Pakistan, China, Turkey, USSR, Iran, being the members of same bloc would boost their, within the bloc trade and their economy is likely to accelerate to gain further momentum. China being the cordial, sincere friend and having friendship – with Pakistan – higher than the heights of Himalaya would like Pakistan having strategic, economic hegemony over South Asia and Middle Eastern countries.

CPEC is a project envisioned and initiated between the two countries – China and Pakistan - having manifold intents and arenas of mutual cooperation, which after completion will not only bring drastic changes to economies of both the nations but will be a harbinger of a new era for both nations. Turkey, Iran, Pakistan Russia and China are heading towards a natural bloc, playing a leading role in world affairs. India and USA both criticize the joint ventures of China, Pakistan (CPEC) because they know full well that India is natural enemy of Pakistan and is going to a position of subservience and USA ever allied with Israel and India, will be lowered down from number one strategic and economic power and China Pakistan and Turkey would replace America, the dollar would be a weaker currency. Strategic, economic supremacy of

America will see utter decline and resultantly India and Israel would come down to miserable plight of plebeian.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-and-greater-pakistan/>

CPEC & road networks

Reema Shaukat

THERE is an interesting saying by Lewis Carroll that “if you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there”. Such is the importance and value of road networks and well-constructed roads in the development and progress of any country. Even the underdeveloped countries prefer building up better roads as it’s the main source of transportation to the far flung areas. Pakistan, since its inception, has focused on the construction of road network throughout the country and from time to time upgradation of existing road infrastructure. The history of transport in modern-day Pakistan dates back to the Indus Valley Civilization. The Grand Trunk Road or famous GT Road was a major road to connect different areas of the Indo-Pak subcontinent. This historic step was taken by Sher Shah Suri in the 16th century and it’s still operative. With the passage of time GT Road was developed as the trees were planted and mosques and temples were built alongside the road for the welfare and ease of local populace. Likewise caravan seroys or rest areas were built for travelers. For several centuries, it has linked the eastern and western regions of South Asia, running from Bengal, across north India, into Peshawar in Pakistan. Apart from road networks, railways and airways were also developed.

Pakistan with the passage of time laid network of national highways throughout the country to improve trade and logistics within the country. In the early 1990s, the construction of motorways began with the idea of building a world class road network throughout Pakistan and with the vision to reduce the load on the heavily used national highways across the country. The Makran coastal highway goes along the coast of Sindh and Baluchistan provinces, linking Karachi and Gwadar. After the construction of new coastal highway, the travel time has been reduced to six or seven hours. The highway was built as part of an overall plan to improve transport facilities and development of far off areas in south of Baluchistan. Another state-of-the-art venture is the Karakoram Highway which is the highest paved international road in the world. It connects China and Pakistan across the Karakoram mountain range through the Khunjerab Pass.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is considered as a main stake of China’s flagship project of One Belt, One Road Initiative. CPEC is all-inclusive growth program that requires the linking of Gwadar Port to China’s north-western region of Xinjiang through highways, railways, oil and gas pipelines and an optical fiber link. CPEC has provided second opportunity to change the fate of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan after construction of Karakoram Highway in the 1970s.

Likewise CPEC encompasses linking all districts and cities of Pakistan through well-built road networks and work is going on at a fast pace for roads connectivity. China’s project of Silk Road is an extensive interconnected network of trade routes across the Asian Continent connecting East, South and Western Asia with the Mediterranean world, including North Africa and Europe. It passes through the midsection of Pakistan through cities like Peshawar, Taxila and Multan.

As an early project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the 118-km-long road from Havelian to Thakot was constructed by the China Road and Bridge Corporation under the Karakoram Highway (KKH) Phase Two project, which consists of the expressway section from Havelian to Mansehra and the secondary road section from Mansehra to Thakot. Likewise Peshawar-Karachi motorway (Multan-Sukkar section) was also completed in the near past.

Another project of Khuzdar-Basima road of approximately 110 km is also under construction. Apart from many projects which are in developmental phase, expansion and construction of existing line ML-1 and construction of dry ports under the CPEC project are also underway. Special Economic Zones are another milestone in CPEC which will surely help in boosting better trade facilities and are in construction phase after selection of sites.

The development of the transport road network plays an important role in the economic development of a country and, therefore, the kilometer-age of paved roads existing in a country is often used as an index to assess the extent of its development. The proper development of the transport road network not only reduces the cost of transportation, both in terms of money and time, but also helps in the integration of various regions within the country and the better understanding of neighboring countries at the international level. In Pakistan, we have terrain of deserts, plateaus, valleys, mountains and plains and therefore to have all areas accessible it is important to have better and safe transport road network. Apart from providing better living opportunities to local populace with the availability of better infrastructure one thing which is often neglected is the potential for tourism.

Pakistan is blessed to have beautiful landscape and diverse weather throughout the year including snowfall in winters and chilly northern areas to enjoy in hot summers. But to attract tourists from outside the country we need to focus on better road facility to untapped hilly areas or along 1000km long coastline of Pakistan where there is matchless beauty of clean beaches and unique variety of seafood. Not only foreigners visit to Pakistan will facilitate earning better economy but tourism within Pakistan can be enhanced with availability of better road conditions, rest areas alongside roads, hotels and resorts, provision of emergency services or basic medical aid.

Certainly whatsoever projects are initiated that are for the ease of public but it comes as a huge responsibility of citizens not to spoil or misuse any government or public property. Such things are long-term projects which not only take long time to complete but considering them as a national asset which can be passed on to generations as heritage, it is responsibility of every individual to consider and understand its duty.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-road-networks/>

September 03, 2020

Pakistan Observer

Chinese scholar calls for joint ventures to implement CPEC's projects

Public and private sector partnership (Joint ventures) could be an effective source to boost industrial development under the 2nd phase of CPEC. There is also need of encouraging Academia-Industrial linkages to achieve the desired goals, this was stated by a Chinese scholar and senior fellow of Chongyang Institute for Financial Study of Renmin University of China Zhou Rong in an article published by Gwadar Pro on Wednesday. Who is to play major roles in implementing CPEC's projects? Will it be led continuously by the governments of the two countries or by the market? Will it be a compulsory joint venture by outside force or a natural voluntary joint venture? These are big issues that have to be properly addressed for implementing the CPEC's 2nd phase as per their spirit and agreed framework.

It is heartening to note that in July Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company, Punjab University and Institute of Quality and Technology Management signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote industrial development in the special economic zone. As reported, under the agreement, PU would set up a modern research center in the special economic zone with strong researcher team for R&D which the enterprises lack, while IQTM would provide training to the management of the industry that the university does not have any edged advantages. Indeed, Chinese entrepreneurs and Chinese engineers and technicians will definitely and actively participate in the seamless connection between Pakistan's enterprises and universities.

Moreover, it can be seen that the combination of the management ability of the enterprise and the research and development ability of the university will produce tangible economic and social benefits, allowing the enterprise to obtain the source of intelligence, and giving the university the opportunity to exert its own advantages.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-scholar-calls-for-joint-ventures-to-implement-cpecs-projects/>

September 04, 2020

Pakistan Observer

Asim Bajwa steps down as SAPM, rebuts allegations Will continue to serve as CPECA Chairman

Lieutenant General (r) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Thursday decided to step down as Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting. Lt Gen (r) Asim Saleem Bajwa said that he would continue to serve as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority (CPECA) Chairman.

“I wanted to concentrate on the CPEC projects,” he said and added he will present his resignation as SAPM on information to Prime Minister Imran Khan. Earlier, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority (CPECA) Chairman strongly rejected baseless allegations leveled against him and his family. In a tweet, Asim Bajwa strongly rebutted the baseless allegations levelled against him by journalist Ahmed Noorani. He said another attempt to damage his reputation has been exposed. I have and will always serve Pakistan with pride and dignity, he added.

Denying the claims made in the news article, he said that on the date of filing the declaration of assets (which the report claimed was false), his wife was no longer a shareholder in any businesses of his brother ‘or anyone else’. In the documents released on Twitter, he wrote that baseless allegations were made in the report regarding awarding CPEC contracts to his brother’s company, adding that his brother’s has never won any CPEC contract. Bajwa went on to say that his son’s company Scion Builders is already registered with the Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), adding that the above mentioned company has not done any business since its inception. “My son owns 50 percent share of the company called Himalaya Private Limited,” he said and added the company has earned a profit of Rs 500,000 in the last three years.

He said that Bajco Global Management, LLC has no ownership interest in any Papa John’s and also termed the allegation of Bajco owning 99 companies as false. The Chairman said that in a span of eighteen years, his brothers purchased the franchise and related assets worth almost \$70 million, out of which around \$60 million were through bank loans and financial facilities.

<https://pakobserver.net/asim-bajwa-steps-down-as-sapm-rebuts-allegations-will-continue-to-serve-as-cpeca-chairman/>

The Nation

President Xi postpones visit to Pakistan

Chinese President Xi Jinping has postponed his visit to Pakistan which was expected this year, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing said yesterday.

Speaking to journalists here, the envoy said that the visit was being rescheduled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Earlier in the day, the ambassador met Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi here.

The Ambassador said the two governments were working on deciding a new date for President Xi Jinping’s visit to Pakistan. “It would be announced soon. The two governments are working on it,” he said.

Prime Minister Imran Khan had invited the Chinese President to Pakistan during his visit to China.

Yao Jing said that the Chinese government was satisfied with the progress of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and both the governments were aware of the challenges facing the multi-billion-dollar project.

“Together, Pakistan and China will defeat these threats,” the envoy said and added that China and Pakistan will not allow the enemies to succeed in their nefarious designs and CPEC.

“The CPEC projects will continue despite the challenge of Covid-19 on both sides. Steps are being taken by both the countries to deal with the pandemic,” he said.

The ambassador assured China’s confidence in CPEC saying that negative elements cannot stop both the countries from cooperation. “The people of both the countries will be able to benefit from this project,” he added.

In February, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had announced that the Chinese President Xi Jinping was expected to visit Pakistan, whereas, some sources had claimed that the visit was likely in June.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Qureshi yesterday held a with the Chinese envoy and emphasized deeper cooperation between Pakistan and china in agriculture sector.

“Agriculture is the mainstay of Pakistan’s economy and employs a large part of Pakistan’s productive labour force. There is a greater need to revamp and modernize agriculture sector with China’s co-operation and unleash the Second Green Revolution in Pakistan”, said Foreign Minister Qureshi in the meeting with Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing. The Agriculture Commissioner of the Chinese Embassy, Dr Gu Wenliang, was also accompanying the Ambassador.

Welcoming the establishment of Joint Working Group on Agriculture Cooperation under CPEC, Foreign Minister Qureshi emphasized that inclusion of agriculture in CPEC will promote industrialization and modernization of the agriculture economy.

Ambassador Yao Jing underlined that China would like to collaborate with Pakistan in setting up Agriculture Technology Centers, Joint Research Centre for Plant Pest and Disease Control, and FMD Zones in Pakistan.

<https://nation.com.pk/04-Sep-2020/president-xi-postpones-visit-to-pakistan>

The News

Chinese project to employ big number of Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD: A Chinese enterprise Shaanxi Huashan Construction Group Co. (TIEC) has estimated that it will employ a large number of Pakistani staff in construction of the addition of two lanes to N-55 National Road (Ratodero- Shikarpur).

Last week, the TIEC, one of the top 250 global contractors of ENR, won the bid by National Highways Authority (NHA) for the addition of two lanes.

According to Gwadar Pro on Thursday, the 43.4 km project is the first winning project issued by NHA in 2020. The project is expected to start in late September.

In an interview, Xu Wei, the manager of TIEC, said that during the construction period of this project, TIEC will establish a joint venture with the cooperative enterprises for project management and implementation, and the labor force will mainly be Pakistani local employees.

“As a Chinese enterprise which attaches great importance to CPEC, we adhere to the localized operation mode. TIEC strives to train local technical workers and management talents,” he said.

Localized operation mode is reckoned as a major pattern amidst CPEC projects, that is an important reason why CPEC projects are able to improve local employment. Xu stated that, “Localized operations have brought great benefits to local development. The projects provide a large number of jobs, fund the training of local labor, and extensively use local building materials.”

TIEC has kept a close eye on construction sector in Pakistan, such as housing, roads, airports, hospitals and other municipal works. “We will further explore the area of construction investment as well,” Xu said.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/709936-chinese-project-to-employ-big-number-of-pakistanis>

September 05, 2020

The Nation

CPEC under vicious attack

Yasir Habib Khan

As there is no let up; another spiteful attempt to discredit CPEC has been unleashed by activating a new and malicious model. The new model does not target merits of projects, rather this time CPEC Authority Chairman Lt Gen (Retired) Asim Saleem Bajwa is in the crosshairs.

Without any delay, CPEC Authority Chairman shrugged off all allegations leveled against him through his tweets on August 27. Later on, he, who is also working as Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting, tweeted on September 03 with detailed written arguments that invalidated all bogus accusations. He also appeared on media, answered each and every question and came clean with grace.

Those who have orchestrated viciousness are the same unscrupulous forces who are always hell-bent to cripple blossoming spirit and electrifying momentum in the entire activity of CPEC projects.

Since the launch of CPEC in 2015, there have been numerous attempts of malice and malign to derail the multi-billion development project. From the onset, questions were raised on the transparency and cost-effectiveness of projects. Debt-trap propaganda was overblown. Chinese development footprints were painted as a secretive endeavor to colonise Pakistan. During the PTI government, psychological warfare intensified.

Since, nothing worked as per mischievous attention and CPEC came clean, anti-state forces have now come up with new nastiness which aim to vilify the character of the Chairman of CPEC authority.

Here serious questions come to mind; why does the CPEC Authority Chairman get targeted now? What is the reason behind the character assassination campaign? What sort of purpose is to be served?

Frankly speaking, the answers to all these questions are very simple. From the day CPEC Authority came into being and Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa assumed the charge as its Chairman, CPEC got a new lease of life. A few months back, the impression that CPEC had been slowing

down was portrayed. Mischief mongers ganged up to float misleading information that the gulf of a trust-deficit between the leadership of China and Pakistan on CPEC was throwing a spanner in the works. They also tried to misguide the world by spreading misinformation that political parties and the government of Pakistan were not on the same page on the existence and execution of CPEC.

Technical delays in the implementation of projects were exploited and misguided analysis were showcased against CPEC. Anti-state elements strove to dent Pak-China relations through the terror attack at Karachi Chinese Consulate. In the backdrop of such precarious developments, Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa took the charge of CPEC Authority. Proving his brilliance and management skills, he made everybody take notice by restoring the spirit of CPEC as a game-changer.

Another miracle he did was to keep CPEC afloat despite the catastrophic situation surrounding COVID-19, which brought the economy to a halt and development activities in the length and breadth of Pakistan.

Under his dynamic leadership acumen, CPEC's two hydro projects made the headlines. Kohala (1124MW) and Azad Patan (700MW) Hydel projects have been signed and committed, which clearly expresses the commitment shown by both the Chinese and Pakistani governments and their private sectors including banks in both countries. ML-1 got approved by ECNEC at a cost of \$6.806 billion from Peshawar to Karachi (1872 KMs) including Havelian Dry Port and upgrading Walton Academy. These three projects costing \$10.9 billion were rolled out in just two months.

The CPEC Authority Chairman's display of performance came to light when the 80KM two-way Mansehra-Thakot expressway costing Rs 136 billion was opened for traffic recently. It is an extension of the 40 KM Havelian-Mansehra 4-lane Motorway.

Due to his dynamism, 306 KMs Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway (M-6) was approved by ECNEC on BOT basis. With contribution to the construction boom, socio-economic revolution for interior Sindh, it will complete the Peshawar-Karachi Eastern Route. It will also link east Balochistan to the entire Motorway network. A new optic fibre cable was also operationalised from Khunjerab to Islamabad. The next phase will be laid from Islamabad to Karachi and to Gwadar as part of the digital highway plan.

Pakistan started transit trade to Afghanistan via sea route by making the Gwadar port operational. Pakistan has activated the deep-water port of Gwadar, on the Arabian Sea, which offers a much shorter overland link, particularly to the southern regions of Afghanistan, for the rapid delivery of goods.

Keeping in view South Balochistan's development, 110 KMs 2 lane Khuzdar-Basima N-30 highway construction work continued in full swing. At the cost of Rs 19 Billion, work commenced on October 19. Almost 20 percent of physical work has been completed.

This is just a glimpse of multi-faced progress that has been made under the leadership of Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa as Chairman of CPEC Authority. The pace of progress is all set to

accelerate in the coming days, catalyzing timely completion of projects. His wonderful performance has hammered in the last nail in the coffin of the enemies of CPEC.

<https://nation.com.pk/05-Sep-2020/cpec-under-vicious-attack?show=preview>

September 06, 2020

Business Recorder

Int'l tender of ML-1 to be issued on 12th: Rashid

LAHROE: Federal Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmad has said that international tender of ML-1 project will be issued on the 12th of this month and Pakistan Railways will enter into a new era after completion of this project. He described ML-1 as a wide range of infrastructure development project to uplift Pakistan Railways.

While talking to reporters here on Saturday at Railways Headquarters, he further said that in the first phase, single track of Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) would be laid down and work on double track would be started after completion of the single track. The KCR single track will be completed till September 30. The orders of the honorable Supreme Court will be followed with spirit and it would be completed within stipulated time, he added.

When asked he said that work on Hassan Abdaal railways junction will be completed soon because this railways station has unique importance due to Sikh community and Gurdawara Punga Sahib. He claimed that Prime Minister Imran Khan will inaugurate Hassan Abdaal railways station in the last week of this month.

The task of transportation of imported wheat had been handed over to the Pakistan Railways by the Cabinet, he maintained. The task of transportation of imported Euro-5 Diesel will also be entrusted to Pakistan Railways, he claimed.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/06/3-page/850466-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

China applauds PM remarks on bilateral ties

China has applauded the warm remarks made by Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan on relations between the two countries. According to Gwadar Pro, Chinese Embassy here in a statement, also appreciated the contribution of the CPEC Authority in advancing the mega project in a fully committed way. The embassy reiterated to work with Pakistan government in earnest under the guidance of the two leaderships for a shared future. The statement from Chinese Embassy came after Prime Minister Imran Khan in an interview with Aljazeera television said Pakistan's future is now linked to China, which is progressing at a faster pace than any other country in the world. He dismissed any renegotiation with China over amending the terms of CPEC, saying that the relationship with China is even better than before.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-applauds-pm-remarks-on-bilateral-ties/>

The News

Pak-China friendship getting stronger under CPEC

ISLAMABAD: The 2020 Beijing International Forum on People-to-people Friendship that was held online stated that the Sino-Pak cooperative partnership is getting stronger with a passage of time under CPEC.

The forum was co-sponsored by Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (BPAFFC) and Beijing NGO Network for International Exchanges (Beijing NGO) under the guidance of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC).

According to Gwadar Pro, the forum attracted more than 200 participants, including representatives of 58 friendship organizations from 30 countries. The event was centered on the theme of people-to-people friendly cooperation under BRI.

Ikhlaque Usmani, the president of All Pakistan-China Friendship Association (APCFA) and Farwa Zafar, the secretary-general of APCFA, attended this conference on behalf of people-to-people friendship organizations in Pakistan.

Usmani in his speech said, Pakistan and China enjoy a very special relationship that are ever-growing. In this May, they marked the 69th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations with China. The two countries have witnessed how the friendship has grown since 1950.

He also mentioned that CPEC has significantly benefited Pakistan. He said: "In Pakistan, the BRI's signature project of CPEC, over past five years has progressed smoothly and has been a driving force of Pakistan's economic growth by one to two percentage points every year and created 70,000 jobs in Pakistan.

In the town of Gwadar, the port and Free Zone have already become operational, creating opportunities for employment, investment and commerce.

Pakistani women working under CPEC projects can access better health care facilities and education, and enjoy better professional working environment in Chinese companies.

Socially, CPEC is aimed at mobilizing the people to work together for the betterment of our two nations, he added.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/710761-pak-china-friendship-getting-stronger-under-cpec>

September 07, 2020

Daily Times

Timely completion of CPEC projects top on govt priority

The present government has been attaching top priority to timely completion of road infrastructure projects related of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Construction work of ongoing road infrastructure projects under CPEC is going on smoothly and ample allocations have been made in the Public Sector Development Programmed (PSDP) to

ensure that these schemes are accomplished in time, an official of National Highway Authority told APP on Sunday.

He said that Rs 10,000 million have been allocated under PSDP-2020-2021 for the new scheme for dualization of Zhob-Quetta Road which would form an important part of Western Corridor of the CPEC. The project has been divided in five packages including 65 km Zhob-Tangi package, 65 km Tangi-Qila Saifullah package, 50 km Qila Saifullah-Nasai package, 65 km Nasai-Khanozai package and 53 km Khanozai-Kuchlak (Quetta) package.

An amount of Rs 20,000 million have been earmarked for construction of Motorway from Burhan- Hakla on M-I to Dera Ismail Khan which would form part of CPEC, the official said. The project has been divided into five packages and expected to be accomplished during ongoing fiscal year. A total of Rs 2500 million, he said , have been earmarked for Construction of KKH Phase-II, 118 km Havelian-Thakot section of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which included Rs 2000 million foreign aid whereas Rs 500 million would be local component.

The NHA official said that for land acquisition and resettlement for KKH (Phase-I), Havelian-Thakot section, Rs 250 million have been earmarked. For land acquisition of CPEC projects, Lahore-Abdul Hakeem Motorway, Multan-Sukkur, Motorway and Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway, Rs 1500 million have been allocated. He said Rs 350 million have been specified for improvement and widening of Chitral-Booni-Mastuj-Shandur Road, also part of CPEC and for Nokundi-Mashkhel road deposit work, Rs 1000 million have been allotted. For construction of 392 km Sukkur-Multan Section which would be built on Build Operate and Transfer basis, Rs 2500 million have been allocated in the PSDP out of which Rs 2000 million are in foreign aid, the official said.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/663843/timely-completion-of-cpec-projects-top-on-govt-priority/>

The Express Tribune

China setting up military logistics facilities in Pakistan: US report

The bilateral relations between Pakistan and China have emerged stronger after the former launched multi-billion dollar CPEC project under its ambitious OBOR initiative in the country.

An official US report released by its Department of Defence last week said due to geo-strategic importance, China has likely considered locations for military logistics facilities in Pakistan and other countries, a claim rejected by both Islamabad and Beijing.

In its annual report to Congress on China's military, the Pentagon said Pakistan is among a handful of countries where Beijing seeks to enhance both "bilateral and multilateral" engagements.

"In support of its national strategy, the PRC [People's Republic of China] pursues a range of goals through OBOR to include strengthening its territorial integrity, increasing its energy security, and expanding its international influence."

Similarly, OBOR projects associated with pipelines and port construction in Pakistan intend to decrease China's reliance on transporting energy resources through strategic choke points, such as the Strait of Malacca, read the report.

The report claimed that China continues to expand the Chinese military participation in bilateral and multilateral military exercises, normalizing its presence overseas and establishing ties to foreign militaries.

“An increase in bilateral and multilateral engagement with foreign militaries, including Russia, Pakistan, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) can improve the PLA’s [People's Liberation Army] ability to organize and manage combined operations that integrate foreign forces,” Pentagon said in its report.

The report also warned the United States that Chinese military is pressing to double its 200-plus nuclear warheads within a decade with the ability to launch them aboard ballistic missiles by land, sea and air.

Aside from aiming for technological parity with the United States, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is also focused on conducting joint operations, to be able to deter or defeat any US effort to intervene on Taiwan's behalf, the report said.

It said that PLA has already matched or surpassed the United States military in several areas, including shipbuilding, land-based ballistic and cruise missiles, and air defense systems.

Responding to the report, China's defense ministry called the report "utterly wrong" and a misinterpretation of Beijing's "defense policy and military strategy".

The report "defamed China's military modernization, defense expenditure, nuclear policy and other issues", the ministry said in a statement.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2262857/china-setting-up-military-logistics-facilities-in-pakistan-us-report>

The News

Pakistan grateful to China for support against locust

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan believes ‘Iron Brother’ China gave more than 100 percent to Islamabad as Pakistan fought locust amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Gwadar Pro quoting top Pakistani leaders stated that China had always helped Pakistan as a big brother in good or bad times.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said China exceeds expectations whenever needed.

“Even at times when we are relaxed and not facing crisis, China remains just a call away. We are like brothers who can never be separated. Especially at the time when they were fighting Covid-19, their support was even more significant.

They have always given more than 100 percent,” he said.

Qureshi maintained that his recent meeting with Chinese counterpart Wang Yi was a regular interaction between trusted friends.

“I thanked him for everything China is doing for us.

We (Pakistan and China) will go on forever as partners and brothers. As the locust is coming under control, China’s help stands tall,” he acknowledged.

Recently, the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), a state-owned Chinese company, provided \$ 100,000 to Ministry of National food Security and Research in order to strengthen its efforts against desert locust.

A cheque of \$ 100,000 was handed over to the Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam.

He thanked China for the provision of 12 drones for locust control activities by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China. China has been assisting Pakistan to control desert locust in Pakistan as an emergency project.

China provided 300,000 liters of pesticides and 50 sprayer equipment that had worth around \$ 4.94 million.

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China also provided medical equipment to Pakistan to continue activities related to desert locust under the ongoing corona virus pandemic.

In addition, Department of Plant Protection received equipment including 200 protective suit, 4550 face masks, 200 goggles and 50 pairs of long shoes.

China's determined support came when Pakistan's farmers were struggling to combat the worst locust plague in nearly three decades as insect swarms decimated entire harvests in the country's agricultural heartlands and sent food prices soaring.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/711278-pakistan-grateful-to-china-for-support-against-locust>

September 08, 2020

Business Recorder

China says CPEC has registered progress against all odds

BEIJING: China on Monday commended positive comments made by Prime Minister Imran Khan on bilateral relations between China and Pakistan.

“China appreciates Prime Minister Imran Khan's positive comments on China-Pakistan relations,” Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson Zhao Lijain said during his regular briefing while responding to a question.

He said, “As all-weather strategic cooperative partners, China and Pakistan always enjoy mutual trust and support. This year, after standing the test of COVID-19, China-Pakistan relations have become even stronger with greater mutual trust, cooperation and friendship.”

Zhao observed that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), an important pilot project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation and a flagship for bilateral cooperation, had registered new progress against all odds.

“China stands ready to work together with Pakistan to advance cooperation in all sectors and forge a closer community with a shared future in a new era to bring more benefits for the two peoples,” he added.

The spokesperson made his remarks in response to Prime Minister Imran Khan's recent interview to a foreign media outlet.

PM Imran Khan linked Pakistan's economic future to China and termed the bilateral relations between Islamabad and Beijing "better than ever before."

He also said that China's growth rate is faster than any other country in the world, and Pakistan could benefit from the manner in which China has developed and lifted millions of its people out of poverty.

PM Imran Khan also dismissed rumors about attempts to renegotiate the CPEC cooperation terms with China.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/08/4-page/850646-news.html>

The Express Tribune

Chinese team discusses investment avenues with Pakistan

Pakistan holds vast investment opportunities in the telecom, energy and processed food sectors, said the head of a three-member Chinese trade delegation, Goa Bao Jun.

During a meeting with Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid, issues of mutual interest between both the countries were discussed.

"There is a need to work on the untapped potential in the field of clean drinking water in Pakistan," said Goa.

"The need for clean drinking water is a big part of life and its scarcity causes many diseases, which further aggravates problems in hospitals." He called for investment in the clean water sector. The delegation toured the chamber and showed keen interest in the One Window Smart Services offered by the chamber to facilitate its members.

The LCCI vice president welcomed the Chinese delegation's interest in investing in the food sector in Pakistan and voiced hope that more Chinese companies would invest in Pakistan.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2262970/chinese-team-discusses-investment-avenues-with-pakistan>

Pakistan looks for Chinese help in corporate farming

Pakistan is seeking support of China for corporate farming through the inclusion of agriculture in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) programme in the hope of triggering a green revolution.

In a recent meeting of the cabinet, its members expressed satisfaction over the inclusion of agriculture as well as science and technology in the CPEC programme. It was emphasised that Pakistan's economic development was intertwined with that of China and a green revolution would come in cooperation with Beijing.

It was pointed out that in the agriculture sector, support was being sought for corporate farming as well as joint farming. It was suggested that joint research should be undertaken in the field of agriculture as Pakistan had the research infrastructure, which had the potential to become a centre of excellence.

The minister for national food security and research told the cabinet that his team was working on raising wheat productivity for which timely announcement of support price and availability of quality seed was crucial.

He requested the prime minister to direct provinces to keep an appropriate quantity of good quality wheat, which would be used as seed.

The prime minister directed the food security minister to prepare short, medium and long-term plans for achieving food security and enhancing crop productivity.

The National Food Security and Research Division informed cabinet members that in September, around 0.5 million tons of imported wheat would be available in the country. It was stated that steps taken by the government had resulted in a reduction in wheat prices. It was pointed out that the transportation cycle should be astutely managed as with the sudden influx of imported wheat, the cost of carriage could increase.

It was also suggested that after the 18th Constitution Amendment, the prime responsibility of the Ministry of National Food Security was to ensure food security for which buffer stocks of essential commodities over and above the annual national demand should be maintained for supply-side intervention to keep prices in check.

The prime minister emphasised that shortage of wheat could not be allowed in the country in any circumstances as it was a staple diet of the common man. The minister for communication requested the cabinet that financing for the Zhob road project, approved in the last Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting, may also be taken up with the Chinese side as it was the main entry point to the western route.

The minister for industries and production apprised cabinet members that prices of sugar had already gone down by Rs4-5 per kg on expectations of arrival of imported sugar ordered by the private sector.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2262967/pakistan-looks-for-chinese-help-in-corporate-farming>

September 09, 2020

Daily Times

Digital trade a potential area for Pakistan-China cooperation: envoy

There is immense potential for digital trade between Pakistan and China as the former is actually moving towards digitalization, and the China International Fair for Trade in Service (CIFTIS) provides an opportunity for the BRI countries to really look into the prospect, said Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) of Pakistan to China Ahmed Farooq in an interview with China Economic Net (CEN).

According to CEN, the CIFTIS held from September 5 to 9 is the largest comprehensive exhibition in the field of global trade in services in China. The event organized under the background of global economic recovery is meant to provide opportunities for international businesses together online and offline and facilitate cooperation.

Addressing a session of Belt and Road Digital Trade under the fair, Ahmed said the CIFTIS is conducive to restoring economic vitality, improving trade connectivity, and facilitating the development of digital trade in the region. While talking about digital development in Pakistan, Ahmed noted it holds a bright future especially in the post-pandemic era when offline business is

undermined and online becomes the trend. The size of the population is very critical to digitalization as well. Pakistan is a country with 220 million people and around two-thirds of the population is below 30 years old, an energetic group always interested in new things and more adaptable to transformation.

The society as a whole is also taking incremental steps to accept those changes brought about by digitalization, including e-commerce, digital payment, online education, etc. Besides, the government is also keen on promoting the Digital Pakistan policy, in view of millions of new jobs expected to be created from economic growth due to digitalization. “Pakistan also has immense potential for developing tourism. With the potential of China’s outbound tourism and the special bond between Pakistan and China, there will be plenty of cooperation opportunities between the two countries after the epidemic,” Ahmed said in the interview.

Blessed with diversified geography from snow-clad mountains to deserts to the uncharted sea, Pakistan is home to 108 peaks above 7,000 meters, as well as more than a 1000 km long serene coastline with sandy and sunny beaches. Pakistan is honored with historical sites of Indus valley civilization that can trace back to 4000 years ago and preserves hundreds of Buddhist heritage sites. “Be it digitalization of Pakistan or tourism, CPEC will continue to play a part in driving their development as it did in the infrastructure sector,” Ahmed noted.

CPEC is moving towards the second phase with a human-centric approach, and the areas of food security, vocational training, job creation, and health sector and others are expected to improve the well-being of the people, he added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/665270/digital-trade-a-potential-area-for-pakistan-china-cooperation-envoy/>

Pakistan Observer

International Forum urges stronger people-to-people ties between China, Pakistan Friendship organizations with China can highlight dividends of BRI, defeat negative propaganda

Zubair Qureshi

All Pakistan-China Friendship Association along with representatives of 58 China friendship organizations from 30 countries worldwide jointly discussed the friendly cooperation between people under the ‘Belt and Road’ initiative, at the 5th International Forum on Friendship, organized by the Beijing People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries in Beijing. At the forum, leaders from many nations applauded its success and spoke excitedly about the future role friendship organizations can play in the BRI as they represent the soft power and voice of their countries. Mapping a new vision, the one day conclave called for a new era of win-win cooperation for common development between China and countries along the Belt and Road. They agreed to jointly build a closer community with a shared future for mankind featuring mutual respect, fairness, and justice. Madame Zhang Qian, Executive Vice President welcomed the leaders of the Friendship organizations and presented a video message of Madame

He Luli, vice chairman of the Ninth and Tenth Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and honorary chairman of the BPAFFC. The meeting was also addressed by Madame Yan Aoshuang, deputy director of the Beijing Municipal People's Congress Standing Committee, Ambassador Lin Songtian, and President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

In his speech Lin Songtian called on international friendly organizations to actively promote the construction of the "Belt and Road" to promote stability and long-term development, heart-to-heart communication among countries along the route, sister-cities exchanges, and to focus on the inclusion of youth, local government officials, think tanks and media representatives.

Friendship organizations from Pakistan, Australia, Nepal, Bangladesh, Maldives, Cambodia, Germany, France, the United States, Peru, Tunisia, Australia and other five continents addressed the gathering. General Secretary of All Pakistan-China Friendship Association – APCFA, Farwa Zafar in her statement noted that the friendship between Pakistan and China is exemplary, representing the commonwealth of the people of the two nations. She said that the BRI is "The Project of the Century" a buzz word across the globe, focused on redeveloping the ancient silk route, forging closer partnerships, among countries in Asia, Europe and Africa and thereby promoting a community of a shared future, to the benefit of all. For Pakistan, the BRI has been a game changer, with the launch in 2015 of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as its flagship project. The CPEC, over the past five years has improved people's livelihoods, been a driver of Pakistan's economic growth by one to two percentage points every year and created 70,000 jobs in Pakistan. In Gwadar, the port and Free Zone have already become operational, creating opportunities for employment, investment and commerce.

<https://pakobserver.net/international-forum-urges-stronger-people-to-people-ties-between-china-pakistan-friendship-organizations-with-china-can-highlight-dividends-of-bri-defeat-negative-propaganda/>

The Nation

China, Pakistan to strengthen cooperation in CPEC security

China stands ready to strengthen cooperation in anti-terrorism, CPEC security, law enforcement with Pakistan, said Zhao Kezhi, Chinese Minister of Public Security in a phone conversation with Pakistani Minister of Interior Ijaz Ahmed Shah.

According to Gwadar Pro on Tuesday, Zhao said China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperation partners.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has talked with Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan by phone and met with the visiting Pakistani President Arif Alvi since the outbreak of COVID-19 epidemic. Leaders of both countries have reached important consensus on joint response to the epidemic and the development of China-Pakistan relations.

Zhao noted that the two nations with a tradition of mutual assistance helped each other in the COVID-19 fight, which fully demonstrates the special China-Pakistan brotherhood.

Now, China is ready to work with Pakistan to implement the consensus reached by leaders of both countries, deepen cooperation in law enforcement, expand the police affairs exchanges and cooperation at local levels and safeguard the two sides' common interests, security and stability to continuously deepen the all-weather strategic cooperation partnership.

The interior minister noted that Pakistan and China enjoy profound friendship. Pakistan highly appreciates China's achievements in the COVID-19 fight under Xi's strong leadership.

He expresses gratitude for China's support and assistance for Pakistan to contain the pandemic.

He said that Pakistan is willing to implement the consensus reached by leaders of two countries, constantly deepen anti-terrorism and other pragmatic cooperation in law enforcement and security area and strengthen the security of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

<https://nation.com.pk/09-Sep-2020/china-pakistan-to-strengthen-cooperation-in-cpec-security>

September 10, 2020

Dunya News

'Large scope of cooperation exists between China, Pakistan and CASs under CPEC'

Speakers at a webinar said that there was a large scope for cooperation on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) among China, Pakistan and the Central Asian States (CASs) which includes energy production, mining industry, food industry and agriculture.

The webinar titled "China Pakistan Economic Corridor & Central Asia: Evolving Connectivity" was organized by Lahore Center for Peace Research.

Speaking in the webinar Former Ambassador Hüseyin Avni Botsali (Turkey) said that world is facing drastic changes with unforeseeable consequences (due to Covid-19 pandemic) and they have reshaped the parameters of interaction, between states and individuals.

It has undermined the present world order and is contributing to shaping a new world order. Furthermore, he added that success of the projects with the vision of connectivity is linked to peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Deputy Director, Center for South Asian Studies, Fudan University, China Lin Minwang said that 'inclusivity and mutuality' are the hallmarks of BRI and the CPEC is the most successful project in BRI framework.

He added that China has launched several projects in Central Asia and Afghanistan under BRI initiative and is now thinking to connect all the projects of BRI to enhance their impact.

Moreover, he noted that China is facilitating Afghan Peace Process and is also promoting relations between Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asian Republics.

Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to Pakistan Erik Beishembiev pointed out that the globalization has turned the world into an interdependent entity.

He added that Kyrgyz republic see the CPEC as a catalyst for economic growth. In his view there is large scope for cooperation on CPEC among China, Pakistan and the Central Asian states which includes energy production, mining industry, food industry, agriculture, etc.

He pointed out that the people to people contact between Pakistan and Central Asian Republics will accelerate the economic growth and the connectivity will provide the requisite impetus.

Former Finance Minister Dr Salman Shah said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a monumental initiative.

He explained that the BRI is a framework that connects four out of five major global economic hubs of the world and envisages the win-win situation for almost 70 countries with unlimited opportunities and prospects for economic growth.

He said China has emerged as “champion of globalization” and has full potential to dominate economic global relations for the next century.

The Central Asia after the end of Afghan War, like East Asia after the end of Vietnam war, has its turn to blossom economically with its enormous amount of natural resources, energy, agriculture, tourism and its geographic location at the crossroads of several regions.

Dr Salman, however, pointed out that it is the leadership of the countries who should translate the potential and connectivity framework into a workable plan that can deliver on the ground across.

Sadullo Rasulov said that the BRI is the linchpin in the connectivity for the land locked Central Asia Region.

He reiterated that Uzbekistan was amongst the first ones to support CPEC which strategically lies at the heart of the geographical centre of the region. He argued that Uzbekistan has a substantial role in CPEC especially in terms of infrastructure building for transportation, telecommunication, tourism and energy based projects.

Lastly, he emphasized upon promoting peace process in Afghanistan, which is long overdue and is an impediment in the way to achieving regional peace and stability.

Former Ambassador Shamshad Ahmad summed up the discussion saying that the people of South Asia and Central Asia romanticize with the concept of integration and draw their inspiration from various historic narratives.

He said, the CPEC is an ‘epoch making’ initiative and a rare opportunity for building peace and prosperity through connectivity for the states of South Asia and Central Asian region. They can avail of the benefits of economy of scale through integration of their transportation, trade, energy and tourism capacities.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Business/563201-Large-scope-cooperation-exists-China-Pakistan-CASS-CPEC>

The Express Tribune

CPEC supplements SCO's vision of regional connectivity: FM Qureshi

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Thursday said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the flagship project of the One Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) supplements

the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) vision of regional connectivity and economic integration.

While addressing the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers moot in Moscow, Qureshi appreciated SCO as a platform for enhancing closer relations with regional partners and realizing the benefits of the emerging connection between the and Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

Speaking about the projects, the foreign minister said CPEC will bring economic prosperity for Pakistan and the region.

Qureshi said Pakistan's experience in poverty alleviation has proposed establishment of an SCO Joint Working and SCO Centre of Excellence on Poverty Alleviation. He thanked member states for their support.

The foreign minister also expressed Pakistan's delight in becoming the newest member of the SCO Youth Council. He said the country is looking forward to actively participating in it.

Covid-19

Referring to the coronavirus outbreak that has affected millions of people worldwide, Qureshi said Pakistan is open to sharing its experiences in combating the virus, following the decline in Covid-19 cases and deaths.

Referring to Prime Minister Imran Khan's Global Initiative for Debt Relief, the foreign minister said this initiative will help developing countries to mitigate the adverse economic impact of the pandemic.

In addition, Qureshi appreciated China's assistance with material and technical support during the crisis and appreciated China's effective handling of the crisis. He said the member states can turn this crisis into an opportunity to showcase SCO's real potential in fostering regional cooperation. The foreign minister highlighted the virtual meetings of the SCO Foreign Ministers and Health Ministers in May and July that discussed multilateral efforts to fight the pandemic.

Furthermore, Qureshi said Pakistan supports SCO's emphasis on the central role of the United Nations (UN) in maintaining peace and security.

Hinting at India, the foreign minister condemned and opposed any unilateral and illegal measures to change the status of disputed territories in violation of the United Nation's Security Council (UNSC).

In a recommendation to the SCO, Qureshi said members should carry out joint research in diverse fields, with an objective to find an effective vaccine for Covid-19 and make it accesible to all as a global public good.

Afghanistan

Shah Mahmood Qureshi reiterated that a peaceful and stable Afghanistan is central to peace and stability in the region and beyond. He said Pakistan has long held there is no military solution to the conflict in the region and the only long-term solution is dialogue.

"The US-Taliban Peace Agreement is a significant step forward in this direction," he said, adding that Pakistan believes the Afghan stakeholders must seize this opportunity and work together to secure an "inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political settlement."

The foreign minister said to be vigilant of "spoilers" within and outside who do not want peace and stability to return to Afghanistan. "The intra-Afghan negotiations process will not be without challenges."

"We look forward to consultations in the SCO-Afghan Contact Group to further facilitate the Afghan peace and reconciliation process," Qureshi said.

The foreign minister vowed to actively promote cooperation in the diverse range of sectors through the SCO. He urged members to work together to address the resurgence of fascist ideologies and violent nationalism.

He said SCO members should focus on promoting regional connectivity projects and avoid viewing these projects as a narrow political prism but rather pursue them for the achievement of sustainable development in the region.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2263396/cpec-supplements-scos-vision-of-regional-connectivity-fm-qureshi>

The Nation

Khattak urges Japan to invest in CPEC

Defence Minister Pervez Khattak has urged Japan to invest in the maritime and industrial manufacturing sectors and promote economic activities through mutually beneficial partnership in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Talking to Japanese Ambassador Kuninori Matsuda in Islamabad on Wednesday, he appreciated Japan's cooperation in Pakistan's prosperity and development.

Commending Japan's role in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan and South Asia, Pervez Khattak also stressed that peace in South Asia is linked to a peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute.

The Defence Minister highlighted the historical close ties between Pakistan and Japan. He appreciated Japanese support for prosperity and development in Pakistan over the years.

He expressed the hope that Japan would help create economic activities in Pakistan through mutually beneficial participation in CPEC as well as considering investment in maritime and industrial manufacturing sectors.

Pervez Khattak also appreciated the role of Japan in promotion of peace and stability in Afghanistan and South Asian Region. He also stressed that South Asia's peace is linked with peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute.

The minister also commended the efforts of Japanese government for regular holding of Pakistan-Japan Politico-Military and Military to Military Dialogues, adding that such interactions were a concrete expression of the desire of both the countries to enhance mutual defense collaboration. He mentioned the potential to cooperate in the defense field and need to strengthen the existing level of defense collaboration.

The Japanese Ambassador assured that his government will explore new avenues of mutual cooperation with Pakistan. The ambassador assured of his government's continued support to Pakistan.

Congratulating government and the people of Pakistan on successful handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, Matsuda Kuninori hailed decision of gradual reopening of educational institutions in Pakistan from 15th September.

The ambassador paid rich tributes to all those involved in these endeavors and also stressed the need for further collaboration between the governments of Japan and Pakistan to successfully handle any future challenge with collective efforts.

“The reopening of educational institutions in phases after a long break due to the coronavirus is a welcome step and it is hoped that students will be back to their schools, colleges and universities very soon” said the Ambassador.

He emphasized that the education sector is the priority for the Government of Japan. Partnering with JICA, the Government of Pakistan, UNHCR, UNICEF and non-governmental organizations, the Government of Japan has continuously offered support for improving Pakistan’s educational infrastructure through the provision of school buildings, teaching materials and training to promote schooling for the youths in Pakistan including refugees and girls.

<https://nation.com.pk/10-Sep-2020/khattak-urges-japan-to-invest-in-cpec>

The News

China’s experience in plant protection to ease burden of Pak farmers

BEIJING: Insect-pest has long been a headache for Pakistani farmers, and the aim to ease the burden of farmers and improve yield sparked of interest in learning agri-entomology and pest control in China.

This was stated by Hafiza Javaria Ashraf, a female Ph.D. student at Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University (FAFU) in China, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Wednesday.

She was confident that she could play a role in integrated pest management (IPM) that emphasizes the growth of a healthy crop with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems and encourages natural pest control.

Javaria graduated from the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) in 2015 with a bachelor’s degree in agricultural entomology. She came to China for further study and received Master’s Degree at FAFU in 2018.

As the top 10 excellent students, Hafiza won the scholarship offered by the Chinese scholarship council (CSC) and FAFU and continued her Ph. D study in plant protection. The scholarship was established for excellent scientists in the agricultural field based on an agreement signed between FAFU and UAF in 2017. “Being a girl, I’m the first one among the whole family to come overseas for studies. My parents supported me upon this decision and encouraged me to acquire a doctorate from China,” Javaria said.

“The facilities provided by State Key Laboratory of Ecological Pest Control for Fujian and Taiwan Crops, College of Plant Protection, FAFU, and my respectable adviser - Prof. Liande Wang are the major reasons I was able to pursue my research dreams here.” The report added, as

per the official statistics, Pakistan's agriculture sector contributes 18.5 percent to the total GDP. Despite its continuously growing agricultural production, Pakistan is still facing a high level of food insecurity.

Every year the damage done to crops by pests and diseases, according to data of FAO, constitutes approximately 20-25 percent of the potential world yield of food crops. Therefore, plant protection plays an extremely important role in increasing the production of crops and protecting them. In March this year, Pakistan and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly establish a center to fight against the locust threat in Pakistan.

The two countries will carry out comprehensive cooperation on plant protection, including monitoring and early warning, demonstration, mutual recognition of standards, personnel training, and emergency response. "As I have a keen interest in and a grip on basic knowledge in plant protection, I deliberately chose the research subject of pest's control, under which I study the insects that impair the growth of orange orchards," Hafiza told the reporter. She has been carrying out an experiment on D. Citri for more than a year and got significant findings in the research.

Dr Citri originated in Asia but is now also found in parts of the Middle East, South and Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean. It has also been reported more recently in Tanzania in East Africa, indicating its global spread.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/712698-china-s-experience-in-plant-protection-to-ease-burden-of-pak-farmers>

Pakistan decides to have access to Central Asia for its products through China

ISLAMABAD: In a major development, Pakistan has decided to have access to market of Central Asian States through China as Uzbekistan has agreed to become part of the Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement (QTTA) already signed among Pakistan, China, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

Uzbekistan's Deputy Prime Minister Sardor Umur Zakov on Investment and Foreign Trade along with a 7-8 member delegation is due today (Thursday) in Islamabad for a one-day visit and will hold a meeting with Prime Minister Imran Khan.

He will also meet Adviser to the PM on Commerce, Textile and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood and will hold talks to explore more avenues for increasing the bilateral trade between the two countries. The Uzbek delegation will also hold meetings with top officials of the Maritime Ministry, a senior official told The News.

Afghanistan has been, he said, reluctant to provide access to Pakistani products for reaching out to the huge market of Central Asian States as it linked Central Asian States with allowing Indian goods to the market of Afghanistan through land route.

The QTTA provides an alternative gateway to Central Asia by completely circumnavigating Afghanistan. Pakistan would use the Karakorum Highway, which connects Gilgit-Baltistan to China's Xinjiang region which links with Central Asian States. Pakistan would support the desire of Uzbekistan to become part of the QTTA. Uzbekistan has since long been expressing

seriousness to join the QTTA, which will enable Pakistan to export its products under QTTA to Central Asia.

During the visit, the official said that Uzbekistan and Pakistan will sign Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for increasing the bilateral trade between them. And both the countries would also form the Joint Working Group on how to advance on investment and trade.

Earlier in May 2020, Razak Dawood invited the Deputy Prime Minister to visit Pakistan along with a delegation to discuss bilateral economic relations. Razak Dawood reiterated that the trade and investment relations between the two countries will be strengthened through institutional mechanisms and private sector joint ventures.

He said that Uzbekistan is also very keen to invest in Pakistan's Karachi port as it wants to have access to the market of Middle East countries. The investment in Karachi port will also help increase the regional connectivity for trade among the regional economies. And to this effect, the Uzbek delegation will hold talks with officials of Maritime Ministry in this regard. The bilateral trade between the two countries is not up to the mark as in 2019 trade turnover of Uzbekistan with Pakistan reached more than \$122 million. In 2018, the volume was estimated at \$98 million while in 2017 it was just \$36.6 million.

Both the countries, however, have the potential to increase the bilateral trade up to \$1 billion in next 5-6 years.

He said that Pakistan can import cotton or cottonseed from Uzbekistan and there is a potential for Pakistan's pharmaceutical industry to export its products to Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan can export oil and gas, minerals and other products to Pakistan.

Pakistan is also keen to develop backward and forward linkages in the textile, leather, and agriculture sectors with Uzbekistan.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/712702-pakistan-decides-to-have-access-to-central-asia-for-its-products-through-china>

September 11, 2020

Dunya News

Nog Rong to be new Chinese ambassador to Pakistan: Chinese FM

China has named Nog Rong as a new ambassador to replace outgoing Chinese Ambassador for Pakistan Yao Jing.

He will be assuming office in a due course, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Zhao Lijian confirmed on Friday.

“As far as I understand, Nog Rong is now appointed as the new Chinese ambassador to Pakistan. He will be taking office in due course,” he said during his regular briefing.

According to reports, the newly nominated ambassador, Nog Rong has expertise in trade and commerce. He had not served in Pakistan earlier.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/563483-Nog-Rong-to-be-new-Chinese-ambassador-to-Pakistan-Chinese-FM>

Pakistan made tremendous efforts, sacrifices in fighting terrorism: China

Opposing attempts to link terrorism to any specific country, China on Friday commended Pakistan for making tremendous efforts and sacrifices in fighting terrorism and called upon the international community to fully recognize and respect such efforts.

Terrorism is common challenge faced by all countries and Pakistan has sacrificed much in the fight against terrorism.

“International community should fully recognize and respect Pakistan’s efforts in this regard” said by a spokesman of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Zhao Lijian during his regular briefing.

He said that China opposed to all kind of terrorism added that all countries should engage themselves in anti terrorism international cooperation to jointly safeguard the world peace and security on the bases of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefits.

The spokesperson said that 19th anniversary of the September 11 incident was being marked today which brought many challenges to the global security.

Zhao said that the Chinese side believed that the United Nations (UN) should play a leading role in this regard, adding, “We oppose double standards on counter terrorism and we oppose the attempt to link the terrorism to any specific country”.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/563464-Pakistan-made-tremendous-efforts-sacrifices-fighting-terrorism-China>

80 percent work of Gwadar East Bay Expressway completed: Asim Bajwa

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Lt. Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Friday said about 80 percent work on the Gwadar East Bay Expressway had been completed.

Asim Bajwa who is also Chairman of the CPEC Authority, in a tweet, also shared some pictures of the expressway showing asphalt work underway on the road.

He said the expressway would help boost the port operations. It would prove to be the main artery of Gwadar Port through which the entire traffic of port would flow. The East-bay Expressway would also provide connectivity of the Gwadar seaport and its Free Zone with the network of National Highways to ensure fast transportation of import, export and transit goods.

Gwadar port is being developed by China and is part of the mega project of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Currently, the Gwadar deep sea port is connected through a narrow 16 feet wide thoroughfare of Gwadar Town at the West-Bay. All the trawlers, trucks loaded with imported shipments pass through this strip causing disruption of normal traffic.

The port has not a dedicated wide highway to cater the transporting requirements of the port.

The port operationalization, even with the available three multi-purpose berths, necessitates construction of the planned East-Bay Expressway. This 6-lane expressway along with a provision of 30 meters wide railway corridor will connect the port with the Mekran Coastal Highway (N-20) through the 2300 acres Free Trade Zone of Gwadar Port.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Business/563462-80-percent-work-of-Gwadar-East-Bay-Expressway-completed-Asim-Bajwa>

The Nation

Zardari founder of CPEC: Chinese envoy

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing on Thursday said that Pakistan People's Party Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari was the founder of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

The envoy called on the former president Asif Ali Zardari at Zardari House Islamabad. Asifa Bhutto Zardari, Senator Sherry Rehman and Deputy Chairman Senate Saleem Mandviwalla were also present on the occasion.

The Chinese Ambassador enquired about the health of the former president and invited him to China for his treatment.

During the meeting, the Ambassador declared Asif Ali Zardari as the founder of CPEC and said that China totally supports Pakistani stance on Kashmir.

Zardari said that China was a trusted friend of Pakistan and Pakistani people take pride in this friendship.

He said both China and Pakistan suffered great human and financial losses due to Covid-19. Both the leaders discussed international and regional issues, as well as matters of mutual interest.

<https://nation.com.pk/11-Sep-2020/zardari-founder-of-cpec-chinese-envoy>

September 12, 2020

Business Recorder

Sale of plots allowed in three SEZs

The Prime Minister's Office, Board of Investment (BoI), being the secretariat for the apex SEZs approving body (Board of Approval) notified SEZ status for Allama Iqbal Industrial City (AIIC), and allowed sale of plots in three different SEZs including the AIIC, Hub, and Bostan. The notification in this regard for the AIIC was issued today by the Secretary BOI, Fareena Mazhar, being secretary of the Board of Approval for the SEZs.

The government further chartered three SEZs committees of the AIIC, Bostan and Hub SEZs, allowing thereby the sale of plots in the respective SEZs.

The SEZ committees shall have responsibilities to administer and enforce SEZ benefits and rules as well as provide facilitation between the SEZ, its enterprises and the government.

Minister of State/Chairman Board of Investment (BoI), Atif R Bukhari, in a statement here expressed satisfaction over the progress on the SEZs' development.

He said that it was high time for all of us to tap the opportunities being provided by the Belt and Road Initiative in the shape of Industrial Cooperation (IC) under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

He pointed out that the private sector should come forward and takes the leading role in this second phase of the CPEC. He appreciated Project Management Unit BoI on the CPEC-IC for its role in ensuring teamwork of the federal and provincial governments, which helped in removing

hurdles that were hindering the progress on the SEZs. Secretary Fareena Mazhar has termed the day as a special day in the journey of SEZ's development.

She stated that establishment of the new SEZs would help to achieve the goals of industrialization such as capitalizing investment inflow, inclusive economic development, creation of jobs and export generation.

She informed that serious efforts for provision of gas and electricity were underway to ensure provision of those basic utilities alongside development of the new SEZs.

The AIIC Faisalabad is being developed by Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) with total area of 2,800 acres by targeting to establish industries in textile; engineering; electrical and electronics; chemical paints; agriculture and food processing; steel and packaging sectors.

It is expected that the zone will help to create 249,477 direct and indirect jobs for local population besides attracting domestic and foreign investment up to the tune of Rs357 billion.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/12/1-page/851182-news.html>

Daily Times

Pakistan urges Chinese companies to take advantage of CPEC SEZs

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque has invited Chinese businessmen to take advantage of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) being set up under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Pakistan has identified nine special economic zones and three of them are now in advanced stage of preparation. "We are going to share all the details very soon," he said in an interview with Economic Daily-China Economic Net (CEN).

Pakistan has been committed to building industrial clusters in recent years to improve its ability to undertake the relocation of Chinese industries. Chinese companies have also been paying continuous attention to the implementation of preferential policies in Pakistan's special economic zones.

In this regard, Haque said, "We have learned a lot from the Chinese experience of developing special economic zones." Talking about China-Pakistan trade relations during the COVID-19 pandemic, he pointed out: "First of all, we are very happy that China has posted a very positive and more than 3% growth in the second quarter. Despite the pandemic, the first quarter of this year we saw our bilateral trade increase."

In this second quarter, there was a little dip because of the disruption of international travel. The updated FTA is very important. Over 300 items are now enjoying duty-free access to each other countries, including fisheries and pharmaceuticals. "So there are many opportunities for the traders of the two countries to work in this area. We hope that in the months and years to come, our trade will increase from our previous figures," he said.

Talking about his experience in the first month of his new duty, Ambassador Haque first mentioned the second strategic dialogue between China and Pakistan which was held in August in south China's Hainan Province. "While thanking China for its very valuable support to us

during the pandemic, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi appreciated the announcement made by Chinese President Xi Jinping that whenever a vaccine is developed, it would be considered a public good.” Regarding the ML-1 railway a multiplier effect for the Phase II of CPEC, he said, the spectrum of Pakistan-China relationship is very broad and very deep, adding, “We cooperate in all areas from defense to security, from trade to investment, culture, education, science and technology, agriculture, and tourism. CPEC is a very important element of our relationship. The industrial development cooperation of phase two is also in sync with the social-economic development agenda of our current government. So these will be very important areas that I’ll be working on during my term.”

The ambassador said Diamer-Bhasha Dam is also as part of Prime Minister Imran Khan’s vision, to provide a clean and affordable energy to our country. “And we are very grateful to Chinese companies for taking a lead in the construction of this dam. ML-1 is the largest project on the CPEC. It is a very important project for both Pakistan and China. It will help to provide very economical and efficient inland travel in Pakistan. I think it will also be very important as a multiplier effect for the phase II of CPEC,” he added.

After fully expressing the necessity of agricultural modernization, Ambassador Haque introduced Pakistan’s industry and service industry. “Like China and many other countries, our work and life were also affected by the COVID-19. There were new ideas, new concepts and new products. “Another area is automobile industry. China and Pakistan are working together to make new brand automobiles. Many Pakistani fashion products are very popular in the world. Our IT applications are very popular. A company like NetSol has a sizable business in China. Pakistan is the 3rd or 4th largest country in milk production. We are making new investments in value-added products such as cheese, butter, yogurt and others. We hope that more Chinese investors can come to Pakistan in this field.”

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/665553/pakistan-urges-chinese-companies-to-take-advantage-of-cpec-sezs/>

Pakistan Observer

Yao Jing says China Pakistan friendship time tested, of strategic value Sanjrani pays glowing tributes to outgoing Chinese envoy

Zubair Qureshi

Friendship with China is the focal point of Pakistan’s foreign policy as the People’s Republic of China is a strategic partner and a reliable friend of Pakistan. Chairman Senate of Pakistan Sadiq Sanjrani said this at a farewell dinner hosted in honor of the outgoing Ambassador of China Yao Jing here Friday. The farewell dinner was attended by a large number of parliamentarians, diplomats, top civil and military officials, Foreign Office representatives and businessmen from the two countries. Sanjrani said not only the governments and the rulers of the two countries were close friends but peoples of the two countries also loved and respected each other. “This bond of friendship is our common legacy and we are custodians of this decade-old relation that is deeper than the oceans and higher than the Himalayas,” said the senate chairman. He also

paid glowing tributes to the vision of President Xi Jinping for giving the developing and the less-privileged nations Belt & Road Initiative that aims at boosting huge economic activity and bringing them at par with the advanced nations. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the flagship project of the B&R Initiative and has turned the friendship between Pakistan and China into strategic partnership, further said Sanjrani. Senate Chairman also praised the leadership qualities of the Chinese president under whose leadership China has grown to be a progressive, peaceful and powerful nation. Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has also referred to Chinese leadership's efforts to eradicate poverty and lift millions of people out of poverty, said the Senate Chairman.

Ambassador Yao Jing on the occasion thanked the Chairman of the Senate and expressed his belief in lasting friendship between China and Pakistan. He also presented Sadiq Sanjrani the Volume III of President Xi Jinping's "Governance of China." Ambassador Yao Jing said the partnership between China and Pakistan under changing geostrategic situations was of vital importance. Pakistan and China believe in peace and will continue to work for the cause of peace, he said, reiterating China's support to Pakistan over Kashmir. Pakistani people, Yao Jing said, had immense love and regard for China and he was leaving Pakistan with treasure of such memories. The farewell reception was also attended by Leader of the House in Senate Dr Shehzad Wasim, Senator Raja Zafarul Haq, Deputy Speaker NA, Qasim Khan Soori, Information Minister Shibli Faraz, Religious Minister Pir Noorul Haq Qadri and member of the Senate of Pakistan.

https://pakobserver.net/yao-jing-says-china-pakistan-friendship-time-tested-of-strategic-value-sanjrani-pays-glowing-tributes-to-outgoing-chinese-envoy/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=yao-jing-says-china-pakistan-friendship-time-tested-of-strategic-value-sanjrani-pays-glowing-tributes-to-outgoing-chinese-envoy

Pak-China youth entrepreneurship will be enhanced under BRI

The Forum on International Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship in BRI, a sub activity of China Beijing International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) that held here reiterated the two countries' resolve to boost their cooperative partnership. According to Gwadar Pro, topics for discussion included international youth innovative development and youth entrepreneurship cultivation.

All Pakistan-China Friendship Association represented by General Secretary Farwa Zafar, and member Kashif Qutub took part in this event online. In addition, youth from China and countries across Asia, Africa and Europe also participated in the forum. According to Farwa Zafar, participants have been benefited and connected to many innovative programmes presented at this forum.

"Cultural differences and sensitivities to know for doing successful business in China by Yuri Khylstov was a topic much appreciated by APCFA as an activity to pursue in the Sino-Pakistan business community in future," she said. Qin Feng, the Chairman of the BRI Youth Alliance, highlighted the power of innovation in the construction of the BRI and how it offered

opportunities for youth to be engaged as active players. The forum also launched the International Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Initiative, which will promote international youth innovation and entrepreneurship cooperation through the platform of CIFTIS. Farwa said that the forum provided Pakistani youth many innovative opportunities which can help them join CPEC projects.

<https://pakobserver.net/pak-china-youth-entrepreneurship-will-be-enhanced-under-bri/>

The Express Tribune

The real ‘Made in Pakistan’

“Pakistan and China have very special ties. It is a relationship between two friends, between two partners, between two brothers. No wonder, we call each other iron brothers,” said newly appointed Pakistan’s Ambassador to China Moinul Haque in an interview with economic daily China Economic Net (CEN) on September 4.

“It is a great honour for me to be appointed Pakistan’s ambassador to China. It will be my sincere endeavour with my wonderful team that I have at the embassy to contribute to this very important partnership and take it into the new era,” Haque told CEN reporter.

‘Vaccine is a public good’

Talking about his experience in the first month of his new duty, Haque mentioned the second strategic dialogue between China and Pakistan, which was held in August in south China’s Hainan province.

“It was a very, very important meeting after the visit of president of Pakistan to China in March,” he said.

“While thanking China for its very valuable support to us during the pandemic, Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi appreciated the announcement made by Chinese President Xi Jinping that whenever a vaccine is developed, it would be considered a public good. And it should be accessible to all countries, especially the developing countries.”

ML-1 railway, a multiplier effect

Haque, in early August, posted two tweets in succession about the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, namely the Diamer-Bhasha Dam and Main Line-1 (ML-1) project of Pakistan Railways.

According to Pakistani media, Prime Minister Imran Khan said that the construction of the dam had been the dream of Pakistani people for more than 40 years while attending the commencement ceremony of Diamer-Bhasha Dam.

“The spectrum of Pakistan-China relationship is very broad and very deep. We cooperate in all areas from defence to security, from trade to investment, culture, education, science and technology, agriculture and tourism,” he said. “CPEC is a very important element of our relationship. It is a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative.”

He added that the government would make sure that all projects, the ongoing ones and those conceived in the early harvest and the first phase, are completed on time.

The cooperation in industrial development in phase-II is also in sync with the socio-economic development agenda of the current government, he said. “So, these will be some very important areas that I will be working on during my term,” Haque said.

Diamer-Bhasha Dam is also part of the prime minister’s vision to provide clean and affordable energy to the country and “we are very grateful to Chinese companies for taking a lead in the construction of this dam,” Haque told CEN.

“ML-1 is the largest project in CPEC. It will help provide economical and efficient inland travel in Pakistan. I think it will also be important as a multiplier effect for phase-II of CPEC.”

SEZ dividend

The tariff reduction arrangements for phase-II of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) were officially implemented on January 1 this year.

Talking about China-Pakistan trade relations during Covid-19 pandemic, Haque pointed out that “first of all, we are very happy that China has posted a very positive and more than 3% growth in the second quarter.”

“Despite the pandemic, the first quarter of this year saw our bilateral trade increase,” he said. In the second quarter, there was a slight dip because of the disruption to international travel.

The updated FTA is very important. Over 300 items are now enjoying duty-free access to each other’s countries including fisheries and pharmaceuticals.

So, there are many opportunities for the traders of the two countries to work in this area, he stressed. “We hope that in the months and years to come, our trade will increase.”

Chinese companies have also been paying continuous attention to the implementation of preferential policies in Pakistan’s Special Economic Zones (SEZs). In this regard, Haque said, “We have learned a lot from the Chinese experience of developing Special Economic Zones. Under CPEC, we have identified nine Special Economic Zones across Pakistan, three of which are now in advanced stage of preparation.”

“I invite my Chinese friends and businessmen to come and take advantage of these Special Economic Zones. We are going to share all the details very soon.”

Pakistan’s fashion products

After fully expressing the necessity of agriculture sector modernisation, Haque introduced Pakistan’s service industry. “Like China and many other countries, our work and life were also affected by Covid-19,” he said. “There were new ideas, new concepts and new products. In Pakistan, we started making our own masks, testing kits and ventilators.”

It can be part of the health corridor that “we are talking about and we support the China-proposed initiative to create a health corridor”.

The pharmaceutical industry in Pakistan is very strong and the country’s surgical goods are some of the best in the world, he added. The envoy said that besides vaccines, Pakistan can produce other medicines and health equipment to promote cooperation. “Another area which I would like to mention is the automobile industry. China and Pakistan are working together to make brand new automobiles,” he underlined.

Learning curve

Answering various questions raised by the reporter, Haque shared his views on the learning curve and economic diplomacy.

“Slowly and steadily, Pakistani enterprises are reaching the stage where they can introduce brands and market products. Our pharmaceutical company, Martin Dow, set up two manufacturing plants in France,” he said.

“In a country like France, it is very important for Pakistani companies to go international and promote Pakistani products and brands. We are learning also, it is a learning curve for Pakistani businessmen.”

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2263595/the-real-made-in-pakistan>

The News

Pakistan favours ‘One China’ policy

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi held separate meetings with his Chinese and Russian counterparts Wang Yi and Sergei Lavrov, respectively, on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organization’s (SCO) meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers on Thursday.

Mr Qureshi’s meeting with the Chinese minister was his second in three weeks. During the meeting, bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest were discussed, a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said here.

Mr Qureshi reiterated that Pakistan remained committed to “One China” policy and stood firmly behind China on core issues of its national interest.

He emphasized that a peaceful and stable Afghanistan was important for peace and stability in the region and beyond and Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process was critical in restoring regional peace and stability. During the meeting with Russian FM Sergei Lavrov, the two sides discussed matters of mutual interest, including the Covid-19 situation, prospects of enhanced bilateral cooperation, regional issues and cooperation at multilateral fora.

They also exchanged views on further strengthening trade and economic cooperation, including in the field of energy, a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

Foreign Minister Lavrov welcomed Pakistan’s likely participation in the forthcoming Kavkaz military exercise scheduled to be held in Russia later this month.

Foreign Minister Qureshi said that Pakistan considered Russia as an important partner, and wanted to forge a long-term and multi-dimensional partnership with it.

The two ministers also discussed the situation in Afghanistan in the context of the recent positive developments.

On the issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), Mr Qureshi shared deep concerns over the grave human rights and humanitarian situation as well as the Indian attempts to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory.

He underlined the urgent necessity of addressing the grave situation in the IIOJK.

Foreign Minister Qureshi extended an invitation to Mr Lavrov to visit Pakistan, which he gladly accepted.

The two foreign ministers agreed to remain in close contact and pursue enhanced cooperation in all spheres of common interest.

In his remarks at the meeting of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers, Mr Qureshi said the SCO was a vital platform for forging synergy with regional partners and realizing benefits of emerging confluence between the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Eurasian Economic Union.

He said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor supplemented the SCO's vision of regional connectivity and economic integration. "We should not view development projects, including BRI and CPEC, through myopic geopolitical angles and should give them our full support," he said.

Mr Lavrov, the foreign ministers of SCO member states and SCO Secretary General Vladimir Norov attended the event.

Expressing delight on Pakistan's membership of the SCO Youth Council, Mr Qureshi said over the past 20 years, the SCO had grown tremendously in stature, prestige and influence.

He asked the SCO members to work together to address the resurgence of fascist ideologies and violent nationalism anywhere in the world, especially in the region.

The foreign minister called for pooling scientific and technical resources of SCO members to carry out joint research in diverse fields, particularly with a view to finding an effective vaccine for COVID-19. He also called for collective work to project the SCO as an effective forum for regional development and a new kind of international organization based on the ideals of Shanghai spirit.

Appreciating the Russian foreign minister for hosting the meeting, Mr Qureshi said despite formidable difficulties, Pakistan had continued fruitful collaboration in the SCO, marked by solidarity and mutual support, under the stewardship of the Russian Federation.

The foreign minister saluted the healthcare professionals, scientists and researchers who are at the vanguard of the valiant anti-Covid-19 struggle and said Pakistan was open to sharing its experience in combating the pandemic in an effective manner.

He called for countering the pandemic's negative economic impact through the Global Initiative for Debt Relief for developing countries as proposed by Prime Minister Imran Khan.

He also opposed politicizing the pandemic and using it for stigmatizing regions, religions or communities.

Mr Qureshi said the world today was becoming increasingly multi-polar with the competition between the old and emerging powers reshaping the contours of contemporary international relations.

"It is our firm belief that in this uncertain and brutally competitive environment that is full of zero-sum prophecies, cooperation and not confrontation should be the driving force in international politics," he said.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's position that the reform of the UN Security Council should be achieved through consensus for a more representative, democratic, effective and accountable council.

He said the peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes was a pre-requisite for achieving development, economic growth, poverty alleviation and social uplift of the masses.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/713723-pakistan-favours-one-china-policy>

September 13, 2020

Daily Times

Gwadar Port: Gateway to glory

Asad Tahir Jappa

Beyond the shadow of a doubt, development of Gwadar Port constitutes the lynch-pin of the greater China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It speaks volumes of the time-tested and all-weather friendship between the two countries and further fortifies the strength of the China-Pakistan relationship. With Pakistan's two major Ports-Karachi and Qasim- operating to their capacity, Gwadar promises to eventually handle one million tons of cargo annually, while also providing significant industrial, oil, and transportation infrastructure. Being hailed as a "monument of Pakistan-China friendship," Gwadar Port offers a gateway to the \$62 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It is only 107 miles (172 km) from Chabahar across the border with Iran and, now, both ports are being developed into maritime hubs by China and India, respectively, triggering what is being called the New Great Game in South Asia. The CPEC is aimed at linking Kashgar in Xinjiang with Gwadar on the Makran coast of Baluchistan, the largest province of Pakistan. It is expected to bring economic prosperity to the region and is part of President Xi Jinping's "dream of national rejuvenation." He Lifeng, Chairman of National Development and Reform Commission-China, said in a message, "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is an important loop in the larger chain of Belt and Road Initiative(BRI), and would enable the possibility of a 21st Century Maritime Silk Route".

At the time of Pakistan's independence, Gwadar as a principality had been in the possession of the Sultan of Oman for almost 200 years. It had been given as a gift to Oman by the then Khan of Kalat in 1783. From 1863 up to independence in 1947, it was administered by a British assistant political agent on behalf of the Sultan of Oman and the small town comprised only a few fishing villages. After independence, at the urging of the Pakistan government, the Khan of Kalat requested the Sultan of Oman to return Gwadar to Pakistan. Oman is reported to have sold Gwadar to Pakistan for \$3 million on September 8, 1958. Since December 1958, it has been an integral part of the Baluchistan province of Pakistan and is now being developed into a deep-water port with Chinese assistance as a living monument of their relationship rooted in history. Pak-China friendship has generally been described as "higher than the mountains, deeper than the oceans, stronger than steel and sweeter than honey." The two countries have closely worked in various sectors including development of ballistic missiles. They also have a strong relationship in manufacturing military hardware and most of Pakistan's weapons and equipment now come from China.

The relations between the two have become even closer with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), turning into a real game-changer. They have, together, been constantly

persuading and negotiating with Afghanistan, Iran, and Russia to join CPEC for mutual interests. The \$62 billion project will link Xinjiang Province of China with Gwadar port on the Makran Coast west of Karachi. Gwadar port and its allied connectivity network is a watershed initiative taken by Pakistan to create secure and accessible trade routes for regional economic integration. Geo-strategically located at the cross-roads of oil rich Middle East, heavily populated South Asia with a huge consumer market, and the energy rich Central Asian Republics (CARs), Pakistan can hugely benefit from the immense trade traffic generated by Gwadar Port. This potential can, thus, be gauged by the global trade trends. Global maritime trade trends indicate the growing need of additional ports to accommodate and channelize the rising maritime trade. The 2017 issue of United Nations' Review of Maritime Transport reports an increased demand for shipping services as a result of 2.6 per cent increase in world seaborne trade. The overall seaborne trade volume was estimated at 10.3 billion tons, reflecting an increase of over A260 million tons of cargo. Similarly, there has been a record increase of 12.6% in the world container port traffic and it will further increase more than twice and will reach 371million TEU by 2024. Furthermore, with the growing industrialization of global economy, there has been a parallel demand for energy sources like coal, natural gas and oil to sustain economic growth. Various credible studies suggest that there will be high demand for natural gas and oil in the coming decades. It is projected that the demand for natural gas will increase by 2.75 percent annually and that the demand for oil will remain unabated. These global trade trends and rising energy demands necessitate the construction of additional ports. Owing to its strategic location, the deep sea Gwadar port has the potential to serve as the hub that helps in meeting these growing demands and aspirations for energy sources, alternative and secure routes to the oil rich Middle East as well as the CARs. Besides, Gwadar port has substantial military benefits for Pakistan. Around 95% of its import and export is done via sea routes. Currently, most of Pakistan's import-export has to be carried out near Indian border in the east. This has serious consequences of naval blockade and other acts of aggression in case of a conflict with India. In such a desperate moment, Gwadar being further 460 km away from India provides an indispensable alternative to the Karachi port complex.

Thus, Gwadar Port offers Pakistan military the much needed maneuvering space and response time in case of urgency. Cognizant of these threats, Chinese and Pakistani naval forces have resolved to enhance security cooperation in the Indian Ocean, as indicated by the sale of eight submarines capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Thus, given the important geo-strategic location, the positive global trade trends and the increasing global demand for energy resources and secure routes, Gwadar port is destined to earn huge revenues once it is fully operational. It can safely be inferred that the Port has huge socio-economic and geostrategic benefits for the country provided that its peaceful use is ensured. The Port is certainly going to become the propeller of prosperity for the impoverished Baluchistan province and the country at large.

In this regard, it is absolutely necessary that all state institutions including the elected government, the military, judiciary as well as media play a positive role in ensuring the wellbeing of the inhabitants of marginalized and disadvantaged regions like Baluchistan and

Gilgit-Baltistan. It is reassuring to know that the incumbent regime in Islamabad has shown its singular commitment by setting up an autonomous CPEC Authority as recommended by the Senate Special Committee on CPEC. The Authority is all set to manage the internal challenges of planning, financing and coordinating between institutions, provinces and agencies to establish synergies, build momentum and thus fast-track the desired outcomes. Furthermore, the Authority is also committed to rationalize tax regimes, ensure infrastructure and energy provisions, and address transparency of contracts in order to maximize gains from CPEC and its pivotal project, Gwadar Port. In a nutshell, Gwadar deep-sea Port is envisaged as a regional hub for trans-shipment which could significantly contribute to the socio-economic development of Pakistan and, thus, become the gateway to glory. He who lives will see it happening and that too very soon.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/666040/gwadar-port-gateway-to-glory/>

Dawn News

Pakistan supports Beijing on South China Sea talks

Pakistan on Saturday voiced support for China on resumption of ‘Code of Conduct’ (CoC) negotiations in South China Sea.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, while virtually participating in the 27th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Regional Forum (ARF), reaffirmed “Pakistan’s support for the ongoing negotiations of Code of Conduct and underlined that the concerned parties may find solution through consensus”.

Mr. Qureshi announced that Pakistan will be co-hosting the 24th ARF Heads of Defense Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting with Malaysia in 2021.

The CoC, which is being negotiated between China and the 10-member Asean, aims to manage the actions of countries within the South China Sea, many of whom have disputing territorial claims. China, Taiwan, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam have competing claims in the resource-rich area.

The Code of Conduct was to provide for dispute management and stability building in the South China Sea. The CoC is based on a 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea signed by China and the 10 Asean states.

The parties had at the 22nd Asean-China summit held in 2019 agreed to finalize the CoC by 2021.

The CoC negotiations had been slow because of differences over dispute settlement mechanisms; conflict management; and the legal status of the CoC. The talks could not take place this year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The schedule of talks for this year included meetings in Brunei in February, in the Philippines in May, Indonesia in August and China in October.

The US involvement in South China Sea has also further complicated the talks.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi had last month urged Asean countries to resume CoC talks.

Mr. Wang had said the US military presence in the region was driving a wedge between China and Asean, and disrupting the CoC consultation process.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1579413/pakistan-supports-beijing-on-south-china-sea-talks>

September 14, 2020

Business Recorder

Pakistan, China to sign development agreement today

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China to sign development agreement of the First China Pakistan Economic Corridor's (CPEC) Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) on Monday at the Prime Minister House, Islamabad.

The event would be attended by the Federal Ministers, Officials from line ministries and KP Government and other stakeholders.

Minister of State/ Chairman Board of Investment (BOI), Atif R. Bokhari, in a statement, said that signing of the Development Agreement of Rashakai SEZ under CPEC would realize the vision of special economic zones' development, ultimately leading to a prosperous and industrial Pakistan. He highlighted the progress on SEZs under CPEC, saying that sufficient headway has been made on this front and the zones are now becoming ready for business. He said that Pakistan's proximity with China will allow these SEZs to foster economic interdependence for mutual economic advantage.

The Special Economic Zones Act 2012, under Section-13 binds together the Federation (Board of Investment), the Province and the SEZ Developer through an agreement for the establishment and development of an SEZ, aptly termed as the Development Agreement. This agreement provides the road map for establishment of an SEZ while holding the Federal and provincial government and the developer jointly responsible for the development and successful operations of an SEZ.

The Rashakai SEZ is to be developed under Public Private Partnership mode, by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zone Development and Management Company (KPEZDMC) (a Section-42 company of Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) in collaboration with China Road & Bridge Corporation (a state-owned Chinese enterprise). An SPV Company of these two firms named Rashakai Special Economic Zone Development and Operations Company (RSEZDOC) has been created for implementation of this Agreement, which is first of its kind with Chinese counterpart being one of the parties. A project of USD 128 Million, spanning over 1,000 acres of land was awarded SEZ status on August 6, 2019 and its Concession Agreement was signed in April 2019.

The Board of Investment promoted establishment of this SEZ with the goals of capitalizing on investment inflow under CPEC, inclusive economic development of KP Province, creation of job opportunities, industrial development, and export generation in Pakistan. Rashakai SEZ holds a unique competitive advantage due to its proximity to the first juncture of CPEC route, and significant resource and manufacturing base in the region. Due to such factors, it has the potential to become one of the primary investment destinations for foreign investors particularly

Chinese Investors who are looking to find new and cheaper markets to relocate their industrial base.

Chairman BOI, Atif R. Bokhari said that Board of Investment has successfully expedited the process of provision of promised utilities, facilitated allocation of fiscal incentives and concession to the co-developer of the SEZ. To enable successful operations of this SEZ, federal government has committed Rs1.8bn for provision of 210 MWs of electricity, and Rs 1.2 billion for the provision of 30 mmcf/d gas from the Federal PSDP. Provision of required utilities at the doorstep of the SEZ as per the required timelines of the project will allow for on-time construction and development of the SEZ, he added.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/14/5-page/851407-news.html>

Daily Times

ML1 (Main line 1): CPEC's eco booster for Pakistan

The word, term or abbreviation of CPEC is not unknown to the common Pakistani anymore. Under it, the biggest project is revamping a railway line called ML1 (Main Line 1). Facts and figures about it might be astonishing, however, is more relevant to study the sheer magnitude of positivity and overall economic growth it will bring for Pakistan. It will change the scope for most Pakistanis as ML1 crosses through most of Pakistan's population. Hence it is very important to explore the vast positive socio-economic impact(s) the completion of ML1, under CPEC, shall bring.

As stated earlier, ML1 passes through crucial areas of the country ie where 78% population and 80% industry lie. It won't be wrong to say that most of Pakistan's economic activity already takes place along this belt so further accentuating the same along the same regions would have a very fruitful effect as it would further propel all that is already happening.

First, it would provide employment to all those involved in the upgradation of ML1. Providing employment would mean income for all workers meaning now they can provide a better life to their families. They can send their children to schools which means they are bringing up a more informed and educated generation the advantages of which are almost infinite. Young educated people mostly look for jobs in the service sector or start up business rather staying in rural areas and work in the agricultural sector. The industrial and services sectors yield higher economic activities and higher GDPs as opposed to the agricultural sector.

But before all of this, schools will have to be made along with houses for workers and professionals which means a boom in cement and steel industries which means more employment more pays etc. All of this will shift Pakistan from being an agro-based economy to an industrial state. This transition is typical of countries progressing from the developing to the developed world. However, this does not mean agriculture will run dry; thanks to CPEC and the technology it will bring, agriculture will be mechanized and yield per acre production will increase to i) meet local demand and ii) for export. This will also create the need for more checks and balances for all the heightened activities going on putting the authorities in motion again bringing more professionalism in institutions.

Since ML1 will create employment wherever it passes from, it will pull people from rural and far flung areas towards it resulting in an increase in urbanization. Pakistan unfortunately lies among countries with a substantial amount of people still living in far flung areas. Living in cities has its benefits as cities are usually more efficient, have better sanitation facilities, offer jobs, have schools and colleges, have hospitals and clinics etc. Plus, providing basic facilities to people in cities is easier for governments as compared to reaching out to those living away. All in all, a country's resources are focused more in cities as they are denser in population than rural areas.

CPEC is undoubtedly Pakistan's future with various types of projects coming under it. Some are complete and operational while others are underway. Some have yet to begin. These projects vary from industry to industry ie from power projects to infrastructure to other individual projects etc.

The infrastructure projects cover roads and railways in which we have ML1 or main line 1. In financial terms it is the biggest individual project under CPEC with a budget of \$6.8billion or \$6806million. At present, ML1 track stretches from Karachi to Peshawar and goes through Pakistan's densely populated areas. It passes through Hyderabad, Nawabshah, Rohri, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur, Khanwal, Sahiwal, Lahore, Gujranwala and Rawalpindi. This alone is proof that ML1 has the potential of becoming the economic backbone for Pakistan due to its route and all areas it passes through.

Under CPEC, ML1 is going through a major transformation. A general upgradation and overhauling of the line is planned along with doubling the line wherever needed. Apart from accelerating activities related to CPEC and international trade, the standalone benefits of a new and improved ML1 for Pakistan will be noteworthy as well.

A new track will be laid with an improved subgrade to withstand greater traffic and load. This will also enable trains to move at a higher speed (160kmph from 90kmph) shortening the time for cargo and passengers to travel on ML1's route saving businesses and people valuable time. New bridges will be built and old ones renovated to ensure the lines under ML1 remain.

An efficient communication system for the trains is to be laid down. Provision for modern signaling and telecom services as part of modernizing the line will be in effect too. This will bring with it, all those advantages of a modern communication system some of which include improved coordination and reduction in unwanted delays again saving valuable time for businesses locally and internationally.

Level crossings that prove to be hindrances for trains and traffic on roads will be replaced by underpasses and/or flyovers to ensure that the line remains uninterrupted. This will also eliminate the safety risk faced at level crossings. To further mitigate safety risks, ML1 under CPEC will be fenced throughout. This will again not only protect the track but also safeguard people and wildlife.

Under ML1, a dry port at Havelian will be made as well. This is to meet to the future anticipated demand (in connection with CPEC and otherwise) of cargo, mainly containers and other types of heavy freight. The port is said to have top notch loading and off-loading facilities, as well as a large storage capacity. This dry port is scheduled for completion sooner than ML1 hence initially

it will act as a dry port/container terminal for goods traffic coming through road from China. Furthermore, transshipment arrangements will also be made at Havelian for loading and unloading railway wagons. Walton Training Academy, which is the central training academy for employees of Pakistan Railways is also scheduled to go under a major restructuring to bring all the staff up to speed with a totally revamped railway structure for Pakistan (not just ML1). This shall entail newer methods of training along with better and more modern training facilities for better human capital.

Since ML1 in totality is a very complex project encompassing multiple smaller projects, there are 3 proposed phases for its completion. Phase 1 is 748km long and includes revamping the Walton training academy. Phase 2 coincidentally also covers 748km of the track albeit at different locations while 279km come under phase 3 along with the construction of the dry port near Havelian. Work is scheduled to begin in the current financial year with different time frames for all phases. Work shall be done both time wise exclusively and simultaneously with all the phases scheduled to end in December 2029. The total time this project will take for completion is 8 and a half years.

The socio-economic impact which I've shed light on earlier, of any project is all mostly anticipation and not approximation. This is because before completion of a project, its effects are yet to unfold. From the above examples it is clear that the positive spill-over effects are almost infinite and never ending. They come out in the form of one economic advantage or the other, in one industry or in another. As far as ML1 is concerned, Pakistanis are both excited and ready to discover these positive effects.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/666557/ml1-main-line-1-cpecs-eco-booster-for-pakistan/>

Dawn News

CPEC to bring peace, prosperity to Baluchistan: minister

Federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar has said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project will change the fate of not only Pakistan but also the entire region.

Talking to media persons during his visit to Turbat on Monday along with Minister for Defense Production Zubaida Jalal, he said that after its completion the CPEC would bring peace and prosperity to Baluchistan.

Asad Umar had reached Quetta along with Prime Minister Imran Khan two days ago, but stayed here to consult the authorities concerned on the development package for southern Baluchistan.

During his visit to Quetta, the prime minister had hinted at announcing a special package for southern Baluchistan.

Official sources said the package would be worth around Rs150 billion and the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas would also be included in it.

PM may visit Gwadar next month and announce Rs150bn package

“Asad Umer is visiting Makran division to consult the authorities concerned and stakeholders on the special package,” Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan Alyani told Dawn, adding that the federal minister would also visit the port city of Gwadar and other areas of Makran division.

The sources said Prime Minister Khan was expected to visit Gwadar next month where he would announce a special uplift package for southern Baluchistan.

The minister for planning and development said the previous governments had not done anything for the development of southern Baluchistan, but the present regime was taking all measures for development of not only southern Baluchistan but also other areas of the province.

“PTI government will resolve issues of the people of Makran and will take steps to provide maximum job opportunities to them,” he said, adding that the Baluchistan government was working on a comprehensive plan for an integrated and long-lasting development of southern districts of the province.

“Southern districts remained backward as the previous governments ignored them, but our government will take special steps to change their fate,” the minister said.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1579774/cpec-to-bring-peace-prosperity-to-balochistan-minister>

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan to set up vocational training institutes with China’s help

China has decided to help Pakistan open six vocational training Institutes across Pakistan to produce skilled labor, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday. At present, Chinese companies working in Pakistan are facing acute shortage of skilled labor as majority of local workers falls under unskilled category.

Shafqat Mahmood, the Federal Minister for Education, told Gwadar Pro that “Vocational training institutes are being set up with the help of China under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to impart necessary skills to meet the demands of the industries. This will further strengthen the partnership between the two friendly countries.” Bao Zhong, head of political and press section of China’s embassy in Pakistan said that China is helping Pakistan to modernize existing vocational training Institutes as well as giving funds to set up at least six more such Institutes to produce skilled work force. Pakistan has the ninth largest labor force in the world with an estimate of 61 million workers, out of which 5.9 percent are unemployed. Around 2.5 million people enter the local job market while the majority of them lack necessary skills to meet the demands of the local industry. While Pakistan has capacity to produce only 445,000 skilled laborers annually, authorities expect that with induction of six more vocational training institutes with help of China, Pakistan will be able to produce skilled labor for both local and international market. Pakistan and China expect to produce millions of jobs for skilled work force by 2030.

Until September 2020, as many as 70,000 Pakistanis have been directly employed at different projects under CPEC. A recent study conducted by CPEC Centre of Excellence, showed that indirectly, CPEC could help create even 1.2 million jobs until 2030 under its presently agreed projects.

In July 2020, China provided training equipment worth \$4 million (approximately 650 million rupees) for the vocational training institutes/ schools around Pakistan through National Vocational and Technical Training Commission.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-to-set-up-vocational-training-institutes-with-chinas-help/>

September 15, 2020

Daily Times

Regional rail network to bring prosperity to region: Sh Rashid

Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on Monday said that regional rail network would ensure country's access to the Central Asian countries through Afghanistan and bring development and prosperity in the area.

During farewell meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing, the minister commended the services of the envoy for promoting Pak-China relations and said "Chinese ambassador's efforts for approval of Main Line-I rail project are unforgettable".

He said that ML-I project was a game changer for Pakistan Railways and indispensable for strengthening country's economy.

Besides ML-I, Pakistan Railways was also putting efforts for development of Peshawar-Jalalabad and Quetta-Kandahar rail network.

The ambassador said that Pakistan and China are enjoying cordial relations and the people of both the countries are having warm relations.

Expressing his pleasure on the approval of ML-I project, the ambassador said this project would help promote Pakistan's local industry as well as create a number of employment opportunities for the people.

Secretary/Chairman Railways, Habib-ur-Rehman Gilani was also present in the meeting.

Pakistan Railways is all set to float long awaited tenders for dualization of Karachi-Peshawar track Main Line-I (ML-I) multi-billion-dollar project under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) during this week. A high powered meeting on the project is likely to be held on September 15 in which the final decision would be taken about the floating of tenders of ML-I, a senior official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

He said that Pakistan Railways management would simultaneously initiate the publicity of the mega project which it believes was the only way to revive the ailing public sector corporation. The Tenders would be limited to seek interest of Chinese firms since the project would be funded and executed under the CPEC.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) had already approved the project which would bring revolution in Pakistan Railways and create a number of job opportunities, he said.

Giving detail of the ML-I, he said project consisted of three packages. Under package-I, the existing tracks between Lala Musa and Lahore, Lahore and Multan and Nawab Shah and Rohri would be replaced and upgraded.

He said the package-II consisted of upgrade of the railway track between Lala Musa and Rawalpindi, Nowshera-Peshawar and Hyderabad-Karachi sections while the package-III included upgradation of remaining chunks of the main-line, including Multan-Khanewal to Sukkur.

Under the project, rehabilitation and construction of bridges, provision of modern signaling and telecom systems, replacing level crossings with underpasses and flyovers, fencing of track, establishment of dry port near Havelian and up-gradation of Walton Training Academy (Lahore) would be carried out.

The project, he said, was aimed at increasing train speed from existing 80-90 km/hour to 160 km/hour, thereby reducing the train journey between major cities like Karachi-Rawalpindi from 22hrs to 10 hrs and Rawalpindi – Lahore from five hrs to three hours only.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/666624/regional-rail-network-to-bring-prosperity-to-region-sh-rashid/>

Provision of jobs through promotion of industrialization a priority: Imran

Prime Minister Imran Khan Monday said it was the government's top priority to provide jobs to the locals through promotion of industrialization under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

He was addressing the signing ceremony of 'Development Agreement of Rashakai Special Zone'. Earlier, he witnessed the signing of agreement.

The prime minister, on the occasion, congratulated Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mahmood Khan over the agreement, which would prove a giant milestone not only for the province, but also for the whole country. He said out of four industrial zones to be set up under CPEC, Rashakai was prioritized to encourage growth of industries and spur local jobs for the people at their doorsteps. The prime minister mentioned that a United Nations survey had indicated that the KP province was leading the efforts at reduction of poverty.

He said often, the people went outside the country or other parts of the country for getting jobs and it was difficult phase for leaving behind a family and eke out. "My government's interest is definitely to provide job opportunities to the locals at their doorsteps," he added.

The KP chief minister, ministers, members of the National Development and Reforms Commission (NDRC) China, CPEC Authority and other relevant high officials were present during the ceremony.

Referring to the strategic position of Pakistan in the wider regional connectivity with the Central Asian countries, he welcomed the commencement of intra-Afghan dialogue in Doha, and said Pakistan had played a vital role in the Afghan peace talks. "If there were peace, it would lead towards achievement of wider regional connectivity upto Central Asia," he said, adding the deputy prime minister of Uzbekistan recently visited Pakistan and they were keen for a railway line from Mazar Sharif to Peshawar.

Besides it, the ML-1 would prove vital in the regional connectivity reducing travelling distance between different cities of the country manifold, he said. It would also enhance the cargo activities, ease of doing and cost of doing business, he added. Such a strategic location of Pakistan, the prime minister said, would prove beneficial for the trade and business activities and

especially the KP province, which had been on the frontline in the war on terror and gave immense sacrifices.

About CPEC, the prime minister said they were moving forward from communication linkage to industrialization growth through agreements. “Our next phase is industrialization. During 60s, the nationalization drive had affected the country’s economy and exports. Our next way leads to industrialization. The Chinese industry wanted to relocate and Pakistan offers very attractive environment with complete incentivization,” he added.

Prime Minister Imran Khan said for the first two months of the current fiscal year, Pakistan’s remittances were up 31 percent over the same period last year.

The Prime Minister in a tweet said that overseas Pakistanis sent \$2,095 million in remittances in August 2020. He said the amount was 24.4 percent higher than August last year. Besides, he also mentioned the record \$2,768 million of remittances received in July 2020.

Prime Minister Imran Khan stressed upon the need to get the young generations fully acquainted with different aspects of Seerat-e-Nabi (SAW) and the teachings of different Sufis. The prime minister was chairing a meeting to review progress on establishment of Al-Qadir University. The meeting was attended by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz, Barrister Ali Zafar, Brig. (retd) Jameel Sarwar Malik and others, PM office media wing in a press release said.

The prime minister was briefed about the progress achieved so far on the establishment of the university.

The prime minister observed that it was imperative to create awareness in the young generations in this regard to revive the real spirit of society and cultivation of basic social values. He observed that besides, imparting knowledge about the teachings of Sufis, a planning for the latest education should be made in the university, so that the young generations were fully equipped to meet the contemporary challenges.

The prime minister also directed for expediting the construction work over the proposed university, so that educational activities could commence at the earliest.

Prime Minister Imran Khan said that a fair and transparent tax system had vital role in enhancing the government’s capacity of ensuring effective governance and welfare and betterment of masses. He said the country’s elite class in the past not only misused public resources for their personal gains but also continued to occasionally bring about changes in tax system in a way that the whole burden of taxes was borne by common man and traders, which affected the small and medium enterprises especially the common man.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/666658/provision-of-jobs-through-promotion-of-industrialisation-a-priority-imran/>

Pakistan Observer

Posters, billboard reflecting Sino-Pak peoples’ love

Gwadar seaport has been got surrounded with posters and billboards, reflecting the Sino-Pak peoples’ love and deep affection, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday. The posters

around the port are nothing but beautiful sceneries, carrying a part of the memory of every “Gwadar people”. The report says, Gwadar Port is not a very built-up area and one look around, they are many of the unremarkable buildings are carefully plastered with “Chicken Soup for the Soul” posters on the walls. These posters seem to be around everybody. There are printed on the wall, painted on the billboard, printed on the steps of the parterre, and printed on the steel tube roadside. The author Chen FanIn stated that he probably found 50 “Chicken Soup for the Soul” posters printed on less than 10 buildings in Gwadar Port. Some of them are proverbs, some are adages and some are catch phrases to enjoy. Lingering to observe these posters, one can feel the sincerity, passion of the Gwadar Port. One can tell that they are taking it as their home and are sparing no efforts in building this shining star. The biggest poster situated on the main road leading to Gwadar Port. That inscribed with “The flower’s every inch; Please see; Please love; Please care by Zhang Yanmei” (located at the Business Center of China Communication Construction Company). Gwadar Port security checkpoint is the most occupied place with 36 posters. Port House, the place where the staff from China Overseas Ports Holding Company Pakistan are living, is painted with some posters, too. “China and Pakistan friendship is deep as the depth of pacific and Atlantic oceans.”

<https://pakobserver.net/posters-billboard-reflecting-sino-pak-peoples-love/>

The News

Pakistan may benefit from China’s experiences on flood control

BEIJING: A Chinese scholar Prof. Zhou Rong said Pakistan in its efforts of overcoming damage caused by the floods and continuous torrential rains could learn more from China’s experiences to handle the situation more effectively.

In a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Monday, he made some suggestions as how to cope up with the situation. According to Prof. Rong, there is needed to start from two aspects. The first is to set up an early warning system. The second is to build more water conservancy facilities in areas at high risk of flooding.

Pakistan needs to do computations of river flow data, and computes water flows into the Indus River as well as its branches, the absorptive capacity of the terrain, the spread of vegetation, the solar energy signature over the entire Indus basin and more. If there is a system to ingest the data and process it, that will be the best.

Prof. Zhou Rong a special commentator of CEN and fellow of Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China suggested that there should be a special system in Pakistan to tell how much rain to expect and where, how much accumulation of water will occur in what region and what river flow will be at each hydrological station every day.

Pakistan would be able to overcome the floods on self-reliance without asking for much international assistance. The country needs to predict rainfall very accurately, even when it is dealing with anomalous storm patterns. But in order to predict stream flows at precise locations, it needs river flow data from each of the hydrological structures on the Indus river system.

Therefore, Pakistan has to develop a special organization or instrument to download daily reports from the Pakistan Meteorological Department website which contains enough information.

If country's special departments concerned could tell the likelihood of the occurrence of a flood, its location, intensity and effects on each individual river of the Indus river system that will be best for everybody. With advance warning, embankments can be strengthened, reservoirs and dams can be emptied out, and barrages can be reinforced.

Breaching priorities for embankments that lie along the path of the flood can be drawn up in time and residents can be alerted so that perishables and livestock can be moved to higher ground.

Prof. Zhou Rong stated that Pakistan is blessed with a highly developed river management system which can be effectively used to mitigate the full impact of a flood. With advance warning, water infrastructures could have been emptied out much sooner, making it possible to absorb the floodwaters surging down the river.

He added, recently, the government signed a contract of Rs442 billion with China Power for the construction of the Diamer-Bhasha Dam. The Chinese firm is executing the project in a joint venture with Frontier Works Organization (FWO).

The Diamer-Bhasha Dam would be completed to cope with the increasing water and electricity requirements of Pakistan. The dam project with a total financial outlay of about Rs1,406.5 billion would be completed in 2028.

The water conservancy infrastructure of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has not yet achieved full coverage, but it could be expected that more and more dams and reservoirs design and construction should be combined with Pakistan's flood prevention and rainstorm loss reduction.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/715071-pakistan-may-benefit-from-china-s-experiences-on-flood-control>