



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

September 16-30, 2020

A pilot project of PICS

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September 16, 2020

Pakistan Observer

Rashakai SEZ to set new direction for industrialization: Fareena

The Board of Investment on Tuesday said that the Rashakai, Special Economic Zone would set a new direction for the modern industrialization in Pakistan and bring huge Foreign Direct Investment in the country. Recently the Pakistan and China signed the development agreement of the Rashakai SEZ under China Pakistan Economic Corridor's to promote the Ease of Doing Business in the country, Federal Secretary for BOI, Ms. Fareena Mazhar said this while talking to Media. Through this milestone in the economic history of the country, the government wants to provide conducive business environment for bringing Foreign Direct Investment in the country, she said. Fareena said that Rashakai M-1 Nowshera, Dhaba, Dhabeji Thatta. Allama Iqbal Industrial City, Faisalabad and Science Technology Park in National University Science and Technology had also been approved and would be top priority of the government to develop these zones for creating the better business opportunity for foreign investment. The secretary said the development of Rashakai SEZ had a huge strategic implication, because of closer to resources rich Central Asian Republics and also play role for economic integration of the region. She said that all of these SEZs would have far-reaching socio-economic impact in the region by attracting more investment, spurring industrialization, creating employment in the industry and ensuring export led-growth. She said that the completion of Rashakai SEZs would promote ease of doing business in the country and would facilitate the local and foreign investors. Replying to a question, she said SEZ in Hattar was also a priority of BoI, adding that electricity issue had halted the completion of economic zones but the matter had been resolved. She said that Pakistan's proximity with China would allow these SEZs to foster economic interdependence for mutual economic advantage. The chairman BOI said that this milestone accord between both of the friendly countries would provide the road map for establishment of upcoming new SEZs in the country. She said the BOI promoted establishment of these all SEZs with the goals of capitalizing on investment inflow under CPEC, inclusive economic development in the Provinces, creation of job opportunities, industrial development, and export generation in Pakistan. Replying to another question, she said that Rashakai SEZ held a unique competitive advantage due to its proximity to the first juncture of CPEC route, and significant resource and manufacturing base in the region.

To another query about the most priority sector for future investment in Pakistan, she said that textiles value addition, Information Technology, Logistic, Tourism and housing are the major sectors for the government to bring foreign investment in these areas. She said that Pakistan acquired the \$2.5 billion FDI in this FY year and the government was committed to bring more foreign investment in potential sector in this year. The secretary said the government had set a target to complete the reforms in BOI within next three years, through Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiative (PRMI) in district provincial and at country level.

<https://pakobserver.net/rashakai-sez-to-set-new-direction-for-industrialization-fareena/>

China ready to help Pakistan to enhance Soybean production, says Wenliang
Soybean production in Pakistan may be spurred by high-yielding varieties from China. This was observed during a meeting held here between Gu Wenliang, Agricultural Commissioner of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Raza, post-doctoral research fellow of Sichuan Agricultural University and Prof. Muhammad Ansar, Chairman of Agronomy Department of PMAS-Arid Agriculture University. According to Gwadar Pro on Tuesday, they held talks to further fuel maize-soybean strip intercropping technology's development in Pakistan. Gu Wenliang admired Muhammad Ali Raza, Prof. Yang Wenyu and other agricultural experts for promoting maize-soybean intercropping technology in Pakistan to tap the potential of Pak-Sino agricultural cooperation. When it comes to the difficulties faced by the research team, Gu Wenliang expressed the embassy's willingness to give full support on bringing high-yielding soybean varieties, pesticides and weedicides for intercropping, and machinery to Pakistan.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-ready-to-help-pakistan-to-enhance-soybean-production-says-wenliang/>

CPEC & Regional Perspectives

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

CHINA Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has now become hope for achieving greater levels of regional connectivity, energy security, socio-economic prosperity and last but not the least, sustainable regional peace and harmony. It is the flagship project of the BRI. It was meant for prosperity, progression, participation and, of course, protection. BRI and CPEC are the projects of 21st Century. Both are custodian for the rise of Asian Century. Both supplement the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) vision of regional connectivity and economic integration too.

Most recently, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, while attending the Foreign Ministers meeting of the SCO in Moscow, upheld the strategic importance of the CPEC and termed it supplemented to SCO. He appreciated SCO potential for enhancing closer relations with regional partners and realizing the benefits of the emerging connection between the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and South East Asian countries and labelled CPEC as connecting hub for both the regions. He said CPEC would bring economic prosperity for Pakistan and the region.

In the recent past, Uzbekistan's Deputy Prime Minister for Investment and Foreign Trade, Sardor Umurzakov along with a 7-8 member delegation also visited Pakistan and met with high dignitaries including Prime Minister Imran Khan, COAS General Bajwa and various Ministers. During his stay in Pakistan, Sardor Umurzakov showed his government's willingness to become the Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement (QTTA) which has already been signed by Pakistan, China, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The Government of Pakistan has now decided to have access to market of Central Asian Republics (CARs) through China. It offers an alternative mean to CARs by completely circling Afghanistan. Pakistan would use the Karakorum Highway

which connects Gilgit-Baltistan and China's Xinjiang region with the CARs. Pakistan would support 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. Uzbek Deputy Premier Sardor Umurzakov also met with Adviser to the PM on Commerce, Textile and Investment, Abdul Razak Dawood and explored more avenues for increasing the bilateral trade between the two countries.

For the further strengthening of inflows of trade and commerce, Uzbekistan needs optimal connectivity with the seaports of Pakistan. In this connection, Sardor Umurzakov called on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Syed Ali Haider Zaidi. During the meeting it was decided to develop various trade routes to get connected Pakistan with the CARs. It was also agreed to establish a specialized terminal for Central Asian goods which would be further transformed and revolutionized after the completion of ML-1 Railway project. Therefore, strategic importance of the CPEC is obvious which has already developed Gwadar and Karachi seaports to be used for the promotion of transit trade between Afghanistan and beyond. Uzbekistan, being one of the largest economies of Central Asia, has potential markets in the shape of the Middle East, especially the Gulf countries, Southeast Asia, Europe and Africa. In this context, Pakistan may be used as connecting hub.

It was also decided to establish a specialized shipping fleet for the promotion of Central Asian exports. It was noticed that bilateral trade volume further enhanced during the last 2-3 years. It is hoped that formation of functional trade corridor would further facilitate volumes of bilateral trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Formation of the Joint Working Group would be a value-addition in this regard. Government of Pakistan has been trying its best to increase its exports and vast consumer markets of the CARs would open a new window of opportunity for it. In this regard, Pakistan special geography and strategic location would play a vital role in the days to come. Prospects of extending cooperation and making investment in the diverse fields/sectors of textile, agriculture, pharmaceuticals and tourism were also discussed.

It is suggested that Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway with access to Gwadar and Karachi ports would be a game and fate changer for the entire region in the days to come. In this connection, Pakistan, being gateway of Central Asian countries, should also explore the opportunities to untapped Cluster-Trading Routes (CTRs). Moreover, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada said that Azerbaijan desired to strengthen the economic and cultural ties along with mutual trade. He said that with the operational of CPEC and growing regional connectivity will also provide the two countries an opportunity to cooperate in multiple sectors.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) unfolds unlimited window of opportunities between South East Asia and Central Asia. The CPEC with investment of over US\$ 60 billion is a flagship project of BRI facilitates multidimensional regional integration. Keeping in view its strategic importance and optimal utility, CPEC is very important to Central Asian Republics (Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan). CPEC provides alternative route via seaports of Gwadar and Karachi to Central Asia countries. Since all CARs are landlocked an

easy and safe access to sea routes is essential which may be easily provided by the CPEC. 75% China-Central Asia trade passes through Xinjiang. CPEC serves as a strategic opportunity for CARs to gain access and competitiveness in the regional markets of South Asia, Middle East and Africa. All Central Asian States have already shown keen interest to join CPEC for close regional integration.

Being prominent regional expert of BRI & CPEC, I suggest using Khorgos- Gwadar route to be connected with Kashgar in Xinjiang that borders Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Chinese transport from Kashgar to Gwadar is being carried out. Transit and Trade through Afghanistan, which provides the shortest transit from Central Asia to Gwadar, should also be operationalized after getting sustainable peace and harmony in Afghanistan. Hopefully, diplomacy of peace has now been started in Doha to bring peace in Afghanistan, so future of greater regional integration, socio-economic prosperity and easy and smooth supplies of energy (TAPI Gas Pipeline, CASA-1000, IP Gas Pipeline) will be directly correlated with CPEC. In this connection, its phase-II is going to be implemented very soon in the country.

21st Century belongs to regional interdependence and greater connectivity. China has emerged as super economic power in the world which cares about regional countries and its BRI & CPEC projects provide golden opportunity to all the regional countries especially CARs to be connected via extended projects of the CPEC in the shape of seaports and railways.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-regional-perspectives/>

CPEC rapidly shaping geo-economic dynamics, evolving connectivity

Dr. Saeed Ahmed Ali

Being the largest bilateral investment project in terms of geo-economic growth, regional partnership and development, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has emerged surprisingly as a boon both for Pakistan and China as well as for other countries in the region. There is much to learn from the revolutionary progressive and development story of China as the emerging superpower has magnetically pulled 800 million people out of poverty during the last four decades through economic reforms and a targeted agenda which presents a compelling model for Pakistan to follow. Gwadar is located on an isthmus in the Arabian Sea on the southwestern coast of Pakistan. As such, it is an economic gateway to both the Persian Gulf and Central Asian countries, which would eventually connect more than 64 countries in Asia and Europe. This is what it has been called the stand-alone pillar of the CPEC and the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative. CPEC is a framework of regional connectivity which aims at economic regionalization in the digital and globalized world. Besides China and Pakistan, the flagship project will put a positive impact on other regional countries including Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asian Republics (CARs), and the Middle Eastern countries. Through CPEC the regional powers in Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East are shaping their geo-economic priorities and financial benefits which would further help generate peace, stable economies, enduring development and a win-win model for all of them. The project is shaping requirements

and cooperation models among regional countries by improving geographical connectivity and business engagement through improved road, rail and air transportation systems. Additionally, the upgraded flow of trade and business volume will result in a well-connected, integrated region of shared destiny, harmony and development through CPEC. CPEC Project Director, Dr. Liaqat Ali Shah, disclosed that the incumbent government of PTI was rapidly achieving immediate results from CPEC, adding immense unemployed youth were being provided with internship initiative opportunities whereas skilled professionals were already doing jobs due to the project. He said China is all weather friend of Pakistan and CPEC project has created further understanding and people-to-people contact between peoples of the two countries. He added that partnership in the form of CPEC would prove to be a historical milestone in the Sino-Pak bilateral relations. Since the beginning, Prime Minister Imran Khan has been taking keen interest and supporting the game changer project CPEC and is determined to accomplish the great initiative. The mega project would not only benefit Pakistan and China but the whole region, he said, adding, this project would prove to be a gateway to European markets for trade activities.” CPEC-projects under the overarching umbrella of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) would help evolve connectivity between the regional and neighboring countries, and economic and social uplift of the country would be further boosted through these mega projects. As per Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives’ document, the CPEC project would envisage industrialization by 2030 and more than 20 specialized economic zones are being established under the Industrial phase of CPEC. Furthermore, five million low cost housing projects, CPEC-Internship and Kamyab Jawan Programme, agriculture sector development and other policy initiatives including shifting focus from trade to manufacturing sector, and private-public partnership are the major features of government’s efforts in achieving the goals. The document further reveals that the set target of economic zones and industrialization would be achieved through mega projects which would be set up under the 2nd phase of CPEC. After becoming fully operational, Gwadar would become harbinger of massive export-import activity and a gateway to both the Persian Gulf and Central Asian countries, which would engage economic partnership of around 64 countries in Asia and Europe, Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) President Mian Anjum Nisar told the APP, adding CPEC was a hope of an advanced future with a modern economy based on peace and prosperity. Setting up of economic zones under the aegis of CPEC would bring about an unbelievable Industrial revolution in the country and industrialization would not only fulfill the domestic needs; rather Pakistan would be able to export its own manufactured items and millions of people will be provided with employment. Instead of joining the activity to boost economy and peace in the region, India and some other countries are maliciously making false propaganda against CPEC which was another manifestation of desperate Indian attempts to mislead the world community, Mian Anjum Nisar said. He further said that these countries are also trying to influence the global monetary forums and international financial institutions by disseminating wrong narrative about CPEC. It is worth mentioning here that the completed projects of the

CPEC phase-1 have started delivering relief and are yielding dividends and tangible socio-economic benefits to the country's people.

Meanwhile, it may be mentioned here that Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Thursday while addressing the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) moot of Council of Foreign Ministers in Moscow said the CPEC and the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) supplement the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) vision of regional connectivity and economic integration.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-rapidly-shaping-geo-economic-dynamics-evolving-connectivity/>

The Nation

Chinese ambassador calls on Shibli Faraz

Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing called on Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz in Islamabad. Speaking on the occasion, the Chinese Ambassador said relationship between Pakistan and China is moving forward in accordance with the vision of leadership. Shibli Faraz said cultural diplomacy is vital to promote people to people contacts and enhance understanding of each other's values and traditions.

Ambassador Yao Jing said Chinese side will be sending an agricultural group to Pakistan for looking into proposals for betterment of agriculture sector.

<https://nation.com.pk/16-Sep-2020/chinese-ambassador-calls-on-shibli-faraz>

September 17, 2020

The Express Tribune

China hails development of Rashakai SEZ

China said on Wednesday that the development of Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) would boost high quality development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and inject a new momentum into Pakistan's economic development.

Chinese foreign ministry's spokesperson told a regular briefing in Beijing that all sides attached great importance to the Rashakai project. "It will surely boost high quality development of the CPEC and inject new momentum into Pakistan's economic development," spokesperson Wang Wenbin said.

On Monday, Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing witnessed the signing ceremony of the 'Development Agreement of Rashakai Special Zone', while Deputy Director of the Chair of Chinese side of the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of CPEC, Ning Jizhe attended via video link.

Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said that the signing of the agreement meant that the project had reached a substantial development stage. "It will play an important and exemplary role for industrial cooperation between the two sides," he added.

The Rashakai SEZ is one of the nine SEZs, prioritized under the CPEC framework. "This is the first agreement signed between the two sides under the CPEC. All sides attach great importance to this project," Wang said in a response to question from APP.

According to the China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), the developer of the SEZ, the leading industries of Rashakai SEZ, would comprise plants for processing of farm produce, automobile, home appliances, textile, consumer electronics, construction materials and logistics.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2264312/china-hails-development-of-rashakai-sez>

The News

Chinese sets up loudspeakers on Ladakh border with Punjabi songs

ISLAMABAD: The Chinese troops in an interesting move have set up loudspeakers that are belting out Punjabi numbers and songs at their forward posts with India in Ladakh.

Indian media has said that this comes in the wake of Indian troops setting up an around the clock observation at the dominating height near Finger 4, overlooking the positions of the Peoples Liberation Army.

According to sources, the post at which the Chinese army has put up loudspeakers is under 24x7 constant watches by Indian soldiers and it is possible that the Chinese might be indulging in such drama to distract Indian troops or perhaps just relieve the pressure, the Indian media contented. China and India had a recent incident near Finger 4 where more than 100 rounds were fired between the troops of the two sides on September 8. India and China have had at least three firing incidents between their troops in Eastern Ladakh in the last 20 days over the ongoing territorial dispute there.

"The first incident happened when the Indian Army preempted the Chinese attempt to occupy heights near Southern Bank of Pangong lake between August 29-31 while the second incident occurred near Mukhpari height on September 7," army sources said. In the third incident, which occurred on September 8 near the northern bank of Pangong Lake, troops of both sides fired more than 100 rounds as the Chinese side was behaving in a very aggressive manner, army sources said. The incident had taken place at a time when the Indian foreign minister had gone to Moscow for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting and met his Chinese counterpart to address the border issues. As per discussions, the two sides were supposed to hold Corps Commander-level talks, but the date and time have not yet been confirmed by the Chinese side, so far. China and India have held multiple rounds of talks since April-May at both military and diplomatic level, but it has not yielded any significant results till now. China and India have been engaged in a standoff since April-May this year.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/716069-chinese-sets-up-loudspeakers-on-ladakh-border-with-punjabi-songs>

‘Pakistan, China to keep high-level cooperation’

BEIJING: China’s Vice Foreign Minister Luo Zhaohui met here with newly-appointed Pakistani ambassador Moin ul Haque and exchanged views on Sino-Pak relations and the high-quality jointly construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

According to Gwadar Pro on Wednesday, Luo said the China and Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperation partnership keeps high level development despite of the disturbance of COVID-19 epidemic and others.

China and Pakistan should implement the consensus reached by leaders of both countries and the outcomes of China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers’ Strategic Dialogue. The two sides should strengthen exchanges at all levels, deepen anti-epidemic cooperation and boost the high-quality construction of CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative.

The two nations should strengthen coordination and cooperation on international and regional issues and make good plans to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties next year to push bilateral ties for greater development.

Haque said it is an honor to be the ambassador to China. He said Pakistan and China are the unique “iron friends”.

Pakistan is ready to firmly support China on all issues concerning its core interests. Pakistan sincerely congratulates China on taking the lead both in fighting the epidemic and resuming development.

Pakistan stands ready to work closely with China to tap the potential for cooperation in various fields and push bilateral relations to a higher level. Luo and Haque exchanged the treaty on the transfer of sentenced persons between China and Pakistan.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/716078-pakistan-china-to-keep-high-level-cooperation>

September 18, 2020

Business Recorder

Upcoming FATF review to go well for Pakistan: Chinese envoy

ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ambassador of People’s Republic of China Yao Jing Thursday expressed his confidence that October review of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) would go well for Pakistan.

He made the remark during a farewell call on the Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh here at the Finance Division. Ambassador Jing thanked the Adviser for his support and expressed desire to further strengthen the two country’s relationship.

He said that CPEC was a project that was an inspiration for the rest of the world.

The ambassador also appreciated the strategy adopted by the government of Pakistan during the Covid-19 crisis and said that the rest of the world could follow and learn from Pakistan's experience. The adviser appreciated the commitment with which Jing worked for the progress of the Pak-China relationship.

The adviser acknowledged the contributions of Ambassador Jing and China's leadership for Pakistan and expressed hope that his predecessor would work on the same lines. At the end the adviser presented a shield to the outgoing ambassador as a token of Finance Division's acknowledgment for his valuable services and said that his successor would be welcomed with the same spirit.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/18/12-page/851972-news.html>

Daily Times

Pakistan, China discuss transport cooperation under CPEC

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin-ul-Haque held a meeting with China's Minister for Transport, Li Xiaopeng here on Thursday. Ambassador Haque and Minister Li held an in-depth exchange of views on various aspects of transport cooperation under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), including the Karakoram and other major highways, connectivity projects in Gwadar, the Main Line I (ML-I) railway upgrade, and metro mass-transit; as well as deepening of regional connectivity initiatives and economic exchanges. Welcoming the Ambassador, Minister Li expressed satisfaction at the state of bilateral cooperation in the transport domain and reiterated China's complete support for joint efforts to forge even stronger multi-modal linkages. In his remarks, Ambassador Haque stated that bilateral cooperation in the transport sector was a longstanding pillar of bilateral cooperation that had been given new impetus through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/667852/pakistan-china-discuss-transport-cooperation-under-cpec/>

Pakistan Observer

Chinese envoy lauds Pakistan's strategy in combating Covid-19

Ambassador of People's Republic of China Yao Jing made a farewell call on the Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh in Islamabad on Thursday. The Adviser appreciated the commitment with which Mr. Jing worked for the progress of the Pak- China relationship. He also acknowledged the contributions of Ambassador Jing and China's leadership for Pakistan and expressed hope that his predecessor will work on the same lines.

Ambassador Jing thanked the Adviser for his support and expressed desire to further strengthen the two country's relationship. He said that CPEC is a project that is an inspiration for the rest of the world. The Ambassador also appreciated the strategy adopted by the government of Pakistan

during the Covid-19 crisis and said that the rest of the world could follow and learn from Pakistan's experience.

The Ambassador expressed his confidence that FATF's October review will go well for Pakistan. At the end, the Adviser presented a shield to the outgoing Ambassador as a token of Finance Division's acknowledgement for his valuable services and said that his successor will be welcomed with the same spirit.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-envoy-lauds-pakistans-strategy-in-combating-covid-19/>

Speakers term CPEC, BRI vital to address Afghan's quagmires

Speakers from various spheres of life and different countries including United States, Afghanistan and Pakistan addressing the webinar "CPEC and Afghanistan: Future of Mutual Prosperity and Regional Connectivity" organized by IPRI here on Thursday shared their perspectives on what CPEC as a project holds for Afghanistan's future. The speakers included Former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Ms. Tehmina Janjua, Director of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Peshawar, Dr. Syed Hussain Shaheed Soherwardi, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Illinois and Director of Afghanistan and Pakistan Studies at the Middle East Institute in the United States, Dr. Marvin G. Weinbaum, Member of the Afghan parliament, Mr. Mir Wais Yasini and Deputy Director and Senior Associate for South Asia at the Wilson Center in the US, Mr. Michael Kugelman. In his opening remarks, Acting President of IPRI Brig (Retd) Raashid Wali Janjua stressed on how CPEC is a strategic outlet with immense geopolitical implications for Afghanistan. He welcomed the diverse range of experts who were tasked with enlightening the audience on this pertinent theme. Ms. Tehmina Janjua in her remarks expressed optimism that through CPEC, existing boundaries between regional players which included Afghanistan and Pakistan could become zones of contact which are grounded in history and can be capitalized upon today. Her optimism was complimented by Dr. Hussain Soherwordi's assessment that the project holds great potential based on the fact that interdependence between states ushers in peace, cooperation and avenues for compromise which can benefit Afghanistan.

Dr. Marvin Weinbaum considered the Belt and Road Initiative to offer a unique opportunity for the Afghan economy with such investments potentially addressing the war torn country's security quagmires. Member of the Afghan parliament, Mr. Mir Wais Yasini then equated regional connectivity and investments in the Afghan economy to be solely dependent on the results of the Intra-Afghan dialogue process which is taking place in Doha.

<https://pakobserver.net/speakers-term-cpec-bri-vital-to-address-afghns-quagmires/>

Zong 4G plays important role under CPEC

Among the major catalysts and enablers of CPEC's sustained progress has been Pakistan's preferred connectivity partner Zong 4G, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. In a majority of CPEC projects, Zong 4G is playing the role of primary connectivity provider,

mainly because of its unrivalled network footprint and best-in-class high-speed data products and services that have stimulated digital penetration in the country. With over 36 Million subscribers the 100% owned subsidiary of China Mobile Communications Corporation, Zong 4G, has seen exponential growth in the last few years to increase it by 10 folds to about 22%. Being the Chinese communication company in Pakistan, Zong 4G has also helped foster economic activities creating 3,500 direct and over 200,000 in-direct employment opportunities in Pakistan.

Zong 4G's remarkable contribution to CPEC is made possible by the operator's passion for empowering Pakistan and its people. Having a strong faith in the ability of technology to alter lives and elevate lifestyles, Zong has spearheaded the country's digital transformation for many years.

From being the pioneers of 4G in Pakistan, first successful 5G testing to MEC (Multi-access Edge Computing) and NB-IoT trials, Zong continues to lead the industry through its technological prowess. "Most of us don't even realize the level of interaction that we will have with technology in years to come, and we're not even talking about some distant future," shares Wang Hua, Chairman and CEO Zong told Gwadar Pro.

<https://pakobserver.net/zong-4g-plays-important-role-under-cpec/>

The Nation

Chinese envoy appreciates Pakistan's media positive role in implementing CPEC

Chinese ambassador Yao Jing who concludes his tenure here lauded Pakistan's media for its supportive role in implementing CPEC.

There are some superb achievements at the credit of ambassador Yao, as he laid special focus on promoting economic diplomacy and ensuring smooth working of CPEC.

At the farewell reception, he hosted for the local media here on Friday, he mentioned the splendid progress made during his stay in Pakistan, particularly the launching of the 2nd phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and signing of 2nd phase of China, Pakistan Free Trade agreement.

Yao Jing who had taken over his responsibility as Chinese ambassador to Pakistan in December, 2017 showed true love with the people of Pakistan, particularly during the outbreak of coronavirus.

He along with the members of his team in the Chinese embassy made untiring efforts for timely availability of Chinese support to the virus-hit people.

At the diplomatic front, he worked hard promoting China's support to Pakistan on Kashmir issue.

Time and again, Yao Jing effectively countered negative propaganda by Western and Indian lobby against the CPEC.

Speaking at the reception, with a sense of joy and pride, he termed his tenure in Pakistan as most memorable. He expressed his confidence that the Sino-Pak relations will keep growing and the CPEC's projects will greatly contribute to the well-being of the people.

The Sino-Pak relations are not limited to CPEC, but their spectrums are quite wide, covering all areas of bilateral interests. The leadership of the two countries are committed to deepen their decades' old partnership, he added.

While praising high the support, he had received from the government and the people of Pakistan, he noted that media had been on the forefront in supporting him for further strengthening the Sino-Pak diplomatic ties and socio-economic partnership.

It is worth-mentioning that in the recent years, there was a considerable progress in promoting people-to-people exchanges, particularly enhancing the number of Pakistani students visiting China on scholarships.

Yao Jing will leave Pakistan, returning to the Foreign Ministry of China for having his next assignment.

Nong Rong, Head of Ethnic Affairs Commission of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has been nominated as the new envoy.

Ambassador Yao Jing is already paying farewell calls to Pakistani dignitaries.

Yao Jing has served in Pakistan thrice and stayed in Islamabad for 11 years in aggregate. He was going to leave a lot of fans in Pakistan.

According to the official website of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the new appointed ambassador Nong Rong was born in September 1967.

He is a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) and holds a certification in International Business.

Nong Rong once worked in the office of the Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Department, the ASEAN Countries and Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Divisions of the Department of Commerce of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

He served as Assistant Secretary-General of the Secretariat of the China-ASEAN Expo.

<https://nation.com.pk/18-Sep-2020/chinese-envoy-appreciates-pakistan-s-media-positive-role-in-implementing-cpec>

September 19, 2020

Daily Times

CPEC and regional integration

Asad Tahir Jappa

In this highly globalized post-modern era, no country can exist in isolation nor can it claim to become self-reliant. Therefore, we can witness that countries have tried to enhance their economic relations and dependency upon one another. That's exactly why China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is being hailed as a 'game-changer' or 'flagship' project not only for China-Pakistan but also for the entire region. This corridor unfolds immense opportunities for regional landlocked states like Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics (CAR's). It decreases Chinese dependence on South China Sea as well as Malacca Strait while it provides a secure and the shortest route to China. Like other economic corridors, the prime focus of CPEC is to increase interdependence for business, trade, industrial development, and ensure overall societal growth. In real terms, China holds the key to connect the whole region for economic activities by ensuring a win-win situation. China as an emerging economic superpower needs to explore and build alternate routes for its energy security; therefore, this route not only reduces Chinese time and cost but also links China with Central Asia, Middle East and Africa. According to 'Obama's 2012 Regional Strategy-Pivot to East Asia', CPEC is a strategy of China to reduce American influence in South East Asia, hence, has many implications for China-America strategic competition.

The phrase regional integration implies regional connectivity and developing infrastructure, communication, cooperation and interdependence for a successful growing economy across the globe. According to the theory of economic integration, the aim is to promote free market economy by minimizing tariff and other trade related restrictions. The regional integration process basically deals with both political as well as economic dimensions. In post-WWII, the emergence of liberal school of thought mainly focuses on economic integration. One success story is EFTA (European Free Trade Association) which has almost abolished tariff and other restrictions among its member states. The shared vision is to promote open markets, free movement of labor, capital transformation, and currency union for achieving regional connectivity. The European Union model for regional integration is yet another classic case study for emulation by Central and South Asian states for ensuring peace and economic prosperity in the region. But it is only possible when each country plays its positive role for integration and is willing to contribute to the shared vision.

CPEC is indeed a giant leap forward which is meant to integrate South Asia, Central Asian landlocked states, less developed western China, Iran and Middle Eastern states. Basically, it provides economic connectivity between resource-starving states and resource-rich regions. This kind of regional integration enhances peace, promotes tranquility and ensures economic

prosperity for the whole region. Therefore, regional integration can only be achieved when whole region sincerely strives to improve infrastructure, transport connectivity and increase trading activities. Unfortunately, Pakistan is situated in a complicated neighborhood having a contentious relationship with its two neighbors? Afghanistan and India. With Afghanistan, Pakistan shares extensive historical, cultural and social affinities owing to the presence of the Pashtun population on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border. However, it is a happy omen to know that social and economic linkages have continued to exist despite tensions in their interstate relations. With a population of approximately 32.5 million, Afghanistan as a landlocked country, shares its borders with Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, and China. Being largely dependent on agriculture, it exports lumps to Pakistan, India, Turkey, and Russia. It carries its major trade through Karachi and Gwadar Port, making it a strong competitor to support CPEC. Through CPEC, Afghanistan can access Gwadar, saving nearly 600km distance for its trading activities.

Geographically, South Asia is bordered by Central Asia, West Asia and Southeast Asia on its different ends. The South Asian nations are also members of regional organizations such as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). It reflects the political and strategic significance of South Asia in regional and international politics. South Asia is important because of the diverse traditional and non-traditional security challenges. Meanwhile, as political issues and security interests have taken precedence over economic cooperation in the region, active conflicts have also undermined prospects of regional cooperation. Despite strategic differences among the South Asian states, particularly between India and Pakistan, efforts have been made to promote regional integration and cooperation. Since transport connectivity influences trade patterns and regional production networks by directly impacting the competitiveness of goods, the South Asian countries have made efforts to improve cross-border transport connectivity, however, transport facilitation measures have lagged behind. Connecting inland production hubs and manufacturing centers across South Asia is crucial for enhancing regional trade.

Political interests in South Asia are not only confined to India-Pakistan relations. As the smaller South Asian nations attempt to find a balance between the Indian and Chinese influences in the region, differences have emerged between India and Nepal; and India and Sri Lanka. Despite occasional differences, smaller nations, however, have not held back the agenda of SAARC. As described above, India-Pakistan tensions have directly impacted the SAARC agenda. One of the prime benefits of linking Central Asian Republics with CPEC is that Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan are rich in oil and gas, therefore, their petroleum products are exported to China or Russia mostly by pipeline through Russia land routes. CPEC would also provide Pakistan with an opportunity to strengthen its relations with Central Asian Republics and it would also import oil and gas to Pakistan at much cheaper rates. It goes beyond saying that the region would have more peace, greater prosperity, and increased business through CPEC. Furthermore, one of the greatest dividends of this larger than life vision is people-to-people contact which refers to inter-

cultural exchange to appreciate the cultural diversity that region is blessed with. Moreover, the CPEC is also significant in ensuring China as a central cohesive force across Asia and the world.

CPEC has enormous potential to drive economic growth and development. Production and trade have already multiplied through expansion in transport connectivity. However, the regional integration and bilateral cooperation in South Asia have been marred by mistrust and hostilities. Unfortunately, under the framework of SAARC, regional cooperation has not made much of headway. In recent years, Pakistan has focused more on investing in transport infrastructure to enhance national and regional connectivity. The CPEC is a North-South trade and transit corridor focusing on infrastructure and industrial development. Linking up the CPEC with Pakistan's western and eastern neighbors, Afghanistan, Iran and India respectively, would address the challenge of navigating regional politics. It would also allow the Pakistani and Chinese businesses to tap into the markets in Afghanistan, Iran and India. For this purpose, the regional cooperation, under the framework of SAARC, to connect with Afghanistan and India, can be initiated to lower trade barriers, link road and railway networks and encourage regional economic cooperation. With Afghanistan and Iran, Pakistan can strengthen bilateral cooperation and also operationalize the ECO and European trade frameworks. East-West linkages with Pakistan's neighbors can, in future, lead to the building of trust and confidence between Pakistan and India and also improve Pakistan's relations with Iran and Afghanistan.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/668578/cpec-and-regional-integration/>

Dunya News

Orange Train project will be launched soon: Asim Bajwa

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority (CPECA) Chairman Lt Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa has on Saturday said that the Lahore Orange Line Metro Train (OLMT) will be launched soon.

Asim Bajwa took to Twitter and told that teething issues are resolved, fare is decided, trial runs are underway, O&M award is given and hiring is in progress.

<http://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/564679-Orange-Train-project-launched-soon-Asim-Bajwa>

Pakistan Observer

Webinar by Bahria University on China-Iran emerging maritime cooperation

Bahria University's National Institute of Maritime Affairs – NIMA organized an interactive webinar on an important current topic “China-Iran Emerging Maritime Cooperation and Opportunities for Pakistan”. National Institute of Maritime Affairs is constituent unit of Bahria University working to broaden the scope of Maritime Research as National Think Tank. Admiral Asif Sandila NI (M), Former Chief of the Naval Staff graced the occasion as chief guest whereas, eminent speakers such as Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry Director General ISSI, Vice Admiral (Retd) Asaf Humayun Former vice Chief of Naval Staff, and Capt. (Retd) Hassan Daud

Butt CEO Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment & Trade, shared their intellectual insights with the audience. Vice Admiral (Retd) Abdul Aleem HI (M), Director General NIMA welcomed all the worthy speakers and participants in the webinar and highlighted the trilateral maritime cooperation of Pakistan, China and Iran. Commodore (Retd) Baber Bilal SI (M) set the stage about the China and Iran emerging maritime partnerships and its prospects for Pakistan. While speaking with the audience, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry shared his intellectual insights about genesis of China & Iran strategic partnerships and its opportunities for Pakistan. Vice Admiral (Retd) Asaf Humayun highlighted the linkage of Gwadar and Chabahar as sister ports, their challenges and opportunities and its impacts on Pakistan economy. Capt Butt shed light on the prospects of China, Iran and Pakistan partnerships in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

At the end of the webinar, the Chief Guest Admiral Asif Sandila NI (M) applauded the efforts put in by NIMA for bringing together policy makers and academician to highlight this strategic issue, its impact on regional and global environment and its prospects for Pakistan. He also hoped that NIMA will keep on playing its significant role in advocating local and regional issues to raise awareness and provide policy recommendations to the policy makers in the country. Large number of attendees from academia, foreign policy experts, university students, government departments, and think tanks actively participated in the webinar.

<https://pakobserver.net/webinar-by-bahria-university-on-china-iran-emerging-maritime-cooperation/>

September 20, 2020

Dunya News

NHA invites bids for construction of Hoshab-Awaran-Khuzdar motorway

The National Highway Authority (NHA) has invited bids for the construction of Hoshab-Awaran-Khuzdar section (146 kms) of M-8 motorway.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Lt. Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Sunday informed that the tender for the project had been opened and the project would bring prosperity in the Southern areas of the Balochistan province.

He said the project would improve connectivity of Gwadar Port, and revolutionize socio-economic development of the region.

Asim who is also Chairman China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority said on twitter that with the construction of the motorway, long term deprivation of the local people would be addressed who were waiting for such development for decades.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/564797-NHA-invites-bids-for-construction-of-Hoshab-Awaran-Khuzdar-motorway>

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan envoy lauds Chinese companies' work in Pakistan

Pakistan's ambassador Moin ul Haque here lauded the achievements of China Railway Construction Corporation in doing its socio-economic work in Pakistan, says a report published by Gwadar Pro. During his meeting with Wang Jianping, chairman of CRCC, he noted the Chinese side is doing well while working with China Metallurgical Corporation of China. The two sides exchanged views on strengthening cooperation on infrastructure projects. CRCC has built several major projects under CPEC in Pakistan, including the Phase II project of Thar Coal Mine and the Karakoram highway reroute project of Dasu Hydropower Station. Mr. Haque said CRCC had built many quality projects for Pakistan. In the period of Covid-19 pandemic, CRCC and the people of Pakistan have helped each other, demonstrating the responsibility of Chinese companies.

He hoped that CRCC takes an active part in Pakistan's infrastructure construction. He believed that bilateral cooperation will yield fruitful results. Haque last week also met Wang Jicheng, the chairman of MCC. They exchanged views on epidemic prevention and control, production and operation, current difficulties and future planning of Saindak Mine in Pakistan. Haque said that when the Pakistani government met lots of difficulties to develop the Saindak mine, it was the prompt decision of MCC to contract for infrastructure construction and lease the operation that broke the impasses. During the epidemic, MCC once again offered assistance by donating supplies to Baluchistan province and local people.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-envoy-lauds-chinese-companies-work-in-pakistan/>

Rashakai: A land of growing opportunity

Rashakai Special Economic Zone (RSEZ), is considered a land of opportunity that would not only bring employment opportunities for common people but also will change the destiny of the region, said Mr. Hassan Daud Butt, CEO, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment & Trade (KP-BOIT). Talking to China Economic Net Hassan Daud said that Rashakai SEZ would be developed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor located at Nowshera- Mardan Road, around 57km away from Peshawar airport in the country's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province.

He said that anything that is produced within this SEZ can easily be exported to Afghanistan and through road connectivity from Gwadar, it can easily be exported to the rest of the world. Therefore, this is a great milestone that has been achieved by both governments. A signing ceremony of the development agreement of the Rashakai SEZ was held on 14 September 2020 in Islamabad and Mr. Hassan Daud Butt signed the treaty from the Pakistani side. "I think Rashakai special economic zone will contribute immensely towards the geo and socio-economic conditions of not just only in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but entire Pakistan. It will create around 200,000 job opportunities and will bring different industries that can-do import substitution and bring new technologies" he told CEN in an exclusive interview. Daud mentioned this project is

within the umbrella of CPEC and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This is the first special economic zone that is being developed in a public-private partnership. If this experiment proves to be fruitful, I think many similar special economic zones will follow. The other important aspect is the location of the special economic zone that is near to Peshawar and also not too far from the Pak-Afghan Torkham border, he added.

<https://pakobserver.net/rashakai-a-land-of-growing-opportunity/>

September 21, 2020

Dunya News

People of Pakistan looking forward to welcome President Xi Jinping: PM Imran

Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that people of Pakistan are eager to welcome Chinese President Xi Jinping on his visit to Pakistan. He made these remarks during a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing on Monday.

According to details, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing had a farewell meeting with Prime Minister Imran Khan in which the PM appreciated his role in further strengthening of Pak-China relations.

The Prime Minister said that the Chinese leadership played an important part in the social and economic transformation of their country. Pakistan has learned a lot from China's economic growth and poverty alleviation, the PM added.

He praised Ambassador Yao Jing and said that during his tenure, CPEC entered its second phase in which the focus is industrial, agricultural, social and economic development. The Prime Minister said that the second phase of the Pak-China Economic Corridor (CPEC) project would play a key role in promoting regional development and prosperity.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Yao Jing said that the vision and leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan has an important role to play in the transformation of Pakistan. Thanks to the PM's personal focus on poverty alleviation and public development, CPEC has entered into the second phase. CPEC will bring immense benefits to the people of the entire region, including Pakistan, he said.

The Chinese Ambassador said that Pakistan's policy of "smart lockdown" to combat Covid-19 has gained international recognition; it can be a useful way of dealing with the second wave of coronavirus. Ambassador Yao Jing said that he will be taking pleasant memories from his stay in Pakistan. "I would like to see even stronger relations between Pakistan and China", and adding that, "China will continue to support Pakistan in achieving its national development and goals."

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/565020-People-Pakistan-welcoming-President-Xi-Jinping-PM>

The Nation

M-8 project to improve connectivity of Gwadar Port

Chairman CPEC Authority Asim Saleem Bajwa on Sunday said tender for important section of M-8 construction has been issued. In a tweet, he said it will improve connectivity of Gwadar Port, revolutionize socio-economic development of the region and bring prosperity through addressing the long-term deprivation.

<https://nation.com.pk/21-Sep-2020/m-8-project-to-improve-connectivity-of-gwadar-port>

RSEZ: A land of growing opportunity for the region

Rashakai Special Economic Zone (RSEZ) is considered a land of opportunity that would not only bring employment opportunities for common people but also will change the destiny of the region, said Hassan Daud Butt, CEO, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade (KP-BOIT). The RSEZ would be developed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor located at Nowshera- Mardan Road, around 57 KM away from Peshawar airport in the country's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province.

He said that anything that is produced within this SEZ can easily be exported to Afghanistan and through road connectivity from Gwadar, it can easily be exported to the rest of the world. Therefore, this is a great milestone that has been achieved by both governments, he said in an interview with China Economic Net (CEN), a major Chinese news website. Hassan Daud Butt said, "The peace in Afghanistan also promises a great future for this region. So, I think we will request our Chinese friends to come and explore the opportunities and incentives that are being offered by the government. They're quite lucrative. Anyone who gets the first user advantage will have a great opportunity to leverage to grow."

"Peace in Afghanistan also promises a great future for this region. So, I think we will request our Chinese friends to come and explore the opportunities and incentives that are being offered by the government. They're quite lucrative. Anyone who gets the first user advantage will have a great opportunity to leverage to grow" • he added. A signing ceremony of the development agreement of the Rashakai SEZ was held on September 14, 2020 in Islamabad and Hassan Daud Butt signed the treaty from the Pakistani side.

"I think Rashakai special economic zone will contribute immensely towards the geo and socio-economic conditions of not just only in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but entire Pakistan. It will create around 200,000 job opportunities and will bring different industries that can-do import substitution and bring new technologies", he told. Daud mentioned this project is within the umbrella of CPEC and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This is the first special economic zone that is being developed in a public-private partnership. If this experiment proves to be fruitful, I think many similar special economic zones will follow. The other important aspect is the location of the special economic zone that is near to Peshawar and also not too far from the Pak-Afghan Torkham border, he added.

Regarding the question about what kind of incentive Chinese investors would get, Daud told, there are many incentives under the framework of CPEC Special Economic Zone Act 2013; that stipulates industry that is set up in any special economic zones under CPEC would get tax relief for 10 years on import duty and also on income tax for a similar period. He said that for the developer there is an exemption on import of development equipment for one time so that they can develop the special economic zone on modern lines. Besides this, the government offers special security for foreign investors. Lastly, the human resource of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is not just cheap but is also extremely efficient.

Daud specified that they had a discussion with Chinese and other potential investors that showed interest in consumer products, light engineering products, textile, food processing and even mobile phones which can be not just used to Pakistan but also exported to China and other part of the world.

“I also see some heavy industry like steel coming this way because there is a growing demand for construction equipment and material, as the Prime Minister initiative on the construction sector. The Agro-industry which is eco-friendly will be extremely welcomed”, he expressed. Butt said that Rashakai Special Economic Zone will be developed in three phases, in the first phase, the infrastructure and road network will be developed, and also the industries can start the development after the bidding process. The first phase would be completed in less than two years. The second phase will largely be about expansion and looking at modern trends and inviting new technologies. The last phase will again be about the expansion of this SEZ. Initially, Rashakai SEZ would cover about 1,000 acre land and will be increased to 4000 acre after the completion of all phases.

“The people from FATA will naturally become the employment pool for this special economic zone because they are extremely hardworking, extremely talented, and they have the historic knack of economic and trade activities. So, I think they will be easily employed in this SEZ”, he further said. Daud mentioned that many Chinese investors have shown interest to invest in this special economic zone because they are aware of the importance of the location and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) as a place which is called a land of growing opportunity for local and particularly foreign investors.

<https://nation.com.pk/21-Sep-2020/rsez-a-land-of-growing-opportunity-for-the-region>

CPEC’s SK power station’s drain system completed

The SK Hydro power Station drainage corridor has been successfully completed with high-standards sufficiently reducing the potential risks, Gwadar Pro reported yesterday.

According to China Gezhouba Group (CGGC), which has contracted to construct this project, a series of advanced technologies and devices were put in to the construction of the No.2 drainage corridor of the SK project. The length of the corridor is 733.25 meters, and the transversal and vertical errors of the corridor are 9 mm and 7 mm respectively, which are far better than the standard required by measurement specification.

Faced with the severe conditions such as small working place, poor ventilation, water impounding and sharp bend in the cave, both Pakistani and Chinese staff have lived on site while implementing the measures of epidemic prevention and control.

After 450 days of continuous operation, the drainage corridor was successfully connected and the horizontal connection was finally achieved.

The errors of various indicators were strictly controlled within the standard range.

The concrete pouring of cut-off wall for SK project was officially launched last week.

The SK hydropower station is one of the priority projects under the CPEC. Once completed, it will make up one fifth of the power gap in Pakistan and play an important role in providing local employment and improving people's livelihood.

<https://nation.com.pk/21-Sep-2020/cpec-s-sk-power-station-s-drain-system-completed>

Pakistan-China friendship much above CPEC: Yao Jing

Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing said that Pakistan-China friendship is much above the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and it covers wide spectrum of bilateral interest.

The envoy, who has completed his tenure in Pakistan and will soon leave for Beijing said at a farewell reception that the multi-billion-dollar CPEC had definitely strengthened the existing friendship, Gwadar Pro reported.

“CPEC is not the whole thing. We were friends even before the CPEC. There is no doubt CPEC has strengthened the bonds further but the brotherhood is much above a project,” he said to a loud applause by the journalists who had come to say good-bye to a friend of Pakistan.

Born in April 1969, Yao Jing had entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1991. He held various posts at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until he was appointed Chinese Ambassador to Afghanistan in October 2015.

On October 11, 2017, President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani bestowed its ‘Said Dzemarudin Afghani’ medal upon him for his efforts to promote China-Afghanistan bilateral relations.

On December 14, 2017, he was appointed and then approved by 12th Standing Committee of the National People's Congress as the Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, replacing Sun Weidong.

Nong Rong, Head of Ethnic Affairs Commission of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has now been nominated as the new envoy. Ambassador Yao Jing has already held a number of farewell meetings with the Pakistani dignitaries in the recent days.

Speaking at the reception with an emotional and victorious voice, the senior diplomat said CPEC cannot be stopped or delayed on the wishes of the conspirators.

“Yes, there are conspiracies but CPEC is going on smoothly. I am very satisfied with the pace of work. Let the conspirators do their job as we focus on development and prosperity,” he remarked.

The envoy said he will miss Pakistan as he had spent 11 years of his career in the country under different capacities. “When I first came to Pakistan, I was a junior diplomat. And as I complete my tenure now as the ambassador, I am more in love with Pakistan. I don’t know when I will return to Pakistan but my heart and soul will remain in Pakistan,” he said amid thumping of desks and clapping.

The envoy also candidly answered questions by the journalists. To a query on the standoff with India, he said China wanted peace in the region and the world. This time three standoff started at a difficult time. India provoked this. We hope India can be more responsible. Peace is important. We would like to tell India please don’t cross over. Aggression is bad. We will not compromise on sovereignty,” he warned. To a question about President Xi Jinping’s visit to Pakistan, Yao Jing said, “Our President happily accepted the invitation by PM Imran Khan.”

<https://nation.com.pk/21-Sep-2020/pakistan-china-friendship-much-above-cpec-yao-jing>

The News

Govt urged to link Malakand, Mohmand with CPEC

KHAR: An all-parties conference (APC) convened by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) on Sunday announced to launch a joint movement to get the Malakand division and Mohmand tribal district included in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project.

The APC was held at the residence of Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Sirajuddin Khan. The politicians belonging to Bajaur, Mohmand, Upper Chitral, Lower Chitral, Upper Dir, Lower Dir attended the APC. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) did not attend it. Former governor Shaukatullah Khan, Member National Assembly Abdul Akbar Chitrali, MPA Inayatullah Khan, Syed Akhuzada Chattan, Badshah Advocate, Maulana Abdul Rasheed, JI’s Haroon Rasheed, Maulana Waheed Gul, Mian Sultan Yousaf Bacha of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, Maulana Arif Haqqani of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Hussain Shah Yousafzai of Awami National Party and others were present.

They also threatened to block the Chakdarra Motorway if their demands were not accepted. The speakers said that the Malakand division and Mohmand district were rich in mineral resources, but the rulers had adopted a discriminatory attitude towards its residents. They lamented that the Dir-Chitral-Bajaur road project had been dropped from the Public Sector Development Programme and this step has caused resentment among the local people. These areas, they said, were already far behind from the rest of the country in terms of development, therefore this step would create alienation among the local population. They demanded that Bajaur, Mohmand, Chitral and Dir should be linked with the CPEC project, which was a game-changer and would help bring prosperity to these areas. The participants in the APC asked the government to honor the pledges made with the people of the merged district at the time of the merger. The government, they said, had pledged to provide Rs100 billion to the merged districts every year

for 10 years, but the pledge was not honored. The APC demanded that the merged district should be expected from taxes till 2023 to give relief to the local people.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/717921-govt-urged-to-link-malakand-mohmand-with-cpec>

September 22, 2020

Dunya News

China lauds President Alvi's remarks about CPEC's benefits to region

China has appreciated President Dr Arif Alvi's remarks about China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), its role for boosting regional connectivity and benefits to Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs).

“Just as President Alvi pointed out, the CPEC not only benefits the people of China and Pakistan, but will also boost the development of other countries in the region and elevate connectivity and economic cooperation throughout the entire region,” Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson Wang Wenbin told APP in a response to a question in this regard.

“We have noted President Alvi's remarks,” he said and added, “The CPEC is an important pilot program of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and a flagship in China-Pakistan cooperation.”

He remarked that since its launch six years ago, major progress had been achieved with a large number of projects starting construction or being completed and more than \$25 billion direct investment flowing into Pakistan.

“The completed projects have greatly improved transportation infrastructure and electricity supply in Pakistan, created over 70,000 direct employment opportunities, contributed between one percentage point and two to its annual GNI growth, and enhanced socioeconomic growth and people's well-being,” he added.

Wang said, “China firmly supports CPEC development and stands ready to work together with Pakistan to act on our leaders' consensus and, on the basis of continued solid progress in infrastructure development, focus on cooperation in social welfare, industrial and agricultural cooperation, to turn the CPEC into a demonstration project for high-quality BRI development and deliver more benefits for the two countries and regional countries.”

It may be mentioned that President Dr. Arif Alvi in a telephonic talk with his Turkmen counterpart Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov had said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would boost regional connectivity and particularly Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics would benefit from its road and railway infrastructure. He also highlighted importance of Gwadar seaport.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/565172-China-lauds-President-Alvi-remarks-about-CPEC-benefits-to-region>

Chinese scholar lauds Pak leading role in Afghan peace process

BEIJING: A Chinese scholar and former Defense Attache in South Asian countries Prof. Cheng Xizhong lauded Pakistan's leading role in pushing forward Afghan peace process.

In an article published by Gwadar Pro on Monday, he said Pakistan has come out as a strong supporter and mediator of the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan and played a key role in realizing the US-Taliban negotiations and signing the peace agreement aimed at ending the war in Afghanistan on February 29 this year.

Similarly, Pakistan, together with all parties concerned in the international community, has done a lot of work to facilitate the opening of peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

Prof. Cheng pointed out that Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan reiterated on September 13 that Pakistan will continue to fully support the Afghan people's unremitting efforts for peace and development.

The "Afghan owned and Afghan led" peace talks are essential to the realization of peace in Afghanistan and the region. He hopes that the Afghan leaders will seize the historic opportunity and work together to reach an inclusive, extensive and comprehensive political solution. Although the intra-Afghan talks have been launched, peace and reconciliation process in the country still faces many difficulties.

First, the United States will not withdraw all its troops from Afghanistan. US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad said recently that the United States will reduce its troops in Afghanistan to 4,500 within one to two months. As long as the US troops continue to stay in Afghanistan, the Afghan Taliban will not completely stop the resistance movement. To truly achieve peace in Afghanistan, the US troops must leave Afghanistan completely.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/718366-chinese-scholar-lauds-pak-leading-role-in-afghan-peace-process>

September 23, 2020

Business Recorder

Agreement signed: Pakistan, China to jointly build cancer medical lab

BEIJING: Pakistan, China will jointly build a cancer medical laboratory through cooperative partnership.

In this connection, an agreement's signing ceremony of Pakistan-China biotechnology strategic cooperation was held here, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. Under the flagship project of this cooperation, Pakistani and Chinese companies will jointly build a cancer medical laboratory. The

agreement was jointly initiated and signed by Life Re health Technology Pakistan and Beijing An long Gene Medicine Technology.

Under the proposed framework, Pakistani and Chinese companies will jointly carry out exploration and research on cancer medical treatment, and Chinese companies will also share their existing medical technologies with Pakistan.

Dr Ahmed Waqas, the CEO of Life Re health, has been active in CPEC medical cooperation for a long-term. He said in an exclusive interview that, the incidence of cancer in Pakistan is very high, especially lung cancer, liver cancer and so on. However, due to the current medical level and sanitary conditions, patients cannot receive good treatments. Therefore, cooperation between Pakistan and China in this sector is very necessary and will bring great benefits to Pakistan. Regarding the reasons why Pakistan chose Chinese company as cooperative partner, Waqas said, the cooperation in medical field is of great importance and requires profound friendship and trust between the two sides.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/23/3-page/852512-news.html>

President confers Hilal-e-Pakistan on outgoing Chinese envoy

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has awarded the Hilal-e-Pakistan to the outgoing Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing in recognition of his services of further strengthening the Pakistan-China relationship in diverse fields. The special award ceremony was held at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Tuesday.

The ceremony was attended by Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser, federal ministers and senior officials of the government of Pakistan.

Ambassador Yao Jing has served in Pakistan thrice in various capacities and in aggregate stayed in Islamabad for 11 years.

The president presented Ambassador Yao Jing with the country's second-highest civil award, given to people for their meritorious contribution to the national interests of Pakistan.

Later, the ambassador called on the president and discussed matters pertaining to bilateral relations between the two countries. While talking to the ambassador, the president said that China was a close friend, which had always supported Pakistan on all issues of national interest.

Highlighting the economic and strategic significance of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the president said the corridor would increase regional connectivity, and countries of the region, particularly Afghanistan and Central Asian countries, would enormously benefit from it. He emphasized the need for further strengthening defense cooperation between the two all-weather friends.

He added that Pakistan was looking forward to the visit of President Xi Jinping, which would further boost bilateral cooperation in the areas of trade, economy, and defense.

The president appreciated the efforts made by the outgoing ambassador for further promoting and solidifying bilateral relations. He said that many infrastructure and development projects were completed during the tenure of Yao Jing. The ambassador assured that China would continue its efforts to promote peace and connectivity in the region.

He specially thanked the president for being the only Head of State to visit China during the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

Ambassador Yao said Pakistan's policy of "smart lockdown" in containing the Covid-19 was internationally recognized and could be followed as a model by others to deal with its possible second wave.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/23/3-page/852508-news.html>

Dunya News

Asim, Buzdar discuss CPEC projects progress

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Chairman Asim Saleem Bajwa Wednesday called on Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar and discussed CPEC projects' progress in the province.

During the meeting, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and agriculture transformation models for Punjab under CPEC framework came under discussion.

The meeting also discussed the progress of Orange Line Metro Train project.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/565359-Asim-Buzdar-discuss-CPEC-projects-progress>

Pakistan Observer

Chinese experts take detailed visit of BRT route

Experts from the company which provided buses for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Peshawar on Tuesday took a detailed trial visit of BRT route. According to spokesman for Trans Peshawar, the buses would be inspected in detail from all aspects with state-of-the-art software and other gadgets installed to monitor any possible reaction and take preemptive measures. More than six Chinese experts and engineers concerned were on board the bus. The BRT service was suspended on recommendations of the bus manufacturing company. The experts from the bus company were taking a review of the buses round the clock. The spokesman said adding after complete inspection of the buses, the BRT service would be restarted.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-experts-take-detailed-visit-of-brt-route/>

CPEC creates opportunities for Chinese food business

People associated with the hotel industry believe that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor significantly created huge opportunities benefitting the commercial entities on both sides of the border.

With the launching of CPEC in 2013, the visibility of the Chinese in public spaces has increased in the main cities of Pakistan. “I have been running Kim Mun restaurant for over 20 years, back then we only had 8 tables but due to support from the local people and love for Chinese food, now we were able to expand it, said Zhang Guo Gen, the restaurant’s owner while talking to China Economic Net (CEN). The restaurant in downtown of the federal capital is reopened and backed to business since the Covid-19 lockdown was eased by the government. Then asked about the response from local people being a Chinese in Pakistan, Zhang replied cheerfully “We have been living here as Pakistani for the past 30 years. Pakistani people are really friendly and welcoming, they never make you feel like an outsider.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-creates-opportunities-for-chinese-food-business/>

CPEC & Caravans of Socio-economic Prosperity

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

THE China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the “symbol” of immense “socio-economic” prosperity. It is indeed a “platform” of prosperity, economic stability, sustainability, industrial progression and systemic “persuasion” of social development, capacity building in health, education and housing sectors. The CPEC has become a “magnetic” force to eradicate poverty, generate new jobs, remove shadows of darkness by installing more and more energy projects (thermal, coal, hydro, nuclear) in the country, height of infrastructural development by developing vast interconnected network of roads, super highways, motorways and tunnels and above all “hope” for economic revival especially after COVID-19.

The CPEC has gained tremendous “momentum” because of trustworthy political willingness of both the countries wherein main stakeholders and organs of the states are also playing substantial role in its further “consolidation”, “advancement” and “development”. In this regard, the outgoing Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) Yao Jing to Pakistan played a “remarkable” role. Due to his “superior” diplomatic skills he succeeded to overcome various “hardships” in the development of the CPEC. He simultaneously outreached policy makers and rulers alike to rebut western propoganda against the “strategic” importance and “optimal utility” of the CPEC. He arranged unlimited consensus media’s campaigns to remove self-defined and self-inserted elements of confusion and doubt about transparency and financial viability of the CPEC.

He held press briefings on a regular basis to disseminate socio-economic dividends, associated with the CPEC to Pakistani audiences. He persuaded a “holistic” approach to project the unlimited benefits of the CPEC to policy makers, businessmen, investors, academia and even people of Pakistan and successfully “shackled” secret axis between international “schemers” and local “spoilors” against the CPEC. Mr. Jing worked tirelessly to achieve harmony among different political parties and pressure groups alike about the actuality and operationalization of the CPEC. He promoted spirit of trust, cooperation, corporation, coordination, accommodation and above all hope between the two states and among different stakeholders.

During his tenure he further consolidated bilateral Pak-China relations in terms of public-private partnership, high inflows of FDIs, joint ventures, economic free zones, development of seaports, infrastructural development, high education cooperation, science and technology, military liaison and especially focus on promoting economic diplomacy and ensuring smooth working of CPEC. Ambassador Yao Jing served in Pakistan thrice in various capacities and in aggregate stayed in Islamabad for eleven years. He has now completed his three years ambassadorial term in Pakistan which he termed a noble mission but caravans of socio-economic prosperity, mutual trust and befitting propositions will never stop because it is not an “end” but “beginning” of new “era” of greater friendship, trust, respect and development. In his departing message to the people of Pakistan he wished prosper and stable Pakistan. Mr. Jing was the facilitator in the initiation and implementation of the 2nd phase of the CPEC in the country. He achieved splendid progress in the success of the CPEC by signing the 2nd phase of China, Pakistan Free Trade agreement.

The outgoing Ambassador Mr. Yao Jing extended immense humanitarian assistance to the government of Pakistan and its people struggling against onslaught of the deadly virus COVID-19 by providing medicines, medical kits, masks, doctors, nurses and paramedical staff. Moreover, he extended Chinese expertise to fight against severe attack of locust in Pakistan due to which fields, crops and farmers of Pakistan are now well protected. During his stay he supported Pakistan’s principled stance on Kashmir, Afghanistan and appreciated its strong resolve against terrorism. While leaving Pakistan, he showed his confidence that the Sino-Pak relations will be further consolidated and the CPEC projects will be fate and game changer by contributing to the well-being of the people and media would play the role of frontline soldier against all malicious propaganda against CPEC. The outgoing Chinese Ambassador Mr. Yao Jing was a true friend of Pakistan.

Caravans of socio-economic prosperity is unstoppable and have already embarked on “infinite” voyage of further strengthening of Sino-Pak bilateral relations, greater socio-economic integration, regional connectivity, trustworthy political consultation, people-to-people contacts and above all massive industrialization and energy generation. The Government of People’s Republic of China (PRC) has now appointed H.E. Nong Rong, Head of Ethnic Affairs Commission of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region as the new envoy of China in Pakistan. Mr. Rong is currently a minister in a provincial government. He has diversified but integrated rich expertise in trade and commerce. Unlike the outgoing Ambassador, he did not serve in Pakistan before the appointment. He joined the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) in January 1987, started work in July 1991, holding a Master Degree in business administration, senior management and international business.

He has served in the Government in various capacities including foreign trade and economic cooperation, ASEAN-business, City Mayor and Hong Kong, Macao & Taiwan regions. During his dynamic career he assumed the post of Secretary of the Party Committee of the Ethnic Minority Language Working Committee of the Autonomous Region and Vice Minister of the

United Front Work Department of the Autonomous Region Party Committee in December 2019 which shows elements of versatility, velocity and diversified expertise of newly appointed Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan which would be used for the further strengthening of Sino-Pak bilateral relations in the days to come. In January 2020, he worked in the slot of Director of the Ethnic Minority Language Working Committee of the Autonomous Region. He remained deputy to the 13th National People's Congress and member of the 11th Party Committee of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Since ancient times, China has been a “staunch” supporter of cultural and people diplomacy to remove barriers. The appointment of new Chinese Ambassador Mr. H.E. Nong Rong, a non-career diplomat, should also be seen in this context. Being a prominent regional expert on CPEC & BRI, I really appreciate Chinese deep insight to appoint an expert of trade and commerce as new Ambassador to Pakistan, who would be an ideal choice to gear-up the CPEC Phase- II projects in Pakistan with zeal. He has vast experience of trade and commerce promotion, senior management, political decision-making, people's diplomacy, human survival, productive channels, cultural fusion, economic development and last but not the least, commercial diplomacy which would be a valuation-addition to implement the CPEC Phase-II projects in Pakistan in the days to come. I personally believe that the new Ambassador will speed up work on the CPEC Phase-II projects. China and Pakistan are committed to turning CPEC as a role model of BRI for the rest of the world to be followed. Designated Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Nong Rong has the requisite and relevant expertise.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-caravans-of-socio-economic-prosperity/>

CPEC & Coastal Tourism

Reema Shaukat

PAKISTAN is a blessed country with a variety of seasons. For sure its geographical location is an added advantage because of the fact that in the same country there are mountains, plateaus, deserts and diverse landscapes. Our country's each province has its own identity and beauty and one of the nations in the world which is blessed simultaneously with sea, deserts, mountains, glaciers and lush grasslands. Generally speaking, people in Pakistan prefer going to northern areas to enjoy the serenity and favorable desired weather as those areas have better roads to travel and rest areas are often available within a few kilometers.

People prefer going outside the country to enjoy the splendor of sea and beaches but what they ignore is that their own country has more than 1000 kilometers long coastline along Arabian Sea which has some exceptional places to travel. In Sindh, Karachi has tourist places like Sandspit, Hawks Bay, French beach and a recently discovered island too but places in Karachi require immediate attention to get rid of the pollution factor. Starting from the East, Creeks area has one of the biggest mangrove jungles which help protect shorelines from damaging storm and hurricane winds, waves and floods. Mangroves also help prevent erosion by stabilizing sediments with their tangled root systems. They maintain water quality and clarity, filter

pollutants and trap sediments originating from land. Moving to the West while travelling on coastal highway one finds some amazing places like Gaddani which is Pakistan's largest ship breaking yard. Then we find Sonmiani and Kund Malir with beautiful sparkling waters. Ormara is another beautiful place on which a lot of development is made by Pakistan Navy and the Cadet College located there is providing knowledge par excellence to the students especially from Baluchistan. Apart from this, development at Ormara has helped people in getting better health facilities and if tourist destinations are developed, locals in this area can benefit a lot from this travel sector by having job opportunities. Baluchistan's coastal line has areas like Pasni, Khor Kalamat, Astola Island, Gwadar, Ganz, Daran and Jiwani where one can find crystal clear water, virgin beaches, excellent quality of sea-food and untapped spots having great potential for maritime sector and coastal tourism.

Tourism is considered as the most influential aspect in any country's financial plan which can give an immense boost to the economy. It is considered as the second largest industry in the world with whom several big and small industries are connected. According to World Travel and Tourism Council's Global Data, in 2019 the global economy grew by 2.5%, whereas the travel and tourism sector grew significantly more at 3.5% and one in four net new jobs were created by the travel and tourism industry over the last five years. In Pakistan, the contribution of tourism to GDP is 5.9% and in the year 2019, tourism witnessed 4.7% rise in it. However, in the year 2020, this industry has suffered temporary setback because of Covid-19. According to UN statistics, international tourist arrivals plunged 93% in June when compared to 2019, with the latest data from the World Tourism Organization showing the severe impact COVID-19 has had on the sector. According to the new issue of the World Tourism Barometer from the United Nations specialized agency, international tourist arrivals dropped by 65% during the first half of the year 2020. This represents an unprecedented decrease, as countries around the world closed their borders and introduced travel restrictions in response to the pandemic. Hopefully, once the impact of the virus is down, economic activities will be generated again.

An estimated coastal tourism worldwide is more than 183 billion dollars whereas the statistics show the estimated potential of coastal tourism in Pakistan amounts around \$4-5 billion. However, Pakistan hardly generates around \$50,000 from this industry. According to one of surveys by Maritime Study Forum – an Islamabad-based think tank, around 70% of the participants showed interest in coastal tourism but most of them either have never experienced travelling along coastline nor have seen sea or beach other than Karachi. Tourism and recreation in the coastal areas of Pakistan is largely limited to beaches along the Karachi coast and a few beaches along the Baluchistan coast such as Gaddani and Kund Malir. However, tremendous potential for recreation and nature-based tourism exists in the Indus Delta and along the Baluchistan coast at Churna and Astola islands, Jiwani and Hingol areas like Buzy pass, Hindu Temple at Hanglaj and Mud Volcano Chandar Gup. Hingol National Park is considered as the largest migratory birds' park and sanctuary for many endangered species of wildlife. Some beaches at Astola and Daran along Makran coast are nesting sites of green and olive colored sea turtles which lay their eggs on these beaches during July-December. Gwadar Bay is another

important area for marine fisheries and other marine animals including whales, dolphins, sea turtles, migratory birds and mangroves.

To develop Pakistan's coastal line, one can take the model of the UAE, Cyprus, Sri Lanka or any other coastal country which has focused more on the development of tourist resorts, fishing activities, sea-cruise rides, scuba-diving activities and highlighting culture of respective coastal communities. Likewise, Pakistan needs to invest in the development of local coastal communities in order to promote tourism in the region. The local culture of coastal communities can act as a great incentive to attract tourists towards this part of the country. It will also help protect marine environment across the coast. A concrete tourism infrastructure is needed which addresses challenges attached to coastal tourism in Pakistan like security, harvesting of mangroves, coastal pollution, solid waste and harbor pollution management, fresh water scarcity, sea intrusion and preservation of marine life and unique species while boating and fishing, considering the importance of coral reefs having precious flora and fauna and sustainable development which protects coastal ecosystem and environment.

With the initiation of CPEC and Gwadar as its hub, a lot of tourism opportunities also unfold for adjoining areas once developed. CPEC entails socio-economic development in Pakistan and considering the potential which lies in Blue Economy, Pakistan may start from projects related to consumption of tidal and wind energy in power sector, desalination of water, resorts at beaches, ship building, fisheries and other developmental projects as CPEC provides openings of road networks from its port cities and Pakistan can benefit a lot by upgrading its coastal areas. A robust strategy is needed to avert the sea-blindness aspect in Pakistan. Formation of coastal authority in Pakistan can lead from the front by providing a platform for research and addressing challenges vis-à-vis Pakistan's coastal tourism.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-coastal-tourism/>

The Express Tribune

Pakistan, China committed to completing second phase of CPEC at the earliest: FM Qureshi

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday said Pakistan and China are committed to completing all projects in the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at the earliest.

Talking to Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing, the foreign minister said this understanding came during his meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Moscow.

"The long-lasting friendship of Pakistan and China has become an example in the world," he said.

The foreign minister lauded the Chinese ambassador's services to strengthen the relationship between the neighboring countries and was hopeful that the new ambassador would continue to work with the same commitment.

Qureshi also congratulated Yao Jing for receiving the Hilal-e-Pakistan award in recognition of his efforts for further strengthening Pakistan-China relationship in diverse fields.

Jing thanked the foreign minister for his cooperation during his stay in the country.

Earlier, Prime Minister Imran Khan emphasized that the CPEC project would be completed under any circumstances as the project was a guarantee for the bright future of Pakistan.

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

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2265269/pakistan-china-committed-to-completing-second-phase-of-cpec-at-the-earliest-fm-qureshi>

September 24, 2020

Business Recorder

Poverty reduction

Sub-committee to scrutinize projects under \$1bn China grant

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Chairman Sher Ali Arbab has constituted a sub-committee to scrutinize the socioeconomic development projects under \$1 billion grant by China to launch pilot projects in the country to reduce poverty.

The committee met with MNA Sher Ali Arbab in the chair at the Parliament House on Wednesday. The members of the Parliamentary Committee on the CPEC also expressed their resentment over the absence of the secretary Railways in the meeting.

The committee directed to ensure his (secretary)'s presence in next meeting, which would be held today (Thursday).

Chairman Parliamentary Committee on the CPEC Sher Ali Arbab told Business Recorder that the Committee members expressed their annoyance on the absence of the secretary Railway.

However, the Committee chairman said that the secretary Railway submitted written apology on the absence.

Sher Ali Arbab said that the sub-committee to scrutinize the Socio-Economic Development Projects under \$1 billion grant by the Chinese government to launch pilot projects in the selective districts of the country to reduce poverty.

He said that the Sub-Committee comprising Mehnaz Akber Aziz, Raza Rabbani Khar, Zahid Akram Durrani and Noor Alam Khan as its convener.

He said that majority of the pilot projects were to be completed in one to two years.

He said that the Sub-Committee would seek update on the projects.

He said that the Sub-Committee would discuss the development on the projects and submit its report.

Chairman Parliamentary Committee on CPEC Sher Ali Arbab said that the agenda item on ML-1 project was deferred, and it would be taken up in the meeting scheduled for today (Thursday).

He said that the Ministry of Railways was directed to come up with a comparative study of the original PC-1 and the revised one having details of financial action plan with timelines.

He said that a draft of the CPEC Authority Bill, 2020, could not be discussed because the Ministry of Planning had referred it for vetting.

However, he said that the Ministry told the Committee that there was no role of the CPEC Authority in the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting.

According to the sources, the federal government is set to delegate more and some unprecedented administrative, financial and punitive powers to the CPEC Authority.

The government had established the CPEC Authority through an ordinance in October 2019, before the visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to Beijing.

Opposition parties, including the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have already rejected the CPEC Authority, and termed it a violation of recommendations of the parliamentary committee concerned.

The meeting was attended by Noor Alam Khan, Sadaqat Ali Khan Abbasi, Mir Khan Muhammad Jamali, Nafeesa Inayatullah Khan Khattak, Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhry, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Mehnaz Akber Aziz, Zahid Akram Durrani, and Senator Khushbakht Shujat.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/24/1-page/852627-news.html>

Daily Times

SEZ will boost industrialization

S M Hali

The establishment of the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) at Rashakai under the aegis of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will boost industrialization and create more jobs in Pakistan. On September 14, Chinese enterprises signed the Development Agreement of Rashakai SEZ with Pakistan, which is the first SEZ development agreement signed between China and Pakistan under the framework of CPEC, to which both governments attach great importance.

The signing of the agreement means that the project will soon enter the substantive construction stage, which is believed to play an important demonstration and leading role in industrial cooperation between the two countries, boost the high-quality development of CPEC and strengthen the internal driving force of Pakistan's economic development.

According to the Board of Investment (BOI), the Rashakai SEZ, also known as the REZ will pave the way for the establishment of new zones, which will lead to a prosperous and industrial Pakistan. Besides the REZ, which is located in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, other SEZs being established under the CPEC, include the China Special Economic Zone Dhabeji at Thatta, in the province of Sindh; Bostan Industrial Zone in the Province of Balochistan; Allama Iqbal Industrial City (M3), Faisalabad in Punjab; ICT Model Industrial Zone, Islamabad; Development of Industrial Park on Pakistan Steel Mills Land at Port Qasim near Karachi; Special Economic Zone at Mirpur, Azad Jammu Kashmir; Mohmand Marble City in former FATA and the Moqpondass SEZ at Gilgit-Baltistan.

The BOI informs that while the various zones are being prepared for business, REZ is gearing up to handle Fruit and Food processing and Packaging along with Textile Stitching and Knitting. Dhabeji project is working on the feasibility of industries to be included. Bostan Industrial zone will comprise Fruit Processing, Agriculture machinery, Pharmaceutical, Motor Bikes Assembly, Chromite, Cooking Oil, Ceramic industries, Ice and Cold storage, Electric Appliance and Halal Food Industry. The Allama Iqbal Industrial City, which has been planned as the largest SEZ, will include the industries comprising Textile, Steel, Pharmaceuticals, Engineering, Chemicals. Food Processing, Plastics and Agriculture Implements. The Islamabad Capital Territory Industrial Zone will provide for the industries pertaining to Steel, Food Processing, Pharmaceutical & Chemicals, Printing and Packaging and Light Engineering. The Industrial Park at Port Qasim will house facilities to support Steel, Auto & allied, Pharma, Chemical, Printing and Packaging and Garments industries. The SEZ at Mirpur will have a mixed bag of industries, the details of which are being worked out while Mohmand Marble City will cater to the marble industry. The Moqpondass SEZ at Gilgit-Baltistan will address the industries of Marble, Granite, Iron Ore Processing, Fruit Processing, Steel, Mineral Processing Units and Leather.

The geographical proximity between Pakistan and China will help in populating SEZs as well as contribute to mutual economic gains. For the REZ, at least Rs3 billion have been allocated to provide 210 MW of electricity and 30 million cubic feet per day (mmcfd) gas. The timely construction and development of the zone will be possible with the provision of all the basic facilities required as the REZ is being constructed with the help of an investment worth Rs128 million, covering an area of 1,000 acres. The REZ was designated as a special economic zone in August 2019 and portends prosperity for the region.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/670446/sez-will-boost-industrialization/>

Pakistan Observer

Pak, China to complete second phase of CPEC: Qureshi Lauds Yao's services to strengthening bilateral ties

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday said Pakistan and China are committed to completing all projects in the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at the earliest. Talking to Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing, the foreign minister said this understanding came during his meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Moscow. "The long-lasting friendship of Pakistan and China has become an example in the world," he said. The foreign minister lauded the Chinese ambassador's services to strengthen the relationship between the neighboring countries and was hopeful that the new ambassador would continue to work with the same commitment. Qureshi also congratulated Yao Jing for receiving the Hilal-e-Pakistan award in recognition of his efforts for further strengthening Pakistan-China relationship in diverse fields. Jing thanked the foreign minister for his cooperation during his stay in the country.

<https://pakobserver.net/pak-china-to-complete-second-phase-of-cpec-qureshi-lauds-yaos-services-to-strengthening-bilateral-ties/>

China to spend four trillion dollars on Belt and Road initiative: Zahid

President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday expressed apprehension that coronavirus can kill globalization.

After the 2008 global financial crisis the US-China trade war has shaken the foundations of globalization and the pandemic may be the last nail in the coffin of free-market mantra, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the concept is getting unpopular among people, US is not ready to play its due role due to financial difficulties, other nations are not well-placed while China is ready to go to any extent to safeguard its interests which can shatter globalization. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that many countries have lifted or eased lockdown triggering economic activities but the movement of goods, services, immigrants, capital, services and flow of information may never gain pre-pandemic levels contracting global economy.

He said that the US is discouraging overseas investment and migration while it is pressurizing companies to shift their manufacturing back to the US so that the maximum number of Americans can get jobs. He said that China will spend four trillion dollars on Belt and Road initiative (BRI) which has been accepted by 138 countries. Pakistan's government, policymakers and business community should try to get maximum benefit from the opportunities arising from the Chinese move and adjust to the international market.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-to-spend-four-trillion-dollars-on-belt-and-road-initiative-zahid/>

The Nation

Promotion of maritime sector vital to fully benefit from CPEC: Naval Chief

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi says promotion of maritime sector is vital to fully benefit from China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), reported by Radio Pakistan.

In a message on the occasion of World Maritimes Day, today, he said the government has declared this year as Blue Economy Year which is a good step.

The Naval Chief said increasing pollution besides traditional challenges is a serious issue and there is a need of collective efforts by all coastal countries to cope these problems.

He said Pakistan Navy has taken various steps including cleanliness of ports, prevention of oil spill and plantation of mangroves in coastal areas.

Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi reiterated to extend full cooperation for promotion of ship industry and development of maritime sector.

<https://nation.com.pk/24-Sep-2020/promotion-of-maritime-sector-vital-to-fully-benefit-from-cpec-naval-chief>

The News

Senior official cuts sorry figure, takes backseat in CPEC MPs body

ISLAMABAD: A senior official (not the chairman) of the China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC) authority cut a sorry figure and had to take a backseat on Wednesday at a meeting of the CPEC parliamentary committee when members objected to his formal participation in the deliberations due to the lapse of the CPEC authority ordinance.

“We pointed out that the official’s presence in the session is illegal because the CPEC authority ordinance does not exist anymore. We asked him to go to the back seats if he wants to observe the proceedings of the parliamentary panel,” former Speaker and senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, who is a member of the forum, told The News.

According to Sadiq, when the official was asked whether he is getting a monthly salary for being associated with the CPEC authority, he replied in the negative. He was told that since the CPEC ordinance has expired and the government has not extended it or got it passed by parliament, his presence in the formal proceedings of the panel is unlawful.

Ayaz Sadiq said anybody can take part in the proceedings of parliamentary committees if he or she is called, otherwise they cannot do so. Others can observe the proceedings.

Another participant said that it was planned to lay before the committee the CPEC authority bill, but it was not done. He said some committee members asked the government side to produce the bill so that they could discuss and review it.

He remarked that while the committee was in favor of CPEC, which they believed was highly beneficial for Pakistan, they emphasized that rules would have to be followed.

Ayaz Sadiq presented the draft of a bill but said he was unaware of whether it was a genuine bill or the same bill that the government wanted to present before the committee. He said that the government should produce the bill before the forum so that it could take a decision on it.

It was demanded that parliament and the 21-member bipartisan CPEC committee, comprising representatives from the National Assembly and Senate, should have oversight over the CPEC authority. Participants said it was not clear so far whether the authority would be under the Planning Division or would be an independent body answerable to the prime minister. They said a lot of points are yet to be clarified.

Participants said they were eager to know which government departments would play what roles in the CPEC authority. That was a key issue as those departments would supervise the game-changer project involving billions of dollars.

After the lapse of its initial four-month constitutional life, the CPEC authority ordinance was extended in January this year for another 120 days.

A day before Prime Minister Imran Khan left for China in October last year, the government promulgated the CPEC authority ordinance to expedite projects related to the multi-billion dollar road and rail network that links China to the Arabian Sea through Pakistan. It was meant to give a message to China that Pakistan was serious and has put in place a legal mechanism for CPEC. However, the ordinance lapsed as it was not passed by parliament. Under the Constitution, an ordinance can be extended only once.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/719383-senior-official-cuts-sorry-figure-takes-backseat-in-cpec-mps-body>

September 25, 2020

Business Recorder

No progress made in CPEC agriculture sector

ISLAMABAD: There has been no progress on the development of agriculture sector under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), it is learnt. CPEC project director Dr Liaqat Ali Shah told Business Recorder that an action plan is being prepared for agriculture sector. He said that areas for agriculture sector would be defined in action plan under CEPC.

Answering a question, Dr Liaqat said the Ministry for Planning, Development and Special Incentives did not receive any working paper or PC-I on projects relating to agriculture sector. He said the relevant Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture and provincial ministries would prepare a working paper and PC-I of projects to be submitted to Ministry of Planning.

An in-camera meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on CPEC was held on Thursday and agriculture sector was its first agenda item but it could not be taken up due to unavailability of CPEC Authority chairman Lt-Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa (retd).

When contacted, chairman Parliamentary Committee on CPEC told Business Recorder that agriculture was part of the agenda of the meeting but it was deferred due to previous engagement of Asim Saleem Bajwa with the Punjab CM.

According to sources, a joint-working group on agriculture sector was established almost two years ago but only two meetings of the group took place during this period - the second held in April 2020. They said that a joint-working group was established for development of seed, drip-irrigation, fruits and vegetables as well as meat industry. CPEC project director Dr Liaqat Ali Shah said that a Joint-Working Group on agriculture sector was formed informally in November 2019. However, he said that its notification was issued in April 2020.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/25/5-page/852776-news.html>

Daily Times

Buzdar, Bajwa agree to speed up work on CPEC projects

Chairman CPEC Authority Lt Gen (r) Asim Saleem Bajwa called on Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar at his office and discussed progress made on CPEC projects in the province. Both agreed to expedite work on CPEC projects and decided to give a priority focus to agri research along with the need for introducing new seeds for improving crops productivity.

Talking on the occasion, the CM expressed the satisfaction that work is being carried out on CPEC projects on a priority basis. The completion of CPEC projects will help improve the economy, he maintained. CPEC projects situated in Punjab are being completed with speed and transparently, he added.

The CM told that the test-run of the orange line metro train has been completed and it has been planned to operationalize it by the end of the next month. The Punjab Mass transit Authority has been issued instructions and tree transplantation and beautification of the route is being done as well, he said.

Chairman CPEC Authority stated the CPEC projects are being completed speedily as CPEC is vital for the country. The situation of CPEC projects is satisfactory in Punjab and the province also has a lot of potential in the agriculture sector, he added.

Meanwhile, provincial Higher Education Minister Raja Yasir Humayun and Sardar Aftab Khan MPA called on Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar at his office and apprised him about the initiatives taken for the promotion of higher education.

The CM expressed the satisfaction that solid steps have been taken for the promotion of higher education and vowed that a university will be set up in every district. The people will be provided with opportunities to access quality higher education near to their homes, he added. It is

satisfying that new universities are being established and the higher education system is synchronized with the needs and requirements of the modern era, he said.

The CM regretted that the education system was used for personal projection in the past and no attention was paid to providing higher education opportunities to remote hinterlands. It is sanguine that the incumbent government has opened the doors of higher education to the students of backward and neglected areas by opening new higher education institutions there; concluded the CM.

Separately, Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar chaired a meeting at 90-SQA in which he was briefed about the progress made on the annual development programme 2020-21.

The CM directed timely utilization of development funds adding the speed of work should be accelerated on development projects and ongoing schemes be completed on a priority basis. He said that separate funds have been allocated for south Punjab and its ADP will also be evolved separately. The funds reserved for south Punjab will not be transferred to anywhere else, he added. The land has been allocated for the establishment of south Punjab secretariat with an amount of Rs 4 billion, he added.

Provincial Finance Minister Hashim Jawan Bakht, Chief Secretary, Chairman and Secretary P&D, Secretary Finance and others attended the meeting.

Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar has sought a report from RPO Faisalabad about an incident of girl's molestation in Chiniot. Meanwhile, the police have registered a case and three nominated accused have been arrested.

Upon the notice of Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar, the Kasur police have arrested Akram and Sufiyan involved in the murder of 5 persons in Chunian while raids are being conducted to arrest the rest of the criminals.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/670581/buzdar-bajwa-agree-to-speed-up-work-on-cpec-projects/>

The Express Tribune

Pakistan seeks Chinese help in human capital development, innovation

The government has given the go-ahead to the Information Technology and Telecommunication Division that is going to sign a strategic cooperation framework with the Chinese IT ministry for the promotion and advancement of information and communication technology (ICT).

Sources told The Express Tribune that in order to turn true the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan for ICT progress, the federal IT minister in a meeting with the Chinese ambassador requested for looking into avenues of human capital development, research and innovation for meeting the evolving demand from domestic and regional markets.

The minister said the IT ministry had made necessary efforts and developed a strategic cooperation framework, which was shared with the Chinese envoy through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Afterwards, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shared a draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) received from the Chinese embassy and said Beijing had proposed to sign the document. Views were also sought on the proposed MoU from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Law and Justice. The former had no objection to the inking of the MoU whereas the latter vetted the draft from the legal point of view.

The Cabinet Division revealed in a recent meeting that a relevant summary had been sent to 28 federal ministers for recording their opinion and subsequent return to the Cabinet Division. Seventeen members of the cabinet endorsed the proposal of the IT Division, replies from nine were not received within the stipulated time whereas two ministers - the communications minister and the planning, development and special initiatives minister - made the following observations:

Communication Minister Murad Saeed said the matter should be taken up in the cabinet whereas Planning Minister Asad Umar pointed out that it was an important proposal but required consultation did not seem to have been carried out by the sponsoring ministry. A summary in that regard may be discussed in a cabinet meeting, Umar said. The summary was subsequently sent for approval to the prime minister, who gave directives for presenting the case to the cabinet.

The IT Division placed the summary titled “Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of China and the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication of Pakistan for Cooperation in Information and Communications Technology” before the cabinet for discussion and its approval.

During deliberations, Asad Umar asked about the reasons for bypassing the joint working group and the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It was clarified that apart from cooperation with Beijing under CPEC project, ministries were engaging with their Chinese counterparts separately as well.

The signing of a G2G MoU was part of efforts to ramp up cooperation in the field of ICT, the cabinet was told. The cabinet reviewed and approved the summary.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2265494/pakistan-seeks-chinese-help-in-human-capital-development-innovation>

The Nation

OLMT to be operational by end of next month

Chairman CPEC Authority Lt Gen (retired) Asim Saleem Bajwa called on Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar at his office the other day and discussed progress made on CPEC projects in the province.

Both also agreed to expedite work on CPEC projects and decided to give a priority focus to agriculture research with a view to introducing new seeds for improving the crops productivity.

Asim Bajwa said that the Punjab province had a lot of potential in the agriculture sector. On this occasion, the chief minister expressed his satisfaction that CPEC projects in Punjab were being executed transparently with great speed. The completion of CPEC projects will help improve the economy, he maintained.

Chairman CPEC Authority stated the CPEC projects were being completed speedily as CPEC was vital for the country. The situation of CPEC projects is satisfactory in Punjab, he said.

They also discussed issues relating to the Orange Line Train. Usman Buzdar told Asim Saleem that the test-run of the Orange Line Metro Train had been completed and it had been planned to operationalize it by the end of the next month. The Punjab Mass Transit Authority has been issued instructions and tree plantation and beautification of the route is being done as well, he said.

<https://nation.com.pk/25-Sep-2020/olmt-to-be-operational-by-end-of-next-month>

CPEC Committee suggests electric locomotives in ml-1 project

Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Thursday directed to look into the option of electric locomotives instead of diesel in ML-I project and Peshawar to Torkham Railway line may be made part of this project because it will enhance connectivity up to Central Asian States.

The Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that met under the Chairmanship of Sher Ali Arbab, MNA was briefed by Board of Investment, Power and Petroleum Divisions regarding provision of Gas and Electricity to three early Harvest Economic Zones-Rashakai, M-3 Industrial Estate Faisalabad and Dhabeji, Sindh.

Secretary, Railways also briefed the Committee on the scope of project ML-1. Its approved cost is US\$ 6.806 billion. This project has been sub-divided into three packages and completion period is 8.5 years. It includes upgradation and doubling of main line-1 (ML-1) from Karachi to Peshawar (1733 KM) and Havelian Dry Port, rehabilitation and construction of bridges, provision of modern signaling and telecom systems and conversion of level crossings into underpasses/flyovers. Establishment of Dry Port near Havelian and up-gradation of Walton Training Academy are components of this project. The Committee directed the Ministry to look into the option of electric locomotives instead of diesel because modern Railway systems in the

world have switched over to electric engines for their high speed and being environment friendly. Peshawar to Torkham Railway line may be made part of this project because it will enhance connectivity upto Central Asian States.

The Chairman directed the concerned Ministries to resolve this issue at the earliest because success of CPEC depends heavily on industrialization in these Economic Zones. If these areas lack basic services for establishing industries, we will not be able to woo the business community to come and invest. Management of these SEZs was directed to sit with the concerned by today and sort out the issues and submit the timelines to this Secretariat by the next week. The default on timelines would not be tolerated anymore. The Committee taking cognizance of the issues remarked if any legislation is needed to remove the bottlenecks this option could be exercised to make CPEC a success story. Board of Investment was directed to consult with FBR for implementation of same tax regime as envisaged in the SEZs Act.

The meeting was attended by Noor Alam Khan, Sadaqat Ali Khan Abbasi, Mr. Umar Aslam Khan, Nafeesa Inayatullah Khan Khattak, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Mehnaz Akber Aziz, Raza Rabani Khar, and Zahid Akram Durrani.

<https://nation.com.pk/25-Sep-2020/cpec-committee-suggests-electric-locomotives-in-ml-1-project>

CPEC to bring economic prosperity

Adviser to Punjab government Dr Salman Shah on Thursday said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will develop geographical linkages to promote regional connectivity and economic activities. He said, in time completion of CPEC was imperative for regional economic development, Radio Pakistan reported. It opens up the entire region for investment which will bring a positive economic impact and it was the high time to take advantage of this great economic opportunity, he added. He said the positive involvement of India in CPEC will improve bilateral ties between Pakistan and India.

<https://nation.com.pk/25-Sep-2020/cpec-to-bring-economic-prosperity>

The News

CPEC to improve economy: Buzdar

LAHORE: Chairman CPEC Authority Lt-Gen (Retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa called on Chief Minister Usman Buzdar at his office and discussed progress made on CPEC projects in the province. Both agreed to expedite work on CPEC projects and decided to give a priority focus to agri research along with the need for introducing new seeds for improving crops productivity.

Speaking on the occasion, the CM expressed satisfaction that work is being carried out on CPEC projects on priority. The completion of CPEC projects will help improve the economy, he maintained.

CPEC projects situated in Punjab are being completed with speed and transparently, he added.

The CM said the test-run of the orange line metro train has been completed and it has been planned to Operationalize it by the end of the next month. The Punjab Mass transit Authority has been issued instructions and tree transplantation and beautification of the route is being done as well, he said.

Chairman CPEC Authority said the CPEC projects are being completed speedily as CPEC is vital for the country. The situation of CPEC projects is satisfactory in Punjab and the province also has a lot of potential in the agriculture sector, he added.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/719882-cpec-to-improve-economy-buzdar>

September 26, 2020

Daily Times

Pakistan-Sichuan Chamber of Commerce set up in Chengdu, China

Pakistan-Sichuan Chamber of Commerce was established in Chengdu, China to promote bilateral trade and open avenues of socio-economic partnership.

It's inaugural meeting was held in Chengdu on Friday. According to Gwadar Pro, the PSCC was initiated by Sichuan enterprises invested in Pakistan.

The chamber has been approved by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and supported by The China Department of Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It set up a secretariat in Islamabad and a representative office in Chengdu, China.

The PSCC will provide both Pakistani and Chinese enterprises a platform for resource sharing, service convergence, project alignment and advantage display.

Mudassir Tipu, the director general (China), the former Consul General of Pakistan in Chengdu, and the speaker at the World Economic Forum, delivered a speech at the meeting that CPEC is fruitful and the friendship between the two countries is unbreakable.

In the future, Southwest China, represented by Sichuan Province, will play an important role in the CPEC. "Sichuan province, in fact, the southwest of China is critically important region for Pakistan and CPEC," Tipu said, "a lot of economic opportunities are being created between the southwest of China and the northeast of Pakistan.

For example, two mega projects have been brought into CPEC in this region, Azad Pattan Project and Kohala Power Project." "Including energy projects, a lot of infrastructure projects under CPEC has been completed. Now, CPEC is coming to its second phase which is focused on industrial and socio-economic development.

We have identified nine special economic zones which will attract a lot of investment to Pakistan," he added, "The CPEC Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting to be held in

October or November this year will also be a key element to further deepen bilateral cooperation.”

Tipu believed that Pakistan has already possessed certain ability in industrial and socio-economic field, and the business communities of the two countries should continue to deepen cooperation.

Meanwhile, China Textile Joint Exhibition was held by China National Textile and Apparel Council (CNTAC) in Shanghai National Exhibition and Convention Center (NECC-Shanghai), providing an attractive environment for revival of textile industry, following the outbreak of COVID-19.

Several Pakistani textile enterprises also took part in this event to display products made in Pakistan such as cotton yarn, socks, hats and so on.

According to Gwadar Pro, the China Textile Joint Exhibition, held on September 23th -25th was having four sub-exhibitions, attracted exhibitors from Pakistan, Austria, South Korea, France, Germany, Italy and other countries.

A total of 4,500 exhibitors participated in the joint exhibition, with an exhibition area of 300,000 square meters.

The organizer said that under the premise of ensuring the perfect epidemic prevention measures, the scale of the exhibition was not degraded. “We provide one-to-one negotiation space for exhibitors, and enterprises can also communicate in the booth.”

This joint exhibition provides a platform for exhibitors to negotiate, it also promotes the economic recovery in textile sector. The organizer said that the textile industry has been hit hard by the epidemic.

“As the half-year quarantine at home, consumers have formed the habit of buying textiles online. However, due to the particularity of textile industry, it is difficult for online transactions to let buyers know the texture of the fabric. Therefore, inter-enterprise transactions require a lot of comparison and contact purchase.”

Ather Iqbal, a Pakistani exhibitor said, “we have been working with China for ten years. China’s textile technology is far ahead, the quality of products is excellent, and the prices are reasonable. Meanwhile, the textile market in China is also massive.” “Under CPEC, both Pakistani and Chinese governments have implemented many favorable policies, such as tariffs and trade procedures, which have greatly increased our enthusiasm for cooperation,” he added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/670832/pakistan-sichuan-chamber-of-commerce-set-up-in-chengdu-china/>

CPEC: Gwadar emerging as immense trade, energy-transportation hub, to economise landlocked states

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project intends to build Pakistan's most needed infrastructure and boost its economy by constructing modern transportation networks, setting up of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and numerous energy projects.

Geo-strategically, CPEC project is located between three key important landlocked regions of the globe including economically emerging and rich-resourced Central Asia, oil-rich Western Asia and thickly populated South Asia.

After globalization, digital technology is transforming the world into global-digital-village in the real sense of modern technology usage, and regional integration is a key aspect of this information mechanism.

If make a comparison of Central and South Asia is made, the earlier is rich in oil and gas resources, while the later is a region developing at a rapid pace, and its internal energy resources are insufficient.

Therefore, the construction of physical-infrastructure linkages and increase in trade volume among the Asian regions including West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia and Western China will be mutually beneficial.

In this connection Pakistan's Gwadar deep sea-port has outshined with multi prospects to emerge as regional trade and energy transportation hub. Sources in the Board of Investment (BoI) told APP about the possible profit statistics in the head of toll collection, that if completed till 2030, the CPEC toll income would be three times the budget of Pakistan.

A document of United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) which maintains the Energy Statistics Database reveals that China's annual crude oil imports from OPEC countries during 2019 increased to an average of 10.1 million barrels per day (b/d), which was an increase of 0.9 million b/d as compared to the 2018 average import.

China remains the world's top crude oil importer, surpassing the United States in 2017.

China's new refinery capacity and strategic inventory stockpiling, combined with flat domestic oil production, were the major factors contributing to the increase in China's crude oil imports in 2019. According to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Annual Statistical Bulletin (ASB) estimates, 79.4 percent of the world's proven oil reserves are located in OPEC Member Countries, with the bulk of OPEC oil reserves in the Middle East, amounting to 64.5 percent of the OPEC total. It may be mentioned here that OPEC's proven oil reserves currently stand at 1,189.80 billion barrels.

Lahore Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) president Mian Anjum Nisar told APP that the setting up of economic zones and upgrading the industrial sector would bring industrialisation revolution in the country, adding these mega projects would be set up under the 2nd phase of CPEC. After becoming fully operational Gwadar would become a

harbinger of massive export import activity and a gateway to both the Persian Gulf and Central Asian countries, he noted.

Nisar said that the energy-transportation would engage the economic partnership of around 64 countries in Asia and Europe and the Middle East. CPEC was a hope of the whole region as an advanced future while strengthening a modern economy based on peace and prosperity, he said.

He said that the newly established Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ), under CPEC, would create employment opportunities for the local youth which would further contribute to the socio-economic development of all provinces including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Similarly, any item produced at Rashakai SEZ, being developed in a public-private partnership, would easily be exported to Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs) and adjoining regions due to its proximity to Torkham (Pak-Afghan) Border, he replied to a question.

The sources in the Ministry of Planning and Development informed APP that a network of roads and highways in connection with the CPEC project was being constructed all over the country.

Due to proximity and the accessible connectivity of the newly constructed roads linked with Gwadar would help reach the shipment in a minimum time with a shortest distance cover, they said adding that the shipment and all items from SEZs would easily be exported to the required regions or destinations.

Therefore, this was a great milestone that has been achieved by both Federal and KPK governments, they added. Mohammad Shoaib a local businessman said that China was the second huge economy at the global business forums and markets, and around 50 percent Chinese business and trade activity around the globe was carried out through the South China sea-route.

To ensure its industrial production's consumption China needs a small, secure, and low-cost path to trade with Europe, Middle East and Central Asia, he said. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a feasible solution to meet international minimum time delivery marketing standards.

And of course this project would be having a direct impact on the whole region's economy, in terms of swift trade, transport-cost and travel time, he stressed. President, Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industries (LCCI) Irfan Iqbal Sheikh in a chat with APP said that post COVID-19 situation has significantly affected the global economy and trade patterns, which has absolutely transformed the nature of global business by reshaping international economies.

The European Union has long been exercising the command and control influence on global trade, by running and operating at a very large surplus volume, he added. He noted that China as the world's second largest leading economy was an increasingly relevant competitor of Europe and USA in third markets, particularly in Latin America.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/671051/cpec-gwadar-emerging-as-immense-trade-energy-transportation-hub-to-economise-landlocked-states/>

Dunya News

Amazed with potential to boost scientific research, Industrial productivity:

Asim Bajwa

Chairman China-Pak Economic Corridor Authority (CPEC) and SAPM on Information and broadcasting Asim Saleem Bajwa said that he was amazed to see homework and potential to boost scientific research and Industrial productivity through CPEC collaboration.

According to details, in his tweet on social networking site twitter he said that he had a daylong meeting in Ministry of Science and Technology with Fawad Chaudhry and all affiliated institutions to scrutinise projects under CPEC framework.

He said that he was amazed to see homework and potential to boost scientific research and Industrial productivity through CPEC collaboration.

<http://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/565794-Amazed-with-potential-to-boost-scientific-research-Industrial>

Pakistan Observer

Special envoys of Pakistan, China discuss Afghan peace process

The Special Envoy of China for Afghanistan Affairs, Ambassador Liu Jian on Friday spoke with Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Ambassador Muhammad Sadiq and discussed the latest situation of the Afghan peace process. According to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Sadiq briefed the visiting dignitary on Pakistan's facilitative role in the Afghan peace process.

Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan remarked that start of Intra-Afghan Negotiations was an historic opportunity for the Afghan leadership to achieve an inclusive, broad based and comprehensive political settlement in Afghanistan. He reiterated Pakistan's continued support to Afghan led and Afghan owned intra Afghan negotiations. Ambassador Jian appreciated the important and constructive role Pakistan has played in the Afghan peace process. Both Pakistan and China shared the same objective of a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

<https://pakobserver.net/special-envoys-of-pakistan-china-discuss-afghan-peace-process/>

September 27, 2020

Daily Times

The Digital Silk Road: A Game Changer for Emerging Economies

Muhammad Rafiq

Enhanced connectivity is the primary motive of massive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by China. Since 2013, a bulk of Chinese investments have crowded around physical infrastructure projects under BRI in over 130 countries and involving some 35 international organisations. BRI is a vehicle by which China is restoring the ancient Silk Road through the integration of maritime, port and land transport routes. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is flagship project of BRI. The Digital Silk Road (DSR), on other hand, was introduced in 2015 by National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China, as a sub-goal of BRI. The DSR was, in fact, aimed to strengthen internet infrastructure, deepen space cooperation, develop common technology standards and improve efficiency of policing system among the Belt and Road countries in Asia, Middle East, Europe, Africa and Latin America.

Ever since its launch, the Digital Silk Road has new avenues of technological transformation for emerging economies. Chinese tech investments have the potential to jumpstart digital developments in BRI countries. In June 2020; China has launched BeiDou-2 i.e. Chinese constructed and operated global satellite navigation system consisting of 35 satellites. BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) is required to be commercially used worldwide as an alternative to the Global Positioning System (GPS) of USA. Along with basic positioning, navigation and time services, BDS can provide high precision and high integrity services to the users in civil aviation, maritime, railway and other industries. Already 30 countries including Pakistan, Thailand, Brunei and Laos have adopted BDS.

Then, Chinese Company Huawei Marine had a joint venture with a Pakistani company in 2017 to construct Pak East Africa Cable Express for connecting Pakistan to Kenya and Djibouti. Other projects of Huawei Marine include submarine cable in Indonesia, and Philippines. On the softer side of the Digital Silk Road, China's Alibaba invested \$400 million in Singapore Post, and \$620 million in India's e-commerce players like Snapdeal, Bi Basket and Ticket New etc. to promote e-commerce services.

Under DSR, Smart Port Technology has been developed and applied that connects ports to the global supply chain to optimize transport mode choices. For this digital integration, China created a body like Smart Maritime Council to standardize and harmonize digital space within the maritime sector. Further, China has also established its own technical standards and principles of cyber-sovereignty. Blockchain Services Network (BSN) has also been launched by China to provide a low-cost platform for developing blockchain-based applications along the Digital Silk Road. China's central bank has digital currency plans besides the replacement of

US-dominated communication network SWIFT that facilitates inter-bank funds transfer. After laying out fibre optic network, the DSR now extends network equipment, technology and facilitating software in the form of 5G networks. Huawei 5G cellular network is more advanced and affordable. Its huge success is now prompting China to look for 6G.

However, increasing acceptability of Digital Silk Road among BRI countries has brought forth some criticism also. USA dubs DSR as a risk to international security and attempts to persuade allies to prohibit Chinese corporations from contributing to their critical digital infrastructures. Despite this Australia, New Zealand, Japan, UK and Germany are less willing to completely block Chinese involvement in 5G networks and other digital infrastructures. In another misperception, the DSR is being viewed as “techno-authoritarian” model for countries along the BRI. But, the deployment of facial recognition technology and privacy-invasive infrastructure in emerging market is very much a demand-driven phenomenon. A practice of certain Chinese companies to self-brand as part of the DSR in overseas projects has been identified by the Chinese authorities for proper control. Again, the DSR has also intensified a strategic competition between China and USA that is reflected in global anti-Huawei 5G campaigns and new Indo-Pacific focused Digital Connectivity and Cyber security Partnership (DCCP) by USA.

If certain Western observers emphasize espionage and surveillance risks of China’s Digital Silk Road, the Chinese government stresses the un-met needs of digital connectivity in Global South, from online education in Zambia to smart health in Saudi Arabia. Backed by Chinese government loans in billions of euros, Huawei and its rival ZTE, for instance, built much of Africa’s digital infrastructure including implementation of e-governance, smart education and digital health projects. In 2015 and 2017, after the DSR was announced, Chinese ICT infrastructure financing across the continent surpassed the combined funds from African governments, multilateral agencies, and G7 nations. The landlocked Central Asia too increased its digital connectivity with Chinese-built fibre optic cables.

While financing digital connectivity in the underserved regions, Chinese government is also contributing to the United Nations’ ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Even the UK’s Department for International Development has initiated a study on how the DSR’s potential could spur rural growth, support SMEs, reduce inequality and strengthen democratic participation to the SDGs. Further, the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business is exploring how standards for cross border e-commerce can support DSR.

In nutshell, China’s Digital Silk Road is essentially a game changer that brings abundant economic opportunities for the less developed economies. With steady uptake of the 5G network and access to optic cables, supported by BeiDou navigation systems, the Digital Silk Road is getting increased global acceptance in Asia, Eurasia, Africa, Latin America and with institutions like United Nations. Pakistan should enhance its digital capacity through DSR by looking beyond fibre optics and related infrastructure. We must be attracting Chinese investment in important areas of DSR like big data, nanotechnology, quantum computing, 5G and artificial intelligence.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/671477/the-digital-silk-road-a-game-changer-for-emerging-economies/>

The Express Tribune

Pakistan all set to roll out locally produced medical equipment: Fawad

Federal Minister for Science and Technology Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Sunday announced that Pakistan was on way to achieving import replacement of \$1.4 billion as the government had planned a whole new medical city, while the production of medical equipment as well as electromagnetic instruments was also on the cards.

He maintained that the Ministry of Science and Technology had already signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) – the developing body of Allama Iqbal Special Economic Zone (SEZ) – and a medical city of 200 acres was planned in Faisalabad.

The science minister, while talking to The Express Tribune, said that the whole business would be tax free for 10 years and there would be no customs duty on import of machinery in the SEZ – the only one in Punjab.

He said that two units were being set up in the medical zone with the help of FIEDMC.

Fawad noted that the whole process of importing and setting up of the machinery would take six to eight months and, in the first phase, production of syringes, needles, cannulas, cartridges, wires and cables and cardiac stents will start within the stipulated time.

In the second phase, production of x-ray and dialysis machines will start in Pakistan.

Fawad termed the production of medical equipment at home a revolutionary step, saying local manufacturing of the items would reduce their current cost by roughly 50%.

Quoting an example, he said that 1.5 billion syringes had been imported in the last one year, adding that there will be no dearth of all these items at least in the government hospitals anymore.

“On February 26, when the first case of coronavirus surfaced in Pakistan, we were importers of medical equipment, including ventilators. Now, we are producing 1,150 ventilators every month,” he said.

The minister observed that the replacement of medical equipment had become possible because of the ministry’s efforts.

“We have turned Covid-19 calamity into an opportunity,” he said.

Responding to a question that the pharmaceutical sector was facing bureaucratic hurdles in getting clearance for raw material needed for several lifesaving drugs, Fawad maintained that he had already pushed the Drug Regulatory of Pakistan (Drap) for the purpose and that the matter would be resolved within next six to eight months.

While sharing the news of medical city on social media, Fawad announced that the next medical zone would be established in Sialkot.

In response, Qaumi Awami Tehreek President Ayaz Latif Paliyo tweeted that he was happy that the medical equipment zones were being set up in Faisalabad and Sialkot.

“I wish the federation and the province would create some industrial zones in Sindh in Badin, Dadu, Thar, Sajawal, Larkana, Jacobabad, Khairpur and Kashmore.”

Fawad replied that the science ministry would be more than happy to join hands with the Sindh government to establish science and tech parks, adding that the provincial government needed to allocate land and SEZ framework for the purpose.

“Sindh can immensely benefit by focusing on tech and science,” he said.

Expressing his gratitude towards Fawad, Paliyo said that he was looking forward to a proposed joint venture of federal and provincial government for the establishment of science and tech parks in Sindh.

“Unemployment and poverty in Sindh need special attention,” he tweeted.

On January 3, 2020, Prime Minister Imran Khan had inaugurated the Allama Iqbal Industrial City – the SEZ under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The project aims to involve both foreign and local investors and promote economic activities in the country.

The industrial city is the largest among the SEZs in terms of area as it spreads over 3,217 acres of land.

It comprises several sectors, including textile, pharmaceuticals, information technology, chemicals automotive and service complex, among others.

The industrial city is the largest among the SEZs in terms of area as it spreads over 3,217 acres of land. It comprises of large number of projects, including textile, pharmaceuticals, information technology, chemicals automotive and service complex, among other things.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2265918/pakistan-all-set-to-roll-out-locally-produced-medical-equipment-fawad>

The News

Pak students take online Chinese proficiency test

BEIJING: Sichuan Normal University (SICNU), China held the first online Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK or Chinese Proficiency Test) amid the COVID-19 outbreak for international students to pursue their research dreams.

As per Liu Tianhao, a Pakistani student from SICNU, the Chinese Proficiency Test empowered him to explore China. “Mastering local languages will enrich your experience in foreign

countries,” he told Gwadar Pro. “Each language is beautiful with its history and content, so are Urdu and Chinese,” he added.

According to SICNU, while doing a good job in epidemic prevention and control; they spare no efforts in the normalization of HSK. “We take HSK as an opportunity to vigorously develop international students’ education at all levels, so as to create a new landscape in international Chinese education,” said the source from SICNU.

The candidates of this online HSK are from Pakistan, Austria, Russia, South Korea, Laos, the United States, Japan, Singapore and some other countries, SICNU noted.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/720861-pak-students-take-online-chinese-proficiency-test>

September 28, 2020

Dawn News

Chinese engineers to design Haripur’s Baldhair dry port

HARIPUR: The designing of the proposed Baldhair dry port will be carried out by a team of Chinese engineers by the end of this year, official sources told Dawn here.

They said the Chinese engineers designing the Pakistan Railway’s ML-I project would work out the acres of land required for the project.

The dry port project expected to boost economic activities in the area by creating job opportunities for the locals, is among the projects of the second phase of the multibillion dollar CPEC project. It will be built around the Baldhair railway station in the east of the Haripur city.

According to official documents, Pakistan Railways Advisory and Consultancy Services (PRACS) had in early 2018 conducted the first feasibility of the area, proposing 260 acres of land to be acquired from Baldhair, Bagra No 2, Dobandi and Kholian villages. The rates to be offered to the landowners were worked out by the local revenue authorities. However, the landowners rejected the rates, insisting these were much below the market rates.

The sources said designing of dry port’s building and other infrastructure besides allaying the apprehensions of the landowners were underway when Chinese engineers left for their country in February this year. But, they could not return as scheduled owing to the Covid-19-induced travel restrictions.

According to official sources, the project implementation unit had, following complaints from landowners, decided to revise the project’s design, and proposed that it should be built on the railway’s land.

Moreover, they said railway’s infrastructure specialist of project implementation unit, CPEC, Lahore, Mohammad Shafiq, had on August 11, 2020 written a letter to the director monitoring and evaluation ministry of railways, stating that the project might not be needing land beyond

17.5 acres which was already available with the railways near the Baldhair railway station, and in case the project required any further land it could be acquired from private landowners.

When contacted, Mr. Shafiq confirmed that efforts were afoot to utilize the railway's land for the dry port project.

However, he said the design finalization and acquisition of land would be done in November this year when Chinese engineers working on ML-I project would resume work after restoration of international flights.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1582064/chinese-engineers-to-design-haripurs-baldhair-dry-port>

Nawaiwaqt

چینی کمپنی ایم سی سی نے 17 سالوں میں 10 ہزار کلاسز میں ہزاروں پاکستانیوں کو تربیت دی

اسلام آباد (نوائے وقت رپورٹ) چین کی ایم سی سی ریسورسز ڈویلپمنٹ کمپنی (ایم آر ڈی ایل) پاکستان میں اپنے ملازمین کی فلاح و بہبود اور معاشرتی ترقی کے لئے پرعزم ہے۔ چائنا اکنامک نیٹ کو انٹرویو دیتے ہوئے ایک ایم آر ڈی ایل افسر نے بتایا کہ چین کی میٹرو جولوجیکل کنسٹرکشن کمپنی (ایم سی سی) اپنے ملازمین اور مقامی آبادی کی معاشرتی ترقی کا ایک تاریخی کلچر رکھتی ہے۔ اپنی 18 سالہ ترقی کے دوران اس نے پاکستان کے قومی خزانے کے لئے شراکت، دھات کی صنعت شروع کرنے کیساتھ ساتھ ہنرمند کارکن پیدا کیے، 1700 کے قریب پاکستانی ملازمین کو رہائش فراہم کی ہیں، قریبی رہائشیوں کو مفت بجلی، پانی، تعلیم اور صحت کی سہولیات فراہم کی ہیں۔ عہدیدار نے ذکر کیا کہ 30 سالوں سے سینڈک پروجیکٹ کے ساتھ وابستگی کی وجہ سے اب ایم آر ڈی ایل ملازمین خود کو مقامی سمجھتے ہیں۔ چاغی ضلع کے 3312 گھرانوں میں 17.5 ملین روپے کی اشیائے خوردونوش کیلئے 200 ملین سے زیادہ رقم مہیا کرنے میں کامیاب رہی، 5000 کے بعد 200000 ماسک، 4000 ٹیسٹنگ کٹس، 2000 حفاظتی لباس، 2000 دستاں، 2000 چشمے، 100 پیشانی تھرمامیٹر، جن کی مالیت 4 ملین روپے ہے۔ اس افسر نے اپنا نام ظاہر نہ کرنے کی شرط پر بتایا دن اور رات کا سفر طے کر کے اپریل میں بلوچستان پہنچایا گیا تھا۔ ملازمین کی صلاحیتوں کو بہتر بنانے کے لیے، کمپنی نے آپریشن کے آغاز کے ساتھ ہی ملازمین کے لئے تکنیکی تربیت کا آغاز کیا۔ انہوں نے کہا "پچھلے 17 سالوں کے دوران، ایم آر ڈی ایل نے مختلف اقسام کی 10000 سے زیادہ ٹریننگ کلاسز منعقد کیں، جن میں ہر سال "ٹیچر اسٹوڈنٹ" کے جوڑے کے ذریعے 100000 سے زیادہ گھنٹے کی تربیت حاصل کی جاتی ہے۔ ہزاروں پاکستانی تکنیکی، ہنرمند جو ایم آر ڈی ایل کے ذریعہ مہیا کی جانے والی منظم تربیت میں شامل تھے، وہ لوگ جنہوں نے سائنڈک پروجیکٹ چھوڑ دیا، انہوں نے دوسرے علاقوں کی معاشی نمو کو آگے بڑھاتے ہوئے پاکستان کی سماجی تعمیر میں بڑھ چڑھ کر حصہ لیا۔ انہوں نے مزید کہا "2012 میں، ایم آر ڈی ایل اور ایس ایم ایل نے دالبندین میں فنی تربیت کا ادارہ قائم کرنے کے لئے مشترکہ طور پر تقریباً 30 ملین روپے کی امداد کی۔ ایم آر ڈی ایل سائنڈک کا پورگولڈ پروجیکٹ پر عمل پیرا ہے، جو پاکستان میں کان کنی کا سب سے بڑا منصوبہ ہے۔"

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/28-Sep-2020/1221324>

The Nation

CPEC Authority chief calls for investment in industrial uplift

The CPEC Authority on Sunday called upon the new investors to play their role in development of industrial sector under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Prime Minister's Special Assistant on Information and Broadcasting Lt Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa in a tweet also

welcomed the initiative to develop exclusive Health and Medical City in CPEC's Faisalabad Special Economic Zone (SEZ) for related manufacturing industry. "The SEZs are our future for enhancing exports, import substitution, and job creation," he added.

He tweeted in response to the tweet by Minister for Science and Technology, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain with respect to the establishment of medical equipment manufacturing zone in Faisalabad. Fawad said the medical equipment manufacturing zone had been established on 200 acres in Faisalabad Industrial Zone. "This zone will focus on manufacturing syringes, needles, cannulas, x-ray machines, heart stunts and dialysis machines." Fawad added that local manufacturing of all such equipment would greatly reduce medical device imports worth Rs 1.4 billion.

<https://nation.com.pk/28-Sep-2020/cpec-authority-chief-calls-for-investment-in-industrial-uplift>

The News

China Int'l Culture Exchange Centre donates masks

ISLAMABAD: China International Culture Exchange Center donated 5000 masks to Pakistan Students Association and Economic Affairs.

The handover ceremony was held here at COMSATS, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday.

Ex-Ambassador to China Khalid Masood, Ex-Ambassador to France Ghalib Iqbal, Founding Rector of COMSATS SM Zaidi, Rector NUTech Lt. General Khalid Asghar, Parliamentary Secretary Kanwal Shauzab, Additional Registrar PEC Nasir Mehmood, Assistant Director of COMSATS Qaisar Nawab, and Diplomats from Azerbaijan Embassy, Students and scholars attended the ceremony. Due to the epidemic, the Chinese side was unable to attend the handover ceremony. Muhammad Shahbaz, President of The Pakistan Students Association, delivered donated materials on behalf of China International Culture Exchange Center, and read out the letter from the Chinese side. In the letter, China International Culture Exchange Center stated that Pakistan is a true friend of China who shares difficulties together, and a good brother who shares wears and woes.

No matter how the international situation changes, Pakistan-China friendship will always be rock-solid and unbreakable.

“At present, the pandemic is still undergoing. We would like to share the successful experience from China in fighting the anti-pandemic with Pakistan.

And in particular we raised a catch of masks to donate to Pakistan Students Association and Economic Affairs. It is expected that we can strengthen cultural exchanges and cooperation to jointly promote Sino-Pakistani friendship after this.”

On the occasion, participants spoke highly of China's efforts in supporting Pakistan's fight against the COVID-19 epidemic.

Dr. Muhammad Shahbaz said that China and Pakistan are iron brothers and have stood by each other in difficulties. He thanked the China International Culture exchange center for the donation of masks.

“BRI and CPEC are game changer projects which bring a lot of benefits for Pakistan. Since COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, China and Pakistan have helped each other in all sectors. .

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/721442-china-int-l-culture-exchange-centre-donates-masks>

September 29, 2020

Business Recorder

Gulf companies keen to invest in Gwadar Free Zone: Asim Bajwa

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CPEC Authority Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa (retd) has said that a number of companies from Gulf region were interested to establish industrial units in the Gwadar Free Zone.

“There has been a lot of progress on free zone in the city that spanned over an area of 2400 acres where not only local and Chinese investors but those from Gulf area were also keen to set up their industries,” he said in his recent interview with a YouTube channel.

He said there had been great progress on the city and the port and recently “we started construction of Gwadar airport with support of the Chinese government who granted \$230 million for the project,” he added.

With respect to the planned Oil City in Gwadar, he informed that about 30 kilometers away from the city near Pasni, an area was being designated for an oil refinery and oil storage.

The chairman pointed out that after completion of the Main Line One (ML-1) Railway Up-gradation Project; the Gwadar Port City would be linked with the rest of the country through railway line.

“A new railway line would be laid from Quetta to Gwadar to link the port city with rest of the country and beyond,” Asim Bajwa said.

He further said the railway line up to Iran would also be up-graded to enhance scope of the mega project.

Bajwa who is also Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting pointed out that the biggest ever project that was being executed under CPEC was the ML-1 project.

“All initial processes have been completed, its evaluation has been done, and estimation has also been reviewed,” he termed the \$6.8 billion project a historical one for logistic infrastructure in Pakistan as every business was going to become viable so far as freight traffic through railways was concerned.

Besides he said the ML-1 project would also bring revolution in the passenger movement from Karachi to Peshawar as the travel time from Lahore to Karachi would be reduced to only eight hours.

To a question, Bajwa said the 1870 kilometers ML-1 project was a huge initiative that was scheduled to be completed over a period of 7-9 years in phases.

However he said as many projects under CPEC had already been completed before time so this project could also be done before the settled time period.

When asked about establishment of CPEC Authority, the chairman said when the government realized that the scope of CPEC project was not expanding, and then it decided to establish the Authority to ensure that all works are done at one window.

He said since so many ministries, departments, provinces and federating units were involved in the mega project, a forum was direly needed to be established that would provide one window facility to the foreign investors.

To another query, the chairman said basically the emphasis of CPEC is more on the implementation of projects but we also do planning, monitoring and evaluation of the projects.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/09/29/3-page/853151-news.html>

Daily Times

Pakistan expects incoming Chinese envoy to promote business ties, boost CPEC

Pakistan expects the incoming Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong to multiply the existing bilateral trade and business ties and further boost the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), officials said.

Officials told Gwadar Pro on Monday that Pakistan is optimistic that the new envoy will set new goals as he takes charge in Islamabad. “Ambassador Yao Jing (who completed his tenure in Pakistan) played a wonderful role and his term is a success from all angles. Now Ambassador Nong Rong is coming and we are expecting him to focus on trade, business, and CPEC,” said a close aide to Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Nong Rong, Head of Ethnic Affairs Commission of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, has been nominated as the new envoy. Nong Rong once worked in the office of the Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Department, the ASEAN countries, and Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan Divisions of the Department of Commerce of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. He served as Assistant Secretary-General of the Secretariat of the China-ASEAN Expo. Nong Rong is an expert in trade and commerce. One of his main aims will be to promote the CPEC under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Officials from the Chinese embassy in Islamabad told Gwadar Pro that the new envoy was expected to arrive in October. “It depends on flights. He is likely to take charge in the upcoming month (October).”

Another Pakistani government official said Pakistanis took every Chinese ambassador as a brother, not a diplomat. “Nong Rong will be treated as our brother as was Yao Jing. This is our policy for all the times to come. We know Nong Rong is an expert and will help boost the trade, business and will also look after the CPEC well,” he remarked.

Nong Rong is not the only political or non-career diplomat appointee. In the 1950s, General Geng Biao too was a political appointee when Chairman Mao sent him as the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan. Known as the chief architect of China-Pakistan relations, General Geng Biao had arrived in Pakistan when General Ayub Khan was in power. Chairman Mao had reportedly asked Geng Biao about opening a new route to China from its western borders into Pakistan. He is famously quoted as saying: “Look after Pakistan. It is China’s window to the west.” The idea was well-received in Pakistan and eventually led to the construction of the Karakoram Highway, passing through Azad Jammu Kashmir.

The majority of the Pakistanis are convinced the ‘all-weather friend’ and Iron Brother has always helped Pakistan come out of crises. CPEC is a beneficial connection among Pakistan, China, and the Central Asian countries with a highway connecting Kashgar to Khunjerab and Gwadar. In southern Pakistan, Gwadar Port will serve as the trade nerve center, officials added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/671898/pakistan-expects-incoming-chinese-envoy-to-promote-business-ties-boost-cpec/>

Dawn News

Clinical trial of ‘effective’ Chinese herbal medicine to treat Covid-19 under way

KARACHI: A research facility at Karachi University (KU) in collaboration with the Indus Hospital (IH) has recently begun clinical trial of a traditional Chinese medicine to treat mild cases of Covid-19, sources told Dawn on Monday.

According to researchers at Dr. Panjwani Centre for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research at KU, the trial will test the efficacy and safe use of Jinhua Qinggan Granule – a combination of natural herbs widely used during the Covid-19 outbreak in China.

It consists of 12 herbal components including honeysuckle, mint and licorice.

“The medicine tested in China has been found to have curative as well as preventive effects. It’s one of the top drugs recommended in China’s national guidelines against Covid-19,” said lead investigator of the study Prof Raza Shah, adding that the medicine had so far been given to 15 Covid-19 patients in Karachi.

Asked about the reason for testing the medicine only for mild cases, Prof Shah explained that it was the first such trial in Pakistan being conducted under an international protocol. “We are also excluding patients with other health complications to minimize chances of any adverse reaction with other drugs.”

Under the partnership with the IH, 300 patients capable of adhering to principles of home isolation would participate in the trial. The lab samples of patients would be tested at KU facility while registration of patients would be carried out at the hospital which would also offer its intensive care units, if required.

According to researchers, compliance to the drug regime would be ensured by keeping a regular contact with patients. The trial is likely to be completed in four to five months.

Citing studies in China, they said the medicine had a curative effect in treating mild and moderate patients and could also improve the recovery rate of lymphocytes and white blood cells, besides reducing the rate of patients’ condition turning severe.

A comparative experiment, they said, showed patients who took Jinhua Qinggan Granule tested negative for coronavirus two and a half days earlier than a group that did not take the granule. The group treated with the granule also took eight days to show improvement, while the other group took 10.3 days.

Dr. Naila Baig Ansari representing the Indus Hospital said: “The medicine available in sachets over the counter in China was developed during the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic. It has shown its efficacy against Covid-19.”

Prof M. Iqbal Chaudhary, the Director of International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), said the trial had been approved by the National Bioethics Committee and Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan and a license to conduct the trial had been acquired.

“The fact that the trial is meant for mild cases doesn’t lessen its significance. Not all mild cases of Covid-19 recover. Hence, it’s important that we test its efficacy in our population.”

Prof Chaudhry described the clinical trial as a welcome sign for the country and said it would directly benefit Pakistan as these studies would help make the drugs available at low cost and strengthen country’s research capacity.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1582138/clinical-trial-of-effective-chinese-herbal-medicine-to-treat-covid-19-under-way>

Pakistan Observer

Chinese company continues its operation at Saindak project during Covid-19

China's MCC Resources Development Company worked with dedication and commitment in the wake of Covid-19 both in epidemic's prevention and operational continuity at its ongoing projects in Pakistan. It kept confirmed cases at zero within Saindak Project and help the local economy to recover in a strong and fast fashion", an official of MRDL told China Economic Net. Putting people's lives first, MRDL has worked relentlessly in the battle against the pandemic and remained zero infection case within the Project. It has united with neighboring villages, FC, local institutions, providing shelter in an area of 20 km (square kilometer), and covering 6,000 people. According to the official, the MRDL is committed to the welfare and social uplift of its employees in Pakistan. It has an amazing historical background of work in different sectors including health and education, particularly in Baluchistan. In an interview with CEN, the officer told on condition of anonymity, that the Metrological Construction Company of China has a historical culture of social uplift of its employees and the local population.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-company-continues-its-operation-at-saindak-project-during-covid-19/>

Speed up work on SEZs, CM tells having Rs807b investment potential, SEZs to create 1.7m jobs

Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar chaired a meeting on Monday to analyze the developments made on the proposed Special Economic Zone (SEZs) in Punjab. The chief minister directed the committee overseeing the SEZ to soon realize all the proposed economic zone projects across Punjab, saying it is his mission to make Punjab the industrial hub. He noted that throughout Punjab the development of nine economic zones have been approved and the province awaited their realization. He said that after its realization, the SEZ will harbinger economic revolution across the province bringing employment opportunities to about 1.7 million people. CM Buzdar said the SEZs expect an investment potential of over Rs807 billion and partly pegged these expectations on the growing interest of prospective investors into buying of industrial lands across Punjab, which he said was encouraging. He added that the government will soon launch Bahawalpur Industrial Estate while stated that the joint venture JW China Pakistan SEZ will be developed comprising 161.5 acres of land on Raiwind Road. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar directed the local bodies' institutions to improve cleanliness situation across the province as provision of clean atmosphere to the citizens is a priority agenda of the government. Chairing a meeting about local bodies, the CM made it clear that he wants to see every city and town neat and clean, adding that no negligence will be tolerated in this regard. Resources will be provided for improving cleanliness situation and the local government departments should show no negligence in resolving public problems, he added. Provincial Ministers including Abdul Aleem Khan, Raja Basharat, Hashim Jawan Bakht, Mian Mahmoodur Rasheed, Murad Raas, Yasir Humayun, Dr Yasmin Rashid, and Chief

Secretary, Chairman P&D, Secretary Good Governance Committee and others attended the meeting.

<https://pakobserver.net/speed-up-work-on-sezs-cm-tells-babus-says-having-rs807b-investment-potential-sezs-to-create-1-7m-jobs/>

The Nation

Gwadar to be linked with railway line under CPEC

Chairman CPEC Authority Lt Gen (retired) Asim Saleem Bajwa has said that a number of companies from Gulf region were interested to establish industrial units in the Gwadar Free Zone.

"There has been a lot of progress on free zone in the city that spanned over an area of 2400 acres where not only local and Chinese investors but those from Gulf area were also keen to set up their industries," he said in an interview with a Youtube channel.

He said there had been great progress on the city and the port and recently "we started construction of Gwadar airport with support of the Chinese government who granted \$230 million for the project", he added. With respect to the planned Oil City in Gwadar, he informed that about 30-Kms away from the city near Pasni, an area was being designated for an oil refinery and oil storage.

The Chairman pointed out that after completion of the Main Line one (ML-1) railway up-gradation project, the Gwadar port city would be linked with the rest of the country through railway line."A new railway line would be laid from Quetta to Gwadar to link the port city with rest of the country and beyond," Asim Bajwa said.

Further he said the railway line up to Iran would also be up-graded to enhance scope of the mega project.

Bajwa who is also Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting pointed out that the biggest ever project that was being executed under CPEC was the ML-1 project.

Govt fully focused on development of Balochistan and progress on Western rout of CPEC

"All initial processes have been completed, its evaluation has been done, and estimation has also been reviewed," he termed the \$6.8 billion project a historical one for logistic infrastructure in Pakistan as every business was going to become viable so far as freight traffic through railways was concerned.

Besides he said the ML-1 project would also bring revolution in the passenger movement from Karachi to Peshawar as the travel time from Lahore to Karachi would be reduced to only 8 hours.

To a question, Bajwa said the 1870 kilometers ML-1 project was a huge initiative that was scheduled to be completed over a period of 7-9 years in phases.

However he said as many projects under CPEC had already been completed before time so this project could also be done before the settled time period.

When asked about establishment of CPEC Authority, the Chairman said when the government realized that the scope of CPEC project was not expanding, and then it decided to establish the Authority to ensure that all works are done at one window.

He said since so many ministries, departments, provinces and federating units were involved in the mega project, a forum was direly needed to be established that would provide one window facility to the foreign investors. To another query, the Chairman said "Basically the emphasis of CPEC is more on the implementation of projects but we also do planning, monitoring and evaluation of the projects".

"Whatever we plan for CPEC project is in consensus with the overall master planning of the country which is done by the Planning Commission of Pakistan, so it becomes easier for all of us to coordinate".

He said after the establishment of the Authority, the work of various projects under CPEC had been streamlined as it helped removing so many hiccups in the projects.

Asim Bajwa pointed out that in energy sector an amount of \$8 billion had already been executed whereas more energy projects worth \$9.5 billion were under execution. In communication sector he said \$4 billion were already invested whereas another over \$3 billion investment was going to be executed soon.

To another query, Bajwa said "We are at the peak of our engagements with the Chinese government and we are entering into second phase CPEC project". He informed that the government was fully focused on the development of Balochistan and progress on Western rout of CPEC project was moving fast.

He said motorway from Islamabad to D.I. Khan was almost completed while the project from DI Khan to Zhob would be taken up in the meeting of Joint Coordination Committee of CPEC next month for approval.

Similarly he said from Zhob to Quetta, groundbreaking of the road project had already been done, the money had been allocated and the land had also been acquired.

In Azad Kashmir he said, the government had recently concluded two hydro power projects, Azad Pattan (701 MW) and Kohala hydro power project (1120 MW) that would bring foreign investment of \$4 billion.

<https://nation.com.pk/29-Sep-2020/gwadar-to-be-linked-with-railway-line-under-cpec>

September 30, 2020

Dawn News

‘No tax on exports from Gwadar port’

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Finance was informed on Tuesday that there is no tax on export of goods from Gwadar port.

The committee headed by its Chairman Senator Farooq H. Naek took up the issue of tax exemptions, establishment of green channels and linking of Gwadar port with Gulf countries.

Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Chairman Javed Ghani informed the committee that the tax rate on export cell in Gwadar is zero and only one per cent income tax is levied for the development and prosperity of the region. He said Gwadar Free Zone facility has been provided so that exports can be improved and there is no customs duty on exports.

Regarding the complaints received at the Silk Bank branches in Islamabad during the year, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) officials told the standing committee that a total of 42 complaints were received against the bank. If the problem is not resolved, the bank would send it to the ombudsman.

The committee chairman asked for sharing of information with the committee.

Senators Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar, Musaddiq Masood Malik and Zeeshan Khanzada expressed some reservations regarding the bank complaints, to which Mr. Naek said that the SBP should provide their written answers to the committee for detailed review.

Senator Musaddiq said that district wise details of bank credit and deposit should be provided to the committee in the next meeting.

In response to a question from Senator Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar, the committee was informed that border markets have been set up in Baluchistan to curb smuggling and provide employment to the locals. This model has been adopted by various countries of the world. There are not enough resources to completely eradicate smuggling.

Mr. Naek and Mr. Mussaddiq said that the border market will promote black marketing and smuggling.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1582398/no-tax-on-exports-from-gwadar-port>

Chinese muzzle

Mahir Ali

LATE last week, China’s President Xi Jinping was quoted by Xinhua news agency as saying at a two-day conference: “Viewed overall, Xinjiang is enjoying a favorable setting of social stability with the people living in peace and contentment. The facts have abundantly demonstrated that our national minority work has been a success.” The Communist Party’s policies were “totally

correct” and efforts to plant the national identity “deep in the souls” of Uighurs and other minorities “must be held to for the long term”.

The same week, fresh evidence emerged of what that “national minority work” entails, with analysis of satellite imagery by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) revealing that 380 detention facilities have either been built or expanded since 2017. “We don’t believe we have found them all,” says the ASPI’s Nathan Ruser. “The largest is more than 300 acres in size. That is more than three and a half Disney lands.”

It is estimated that about 10pc of Xinjiang’s Uighur and Kazakh minorities have involuntarily been enrolled in what are officially described as vocational re-education institutes. By most accounts, trades are indeed taught in these facilities, but that is only part of the purpose. Much effort is focused on indoctrination, both cultural and ideological.

The campaign is not restricted to Xinjiang. There have lately been reports of a similar “mass labor programme” in Tibet, apparently aimed at turning rural agricultural laborers into factory workers. In Inner Mongolia, meanwhile, protests erupted last month against a policy to gradually replace Mongolian with Chinese as the medium of instruction in schools.

The largest detention camp is 300 acres plus.

Such measures are sometimes officially depicted as part of Xi Jinping’s campaign to eradicate poverty by the end of this year. How that could possibly be construed as an undesirable goal?

On the face of it, the intent is welcome. On the other hand, the very fact that poverty still exists in China more than 70 years after the communist revolution seems like an indictment of much that has occurred in the interim. The failure is even starker if one compares the ostentatious wealth of Shanghai with the deprivation in the vast countryside. China boasts the second highest number of billionaires after the United States, yet half its population subsists on an annual income of about \$1,500, roughly equivalent to the price of a Chinese-manufactured iPhone.

President Xi has himself approvingly cited the scholarship of Thomas Piketty in the context of inequality in the US, but the publication of the French economist’s latest book, *Capital and Ideology*, was nonetheless held up in China because the author refused to agree to the excision of segments referring to economic disparities in China, notably the fact that wealth distribution between the top 10pc and bottom 50pc is “only slightly less in egalitarian than the United States and significantly more so than Europe”.

China can perhaps justifiably boast of many achievements in the past few decades, during which it has insinuated itself into the global economy by becoming the world’s leading manufacturer, albeit largely on the strength of an underpaid and overworked workforce without recourse to the organizing options available to labor, to some extent, in most capitalist societies.

Its response to the Covid-19 pandemic has also been remarkable, despite egregious initial slip-ups, at least if the official figures are to be taken at face value. Its economy has by some accounts roared back into life while much of the rest of the world is still struggling with a range of

restrictions. China's apparent strategy, as in many other countries, is to henceforth rely more on the domestic market.

However, the impressive ability to construct a hospital in Wuhan within a week or so also extends to the rapid erection of detention centers elsewhere.

If Xi Jinping does not particularly stand out among the international rogues' gallery of dilettantes running the world, it's largely because his attentions are focused locally. There are indications, but no conclusive evidence, that there is substantial opposition to him within the Communist Party. Which is hardly surprising, given that critics and dissidents face extended incarceration or worse, and it is never easy to tell whether those incarcerated or executed for graft or corruption are actually guilty.

The cultural genocide unfolding in Xinjiang has lately begun to provoke some pushback, both economic and political, although there is cause to suspect it is more directly related to other aspects of Beijing's belligerence on the economic and geopolitical fronts. Were Xi to kowtow to the usual capitalist deities, the outrages in Urumqi and Kashgar would probably soon be forgotten.

But China's largely facetious claim to socialist ideals deserves a skeptical eye-roll, and the idea that "Xi Jinping Thought" is "21st-century Marxism" hardly bears scrutiny, yet it will be important to keep a close eye on China's future trajectory, in respect of both its formidable achievements and its egregious and often repellent excesses.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1582425/chinese-muzzle>

Pakistan Observer

Fishermen receive donation from Chinese Consulate

Gwadar fishermen have been gifted small engines, fishing nets, special incubators, marine life saving kits, and other livelihood materials from the Chinese Consulate in Karachi at a donation ceremony held here. Officials of the Consulate General, President of Gwadar Fisheries Association, and representatives of fishermen attended the ceremony, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. With the trust of the Consul General Li Bijian, Chairman of China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) Zhang Baozhong presented at the event and conveyed the consulate's cordial greetings to the fishermen. He thanked the community for their consistent support to the development of Gwadar Port, adding that COPHC, along with other Chinese enterprises in Gwadar, is more than willing to fulfill its social responsibilities and makes greater contributions to the well-being of people in Gwadar. Khuda Dad Wajo, Chairman of Gwadar Fisheries Association expressed gratitude to the consulate. He noted that an efficient distribution of the supplies to the fishermen in need would be a top priority to revive production.

<https://pakobserver.net/fishermen-receive-donation-from-chinese-consulate/>

CPEC & strategic realities

Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

THE China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has strategic orientations but rapidly changing socio-economic trends, geopolitical scenarios and geostrategic compulsions there is an urgent need to redesign and reshape its future course of action and implementation mechanism in order to create strategic cushions against all regional enmities and global rivalries. The CPEC is the icon of economic sustainability having potential of greater regional connectivity and socio-economic integration. But increasing regional squabbles has deteriorated regional security and peace. Development has become siege of regional disputes due to which national narratives are at the mercy of hand grenades (social media accounts). China-India constant stand-off in Ladakh has now drastically changed the landscape of economic preferences and political priorities.

Indian misadventure has created elements of insecurity and violation of territorial sovereignty among the regional countries especially China and Pakistan. It is feared that CPEC would be ultimate target of ongoing tussle between China and India in Ladakh where some mega projects of the CPEC are situated merely 10-15 kilometers away. In this context, Government of Pakistan has already initiated right steps in the right direction namely broadcasting daily weather report of the Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), speed-up mega infrastructural projects and last but not the least, highest political consultation with all the main stream parties and stakeholders to change the current status of the GB (6th province of Pakistan) so that spill over ramifications of any Indian misadventures in the region especially from the Line of the Control or Ladakh may be easily managed.

Wise policy making of the Government of Pakistan and its patriotic establishment has now formed zones of comfort among the policy makers of the CPEC and hopefully, its phase-II will be started as soon as possible. In this regard, appointment of new Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan with diversified expertise of good governance, economic development, social cohesion, rational decision making, and political adaptability and last but not the least, commercial diplomacy may be a valuation-addition for the success of the CPEC phase-II. The CPEC has opened a window of opportunity for the GB. It is now successfully forming zones of happiness, satisfaction, socio-economic prosperity, technical learning and enrolment of new businesses with the help of the CPEC.

The GB is an essential part of the CPEC project and residents of this region will be provided maximum benefits. It will connect with neighboring Chinese Xinjiang province. It will tremendously increase business activities and will also brighten prospects of investment. Various mini-hydropower projects are under construction in the GB changing the daily life of the local residents. According to the official statistics (June 2020), the GBR has great energy potential due to huge water resources. It can generate over 50,000-megawatt electricity from water which can be subsequently connected with the National Power Supplies System (NPSS).

The Gilgit-Chitral Road (GCR) would reduce physical distance and would be useful for the local economy of the GB. Moreover, Karakoram Highway (KKH) up-gradation and maintenance schemes have been initiated in the GB Region. For the development of local agro-economy both the governments have devised a comprehensive plan under the 'green channel' to allow imports and exports of fresh and dried fruits including apricot and cherry. Unfortunately somehow, the Pakistani customs officials are not implementing the mechanism in its true spirits thus create unnecessary hurdles to promote bilateral trade under the umbrella of the CPEC.

The Gilgit-Baltistan Region (GBR) is one of the most attractive areas in the world and its economy could get a boost from tourism and trade with China. Furthermore, its vast tourism opportunities would be further brightened with the help of the CPEC projects in the GB. It has one of the most beautiful valleys like Nagar, Hunza, Gilgit, Attaabad, Khaplu, Shiger, Gupis, Astore, and Skardu thus attracts the local and foreign tourists in the summer season. Completion of various projects of the CPEC would further enhance importance of these fairylands of the GBR in the days to come. Since the GBR has become a gateway for the multi-billion dollar CPEC, banks, investors and food chains are moving into the mountainous region. Many domestic banks are planning to expand their branches in the GBR.

Telecommunication companies are gearing up their infrastructures and services to grab the potential opportunities. Various food chains are in the process of shifting their franchises to GBR to avail this opportunity. It seems that development of the CPEC and development of the GBR is interconnected and correlated. The GBR would be a future business hub after the CPEC becomes fully operational. CPEC is now bringing drastic changes in the daily life of the local people living in the GBR. Harsh weather in the winter is an impediment in the way of large investment which needs to be tackled as soon as possible.

Interestingly, 180 km Hazara Motorway linking the Burhan Interchange near Hasan Abdal in Punjab province with Thakot in north-western Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has been completed and operationalized. It has significantly reduced travel hours from capital Islamabad. To revolutionize the GBR, nine priority SEZs have been selected. Moqpondass is one of the proposed SEZ under CPEC in the GBR that is bordered with Afghanistan to the north, China to the northeast, and the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) to the south. It has important geopolitical & geostrategic leverage which may be used in the days to come. The Moqpondass SEZ of GB, naturally rich in precious stones, fruits. The proposed SEZ would be connected through nearest airport 35KM, Sost Dry port 200KM, CPEC Route 4KM on Gilgit-Skardu Road. It is an ideal place for marble and granite production, iron ore processing, fruit processing and value addition steel industry, mineral processing and leather industry.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has changed the dynamics of the GBR. It is planned to further develop scope of the KKH. The CPEC will continue to build on the existing KKH, passing through the mountains of the GBR. The KKH will be further improved and a few new roads will be constructed for easy and smooth travel, moreover new bridges, tunnels and railway track is expected to construct to connect Kashgar city of China to Havelian in Pakistan.

Being prominent regional expert of the BRI & CPEC I suggest that since the GBR shares its border with China therefore it should be further developed thus catering the future economic, industrial, trade, joint ventures, and foreign direct investment and tourism potentials under the umbrella of the CPEC in the days to come.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-strategic-realities/>

CPEC: Gwadar emerging trade, energy transportation hub, to economize landlocked states

Saeed Ahmad

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project intends to build Pakistan's most needed infrastructure and boost its economy by constructing modern transportation networks, setting up of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and numerous energy projects.

Geo-strategically, CPEC project is located between three key important landlocked regions of the globe including economically emerging and rich-resourced Central Asia, oil-rich Western Asia and thickly populated South Asia.

After globalization, digital technology is transforming the world into global-digital-village in the real sense of modern technology usage and regional integration is a key aspect of this information mechanism. If a comparison of Central and South Asia is made, the earlier is rich in oil and gas resources while the latter is a region developing at a rapid pace, and its internal energy resources are insufficient. Therefore, the construction of physical-infrastructure linkages and increase in trade volume among the Asian regions including West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia and Western China will be mutually beneficial. In this connection, Pakistan's Gwadar deep sea-port has outshined with multi prospects to emerge as regional trade and energy transportation hub. Official sources reveal that the possible profit statistics in the head of toll collection, that if completed by 2030, the CPEC toll income would be three times the budget of Pakistan.

A document of United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) which maintains the Energy Statistics Database reveals that China's annual crude oil imports from OPEC countries during 2019 increased to an average of 10.1 million barrels per day (b/d), which was an increase of 0.9 million b/d as compared to the 2018 average import.

China remains the world's top crude oil importer, surpassing the United States in 2017.

China's new refinery capacity and strategic inventory stockpiling, combined with flat domestic oil production, were the major factors contributing to the increase in China's crude oil imports in 2019. According to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Annual Statistical Bulletin (ASB) estimates, 79.4% of the world's proven oil reserves are located in OPEC member countries, with the bulk of OPEC oil reserves in the Middle East, amounting to 64.5% of the OPEC in total. It may be mentioned here that OPEC's proven oil reserves currently stand at 1,189.80 billion barrels.

According to the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) President, Mian Anjum Nisar, the setting up of economic zones and upgrading the industrial sector would bring industrial revolution in the country, adding these mega projects would be set up under the 2nd phase of CPEC. After becoming fully operational Gwadar Port would become a harbinger of massive export-import activity and a gateway to both the Persian Gulf and Central Asian countries. Mian Nisar said that the energy-transportation would engage the economic partnership of around 64 countries in Asia and Europe and the Middle East. CPEC is hope of the whole region as an advanced future while strengthening a modern economy based on peace and prosperity. He further said that the newly established Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ), under CPEC, would create employment opportunities for the local youth which would further contribute to the socio-economic development of all provinces including Khyber- Pakhtunkhwa.

Similarly, any item produced at Rashakai SEZ, being developed in a public-private partnership, would easily be exported to Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs) and adjoining regions due to its proximity to Torkham (Pak-Afghan) border.

Official sources say that a network of roads and highways under the aegis of the CPEC project was being constructed all over the country. Due to proximity and the accessible connectivity of the newly constructed roads linked with Gwadar would help reach the shipment in a minimum time with a shortest distance cover. The sources added that the shipment and all items from SEZs would be easily exported to their destinations. Therefore, this was a great milestone that has been achieved by both Federal and KPK governments.

To ensure its industrial production's consumption China needs a small, secure, and low-cost path to trade with Europe, Middle East and Central Asia. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a feasible solution to meet international minimum time delivery marketing standards. And, of course, this project would be having a direct impact on the whole region's economy, in terms of swift trade, transport-cost and travel time. President, Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industries (LCCI) Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that post-Covid-19 situation has significantly affected the global economy and trade patterns, which has absolutely transformed the nature of global business by reshaping international economies. The European Union has long been exercising the command and control influence on global trade, by running and operating at a very large surplus volume. He noted that China as the world's second largest leading economy was an increasingly relevant competitor of Europe and USA in third markets, particularly in Latin America.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-gwadar-emerging-trade-energy-transportation-hub-to-economize-landlocked-states/>

