



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

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A pilot project of PICS

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October 16, 2020

Business Recorder

Umar for encouraging Chinese investment in SEZs under CPEC

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar emphasised the need to take immediate actions to encourage the Chinese investors to invest in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The minister expressed these views, while chairing a consultative meeting to review the preparations for the upcoming 10th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting on CPEC, here on Thursday.

All the conveners of the respective Joint Working Groups (JWGs) under the CPEC framework including the secretary planning, chairman CPEC Authority, secretary communications, secretary foreign affairs, officials from the line ministries, and representatives from all the relevant departments attended the meeting.

Progress on prioritised SEZs under the CPEC including Rashakai, Dhabeji, Allama Iqbal Industrial City (M3) was also reviewed at the meeting.

While discussing progress in industrial cooperation sector under the CPEC, Asad Umar stressed the need to take immediate actions to encourage the Chinese investors to invest in the SEZs. The minister emphasised to enhance business-to-business linkages between China and Pakistan; facilitate increased investment from the Chinese enterprises, enhance industrial competitiveness of business in Pakistan; through technology transfer, world class managerial and industrial practices, and skills transfer.

The conveners of the JWGs and their representatives briefed the federal minister on the agenda, and proposed deliverables for the 10th JCC. According to the sources, the 10th JCC meeting would be held in the mid of the next month (November).

The minister expressed satisfaction over the preparations and suggested deliverables for the JCC. Under the JWG on Transport and Infrastructure, Asad Umar agreed to take up DI Khan–Zhob highway project with the Chinese side for funding in the meeting of the respective JWG. The chair also agreed that new projects will be considered in the next JCC after approval of the PC-I including Swat Express Way Phase–II and Peshawar-DI Khan Motorway. Greater Peshawar Mass Transit was also discussed and it was decided that the project will be taken up with the Chinese side after the completion of the feasibility study. Asad Umar directed the Ministry of National Food Security and Research to select need-based specific projects for agriculture to take up with the Chinese counterparts, and the FMD free zone for Balochistan should also be the part of the upcoming JCC.

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40026648/umar-for-encouraging-chinese-investment-in-sezs-under-cpec>

Daily Times

CPEC-A doorway to prosperity of Pakistan and the region

Col (R) Muhammad Hanif

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is being jointly constructed by Pakistan and China with the Chinese investment of US \$ 62 billion. The project comprises a network of energy producing plants (hydro, coal, and solar powered), roads, railways, airports, dry ports, fiber optic lines for communications and industrial zones being built in Pakistan to connect Kashghar city of China with the Gawadar Port of Pakistan. The CPEC agreement was signed by Pakistan and China during the visit of the Chinese President Mr. Xi Jinping to Pakistan in April 2015.

The CPEC will interconnect China, Central Asian Republics (CARs), Russia, the Middle East, and Africa through the warm waters of the Arabian sea for facilitating wider and large scale trade, investment, tourism activities and for mutually sharing labor market. This will enable the people of this region and other regions to harvest common benefits, which will add to their economic wellbeing and prosperity, within the context of Chinese President, Xi Jinping's concept of the shared destinies.

The CPEC is being built as a pilot project of China's Belt and Road (B&R) Initiative that is aimed at interconnecting various regions and continents of the world as part of China's vision of shared destinies with its neighbors and beyond through joint infrastructure and economic development projects located in various countries via roads and the silk route that passes through seas interconnecting various important trading ports of many countries in Asia, North Africa and Europe. The CPEC connects the B&R road and the silk roads.

The CPEC will interconnect China, Central Asian Republics (CARs), Russia, the Middle East, and Africa through the warm waters of the Arabian sea for facilitating wider and large scale trade.

The CPEC is planned to be constructed in four phases. First, the Early Harvest 2015-2019, including an early completion of the projects, mostly related to Energy sector to end energy shortage in Pakistan. Second, short term projects up to 2022 mainly comprising Roads, Gwadar Development, Optic fiber network and the Hydel, coal mining and power projects. Third, medium projects up to 2025 comprising Railways and Industrial zones. Fourth, long term projects up to 2030 including the completion of Industrial zones, Agriculture, and Tourism etc.

The construction of the Phase 1 of the CPEC is progressing as per the plan. As per the report of the Chinese Embassy, whereas 15 early harvest energy projects with a total generation capacity of 11,110MW were planned as a priority, seven projects have been completed adding 4200W to the national grid, while six projects are "under construction" with a total capacity of 6,910MW. The major part of the road has also been completed, and upgrading of the railway line from

Karachi to Peshawar, and the construction of the industrial zone at Rashkai, KP, and dry port at Havellian are about to be started.

The CPEC related cooperation with China includes; Trade & market access, industrial development, socioeconomic development, poverty alleviation, agriculture modernization, marketing, Gwadar oil city and blue economy, Regional connectivity and third country participation. This cooperation with China will accrue following advantages to Pakistan. The relocation of Chinese export-focused light manufacturing and labor-intensive industries will help to add substantial share in exports. Moreover, the expansion of the IT sector through joint ventures with China, along with the upgrading of technology and capacity enhancement will increase productivity.

In the areas of the agricultural modernization and marketing, the Pakistan government has prioritized value addition and co-branding of dairy, livestock and poultry sectors to uplift these sectors. The collaboration with China is also being promoted in the productivity enhancement of fruits and high-value crops through the transfer of technology in precision agriculture (drip Irrigation, sprinklers), along with the modified and high yield variety seeds for crops diversification to reduce the cost of production/prices and substitute the import of edible oils and pulses.

For the socio-economic development and poverty reduction, Chinese experiences will help a great deal. Through CPEC, more than a million direct jobs and manifold indirect and induced ones will be created to tackle unemployment and poverty reduction. Besides, capacity development of skills via technical and vocational centers across the country along with the community-based projects in underdeveloped areas will also be established.

The government is also raising the prospects of Gwadar through the concept of the “blue economy”. The establishment of Oil City Gwadar to substitute refined oil imports with crude oil are also the positive steps taken in the right direction. Furthermore, the development of aquaculture for fisheries and seafood along the coastal area would also be tapped. The Coastal Tourism will also further the prospects of Balochistan in particular.

The above discussion indicates that the CPEC is the project that will benefit not only Pakistan and China, but the whole region including the CARs, Russia, Afghanistan, Iran, India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka by enhancing trade, and investment opportunities and increasing trade and investment related individual countries’ and regional productivity, economic growth and employment opportunities. The enhance economic growth and employment opportunities in the region will certainly help in increasing the countries’ and individuals’ incomes. This will kill the poverty and bring the prosperity to the regional countries as well as their people. To conclude, it can be stated with almost surety that the CPEC is a gateway to the prosperity of Pakistan and the region.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/678197/cpec-a-doorway-to-prosperity-of-pakistan-and-the-region/>

Dawn News

JCC to take up inclusion of road projects in CPEC

ISLAMABAD: The government on Thursday decided to take up at least three major road projects for inclusion in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in the forthcoming Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) being scheduled for third week of November.

Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Asad Umar presided over a consultative meeting to review the preparations for the upcoming 10th JCC meeting on CPEC. All the conveners of the respective Joint Working Groups (JWGs) under CPEC framework including Secretary Planning, Chairman CPEC Authority, Secretary Communications, and Secretary Foreign Affairs besides officials from line ministries and representatives from all relevant departments attended the meeting.

The conveners of the JWGs and their representatives briefed the meeting on the agenda and proposed deliverables for the 10th JCC. The meeting expressed satisfaction over the preparations and suggested deliverables for the JCC, an official statement said.

Under the JWG on Transport and Infrastructure, the meeting agreed to take up D.I Khan-Zhob highway project — key segment of the Western border — with the Chinese side for funding in the meeting of the respective JWG. The meeting also decided that new projects should be considered in the next JCC after approval of the PC-Is including Swat Express Way Phase-II and Peshawar-D.I Khan Motorway.

Greater Peshawar Mass Transit was also discussed and it was decided that the project will be taken up with the Chinese side after the completion of feasibility study.

Progress on prioritized CPEC SEZs including Rashakai, Dhabeji, and Allama Iqbal Industrial City (M3) was also reviewed. While discussing progress in industrial cooperation sector under CPEC, Asad stressed the need to take immediate actions to encourage the Chinese investors to invest in SEZs.

He emphasized to enhance business-to-business linkages between China and Pakistan; facilitate increased investment from Chinese enterprises, enhance industrial competitiveness of business in Pakistan; through technology transfer, world class managerial and industrial practices and skills transfer.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1585336/jcc-to-take-up-inclusion-of-road-projects-in-cpec>

Major restructuring package for power sector planned

ISLAMABAD: The government is planning to announce a major restructuring package for the power sector envisaging a freeze on average consumer tariff coupled with incentive-based lower rates for industry and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), transfer of distribution companies (Discos) to the provinces and transfer of K-Electric's majority shares to Shanghai Electric under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The recently inducted Special Adviser to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Power Tabish Gauhar told Dawn that he was also pushing for putting to an end to the uniform power tariff across the country. He said the staff of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during recent engagements with the PM's adviser on finance and State Bank of Pakistan governor had reportedly demanded an increase in power rates but that is where Prime Minister Imran Khan would take up the matter at the highest level with a strong commitment to achieving specific reform goals within a given time frame.

His understanding was that the IMF leadership would have the confidence that commitments on deliverables at the highest level in Pakistan would be adhered to with full force unlike ministerial and staff-level commitments in the past that falter down the line under separate compulsions of the political leadership.

Mr Gauhar said the power division had prepared the new tariff model, shared it with the prime minister and is finalizing it. The different tariff rates — higher at peak times and lower at off-peak ones — would be done away with and consumers would be offered to enjoy lower flat rates round the clock to encourage maximum utilization of surplus power capacity.

Transfer of Discos to provinces and K-Electric's majority shares to Shanghai Electric under CPEC envisaged

He said the government had been providing lower power rates to big industry in recent years but the SME sector, which actually had the potential for job creation and could contribute substantially to GDP, remained overlooked. The peak rates would be done away with for SMEs and even residential consumers. "There is no justification for peak rate of Rs21 per unit or above when the country has surplus capacity," he said.

This would address the challenge of capacity payments, estimated for the current fiscal year to be more than Rs900 billion and projected to touch Rs1.6 trillion next year, he explained. He said the average tariff had also gone beyond people's paying capacity and was getting counter-productive without addressing the root causes of circular debt.

Mr. Gauhar, who led K-Electric for more than six years until 2015, said the piecemeal reforms were not going to change the power sector and drastic steps were needed. Decentralization was the solution to Discos' problem instead of centralization of power. Therefore, he said, he was pushing for abolition of the Pakistan Electric Power Company (Pepco) with which the power division was until recently pushing Discos to sign management contracts.

He said the empowered boards of directors of Discos should take commercial decisions and this would be done at the earliest. For this, he said, Discos would be handed over to the provinces along with doing away with the uniform tariff mechanism. After the 18th Amendment, he added, there was no justification for a uniform tariff that was creating about Rs150bn annual circular debt.

The SAPM said there could be some resistance from Sindh and difficult in Balochistan because of Quetta Electric Supply Company's huge losses, but an easy way forward would be to start with transfer of 100 per cent equity of Punjab-based Discos for Re1 to the Punjab government where the PTI was in power.

After devolution, "plugging the leakages in the 'last mile' distribution network by reducing theft, improving collections ought to be the primary responsibility of the local provincial government". Where required, the provincial government should provide the subsidy, not the federal government.

Mr Gauhar said he had also proposed to the prime minister that K-Electric's transfer to Shanghai Electric, delayed for four years, should finally be consummated under the CPEC umbrella in an unbundled basis i.e. divided into generation, distribution and transmission to provide a comfort to the Chinese firm that the governments of China and Pakistan stood by the deal.

The matters relating to receivables and payables between the government entities and K-Electric have to be settled through a court or arbitration in a fair manner. He said the mark-up being claimed by Sui Sothern Gas Company on K-Electric dues was un-Islamic because it was in compound form and more than 60pc of the total amount.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1585314>

Pakistan Observer

China remains top importer, traded products over \$1884m

Islamabad: China topped the list of countries from where Pakistan imported different products during the first two months of the current fiscal year (2020-21), followed by United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Singapore.

The total imports from China during July-August 2020-21 were recorded at \$1884.801 million against the \$1592.096 million during July-August 2019-21, showing an increase of 18.38 percent during the period, according to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This was followed by UAE, where from Pakistan imported goods worth \$1089.203 million against the imports of \$1268.907 million last year, showing negative growth of 14.16 percent.

Singapore was the at third top country from where Pakistan imported products worth \$365.687 million against the imports of \$403.247 million last year, showing the decline of 9.31 percent, SBP data revealed.

Among other countries, Pakistani imports from United State of America (USA) stood at \$311.377 million against \$227.769 million during last year, showing growth of 36.70 percent while the imports from Saudi Arabia were recorded at \$215.007 million against \$314.156 million last year, showing decrease of 31.56 percent, the data revealed.

The imports from Switzerland were recorded at \$200.802m against \$81.815 million whereas imports from Malaysia were recorded at \$166.344m against \$160.942m last year.—APP

<https://pakobserver.net/china-remains-top-importer-traded-products-over-1884m/>

The Nation

Pakistan will try to sign framework agreement with China next month

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan will try to sign a framework agreement with China on Western Route of CPEC (D.I.Khan Zhob) during the meeting of 10th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of the corridor which is likely to be held next month.

All the preparations for the Railways project ML-I have been completed and it will also be finalized during the upcoming JCC which is most likely to be held during third week of November, official source told The Nation here.

A consultative meeting to review the preparations for the upcoming 10th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting on CPEC was held here under Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Asad Umar in chair.

All the conveners of the respective Joint Working Groups (JWGs) under CPEC framework including Secretary Planning, Chairman CPEC Authority, Secretary Communications, and Secretary Foreign Affairs, officials from line ministries and representatives from all relevant departments attended the meeting.

The conveners of the JWGs and their representatives briefed the federal minister on the agenda and proposed deliverables for the 10th JCC. The minister expressed satisfaction over the preparations and suggested deliverables for the JCC.

Meetings of the Joint Working Groups (JWG) will be started from next week which will finalize the proposed deliverables for the next JCC, official source said.

Under the JWG on Transport and Infrastructure, Asad Umar agreed in the meeting to take up D I Khan–Zhob highway project with the Chinese side for funding in the meeting of the respective JWG. The chair also agreed that new projects will be considered in the next JCC after approval of the PC-Is including Swat Express Way Phase–II and Peshawar-D I Khan Motorway. Greater Peshawar Mass Transit was also discussed and it was decided that the project will be taken up with the Chinese side after the completion of feasibility study.

Progress on prioritized CPEC SEZs including Rashakai, Dhabeji, and Allama Iqbal Industrial City (M3) was also reviewed. While discussing progress in industrial cooperation sector under CPEC, Asad Umar stressed the need to take immediate actions to encourage the Chinese investors to invest in SEZs. He emphasized to enhance business to business linkages between China and Pakistan; facilitate increased investment from Chinese enterprises, enhance industrial competitiveness of business in Pakistan; through technology transfer, world class managerial and industrial practices and skills transfer.

Asad Umar directed Ministry of National Food Security and Research to select need based specific projects for agriculture to take up with Chinese counterparts and FMD free zone for Balochistan should also be the part of upcoming JCC.

Federal Minister Asad Umar would convene follow-up meetings on industrial cooperation, agriculture, Gwadar and socio-economic development sector in the coming week to further refine the deliverables for the 10th JCC.

<https://nation.com.pk/16-Oct-2020/pakistan-will-try-to-sign-framework-agreement-with-china-next-month>

Pak-China Health Corridor to benefit people's livelihood in Pakistan:

Prof Cheng

The construction of the China-Pakistan Health Corridor and the cooperation between China and Pakistan in the field of health can directly benefit the people's livelihood in Pakistan, Cheng Xizhong, visiting professor at Southwest University of Political Science and Law said on Friday.

“China-Pakistan Health Corridor is a very good concept. Initially, we were devoted to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Later, the economic corridor expanded to the cultural corridor and the tourism corridor. Now we are talking about the China-Pakistan Health Corridor,” he said in his article published by China Economic Net (CEN).

Prof Cheng, also a senior fellow of the Charhar Institute, believed that there would be other corridors in the days to come. “This shows that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is constantly enriching and developing.”

He said the construction of the China-Pakistan Health Corridor and the cooperation between China and Pakistan in the field of health could directly benefit the people's livelihood in Pakistan and added, “This shows that the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is becoming more and more pragmatic.”

In his impression, China and Pakistan had cooperated in the field of health for many years. As far back as 2006, the health authorities of China and Pakistan signed a cooperation document in the field of health, which stated that the two sides would strengthen cooperation in the fields of clinical training, traditional medicine, public healthcare, prevention of viral diseases, and surveillance of infectious diseases.

This year, the novel corona virus pneumonia was unprecedentedly spreading worldwide. For joint prevention, control and treatment, the central governments, local governments, medical institutions, enterprises and non-governmental organizations of China and Pakistan had carried out close cooperation, which fully reflected the special friendly relationship between the two countries.

In building the China-Pakistan Health Corridor, he advocated giving full play to two initiatives: one is the initiative of the governments; the other was the initiative of medical institutions. In

addition to the efforts by the two governments, the medical institutions of China and Pakistan should carry out close cooperation.

Recently, he noticed a piece of information from the media that Chinese and Pakistani enterprises would jointly establish a medical laboratory. The incidence rate of cancer in Pakistan was very high, especially in lung cancer and liver cancer. However, due to the current medical and health conditions in Pakistan, patients could not get proper treatment.

<https://nation.com.pk/16-Oct-2020/pak-china-health-corridor-to-benefit-people-s-livelihood-in-pakistan-prof-cheng>

October 17, 2020

Daily Times

CPEC strong pillar of Pak-China all-weather friendship: Ambassador Haque

Pakistan and China are all-weather friends, who have stood by one another in times of hardship, and their partnership during the COVID-19 period has been exemplary, Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque said on Saturday.

According to the ambassador, when the corona virus first hit China, Pakistan stood by China, sending a plane loaded with much-needed supplies, and the Pakistani president undertook a solidarity visit to China in March.

“By the time COVID-19 started spreading in Pakistan, China came to help us in a big way,” the ambassador said in an exclusive interview with China.org.cn. “We are grateful to China for providing critical support to Pakistan in these difficult times.”

Pakistan and China are now cooperating on the development of COVID-19 vaccines, for which phase-3 clinical trials are being conducted jointly by pharmaceutical companies from both countries in Pakistan, Haque said.

The construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has attracted much attention from both inside and outside the two countries.

The ambassador described the CPEC as a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and a strong pillar of China-Pakistan relations.

“It is a mega project of infrastructure development, energy, transport and telecommunication,” explained Haque. “In Phase II, we are going to focus on the areas of agriculture, industry, IT, science and technology, and tourism. Special focus would be on socioeconomic development and poverty alleviation.”

This new important dimension of industrial cooperation under the CPEC will greatly help businesspeople and investors from both countries, the ambassador said.

In recent years, Chinese and Pakistani authorities have worked on multiple cultural and educational exchange programs to strengthen bilateral ties.

The number of Pakistani students studying in China has increased threefold during the past seven years to some 28,000, making it the largest overseas contingent of Pakistani students anywhere in the world.

“We have also established a number of Pakistan Study and Urdu Language Centers at many leading universities in China,” explained the ambassador. “Similarly, there are a number of Confucius Institutes in Pakistan.”

These student exchanges and institutional links are an important component of bilateral cooperation and help promote better understanding between the people of the two countries, Haque added.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

The ambassador said that Pakistan and China have always supported conducting international relations based on the U.N. Charter, and standing against unilateralism.

The ambassador explained: “The COVID-19 crisis with its global spread and impact has once again highlighted the importance of collective efforts and approach.

No country alone can address critical challenges like health, pandemics, climate change and poverty. The international community has to work together for the sake of the collective good of humanity.”

Haque stressed that as responsible countries, China and Pakistan will work together to promote international peace, solidarity and cooperation.

He also spoke highly of China’s success in combating poverty. “In the process of opening-up and reform, China has lifted 800 million people out of poverty.

It has restored the dignity of its people with the provision of basic needs such as clean drinking water, decent work, housing and education. It is an unparalleled achievement in human history.”

According to the ambassador, Pakistan is also focusing on socioeconomic development, and has undertaken wide-ranging poverty alleviation programs inspired by Chinese achievements. “We are learning from China’s experience and taking required reforms to eliminate poverty from our country.”

Pakistan highly appreciates the continued efforts made by China, one of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, for an equitable and just rule-based global system, he added.

Next year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China. The ambassador said the two countries are “Iron Brothers,” and stated that dozens of high-level events and activities will be held to commemorate the special nature of the relationship.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/678923/cpec-strong-pillar-of-pak-china-all-weather-friendship-ambassador-haque/>

Gwadar on way to become ‘Silicon Valley of Pakistan’

China’s experience in building and developing ports and basic infrastructure is certainly benefiting Pakistan and it is expected that soon Gwadar will become the ‘silicon valley’ of Pakistan and could emerge as center for promotion of economic activities at regional and global level.

If we talk about Gwadar, this city is also called city of fishermen like Shenzhen, China’s first special economic zone.

Gwadar is of central importance in the construction of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and projects like Gwadar Port, Gwadar Airport and Gwadar Free Zone are among the priorities of the Government of Pakistan.

It seemed that Gwadar is becoming a hub of industrial and investment activities in Pakistan. China Radio International (CRI) Urdu commented on Friday China is also assisting Pakistan in the construction of Gwadar Port, a natural deep water port which distinguishes it from other nearby ports.

Gwadar Port is also thanks to its strategic geographical location significantly important because it is located at the head of the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf, which can easily establish trade relations with other countries in the region.

Under the CPEC, nine special economic zones will be set up across Pakistan to promote industrialization, which will definitely increase Pakistan’s exports, create a wide range of employment opportunities, and help Pakistan’s connectivity with Central Asian states, including China. And trade ties with other regional countries will be enhanced.

In the field of economic zones, there is vast scope and potential for cooperation and exchanges between China and Pakistan. China is known around the world for its construction and development of special economic zones. And recently addressing the 40th anniversary of the establishment of country’s first “Shenzhen Special Economic Zone”. • Chinese President Xi Jinping vowed to further expand reform and openness.

The importance of the special economic zone can be gauged from the fact that Shenzhen was counted as a small village famous for its fishing but in just four decades the village has become a modern city and today it is known as China’s ‘Silicon Valley’ because of its tremendous economic activity.

During the journey from 1980 to 2019, the city’s GDP grew by 20.7% annually and reached to US\$ 400 billion. Shenzhen’s total imports and exports were US\$ 431 in 2019.

The living standard of people changed dramatically and they have access to quality services in all areas including education, medical care, housing and more. In light of these facts, Shenzhen is

today considered one of the best and most exemplary models of sustainable development in China.

The traditional strong friendship between China and Pakistan is growing stronger with the passage of time. The two countries are not only strong supporters of each other on global and regional platforms but also want strong economic and social development of each other.

In terms of development, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has recently become a strong foundation of stable economic relations between the two countries. The construction of CPEC projects in Pakistan is in full swing and Prime Minister Imran Khan said that the entire nation is united for the protection and construction of CPEC. In the long run, CPEC aims to develop not only Pakistan but the region as a whole.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/678778/gwadar-on-way-to-become-silicon-valley-of-pakistan/>

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan gets ample opportunity to export fruit to China: Yasin

Beijing: China, as the world's major fruit importer and producer, is encouraging Pakistan to export high-quality fresh fruit in the Chinese market, said Mohammad Yasin, CEO of Midtrans. Mohammad Yasin has been living in China for more than 30 years. He told China Economic Net that Pakistan's enterprises can improve the quality of fruits by providing the basic knowledge to our farmers on how to protect and handle fruits.

"The Fruits account 30% to 40% of the total is lost from the field to the market, because of the mishandling, we have to treat each fruit, like an egg. When you mishandling the egg, it will be broken and waste", he mentioned.

He said that after five years, China will be a net importer of food, because they will be a net exporter of industrial products. Therefore, we should focus on our agriculture that is the backbone of the Pakistan economy. As the major beneficiary of Belt and Road Initiatives, Pakistan can get the advantage of the Chinese market by producing those crops which are popular here.

"Pakistani enterprises have to focus on how we can market our fruits, and we have to find overseas markets, which can pay well to our farmers.

There are two ways, by using modern practices we have to increase shelf life of the fruits and the government should provide subsidies in the form of the transportation of the foods to the international markets in this way cost of the product can be a little cheaper and we can compete in the international market," he stated.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-gets-ample-opportunity-to-export-fruit-to-china-yasin/>

The Nation

TikTok management dismayed over ban in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD - After banning Chinese video sharing App in Pakistan, TikTok management yesterday claimed that it continues to engage with the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to demonstrate its commitment to comply with local laws and further enhance its content moderation capacity.

In a statement, it said, “the TikTok mission is to inspire creativity and joy, and that's just what we've done in Pakistan. We've built a community whose creativity and passion has brought joy to households across Pakistan and opened vital economic opportunities to incredibly talented creators.”

It added, “This is why we're disappointed that our users and creators in Pakistan are still unable to access TikTok, more than one week after our services were blocked by the PTA.”

It further said, over the past year, they have made concerted efforts to address questions from the government of Pakistan around their content moderation process, including significantly increasing the capacity of local language content moderation team.

It said that after TikTok was blocked in Pakistan, “we continued to engage with the PTA to demonstrate our commitment to comply with local laws and further enhance our content moderation capacity.”

The management explained that though the PTA acknowledged and appreciated these efforts, their services remain blocked in the country and “we have received no communication from PTA.”

TikTok further said, “We continue to hope that our productive dialogue with the PTA can bring assurance of the government's commitment to a stable, enabling environment whereby we can explore investing further in the market, including in the inspiring talent we've seen thrive on TikTok.”

It also said that if the government of Pakistan decides to reopen access to its services in future, they will certainly assess their allocation of resources to this market. It added that it's unfortunate that Pakistan's vibrant online community is still unable to showcase their talent and creativity to its hundreds of millions of users worldwide.

<https://nation.com.pk/18-Oct-2020/tiktok-management-dismayed-over-ban-in-pakistan>

China willing to help more countries access to COVID-19 vaccine: FM

China has made it clear that it is willing to make efforts within its capacity in vaccine development, and give priority to the needs of developing countries including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Friday.

Wang made the remarks in an exclusive interview with Xinhua after he held talks last week with Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, Indonesian president's special envoy, and Philippine Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin in southwest China's Yunnan Province, and wrapped up Friday his Southeast Asia tour, which has taken him to Cambodia, Malaysia, Laos, Thailand and Singapore.

When talking about how wills China fulfill its commitment to make vaccines a global public good, Wang said that virus knows no borders, and only when all countries get rid of the epidemic can the global fight against the COVID-19 be a final victory.

Vaccines are the "ultimate weapon" to prevail over the epidemic, he noted.

On the issue concerning the life and health of all mankind, the international community should cooperate with each other, he said, adding "We should not fight alone, still less monopolize resources."

Noting that China is one of the frontrunners in vaccine development, Wang said China has shared the genetic sequence of the virus with the World Health Organization in a timely manner at the early stage of the epidemic, creating the necessary conditions for global vaccine development.

China will earnestly fulfill its commitment to make vaccines a global public product once they are successfully developed and put into use, and will contribute to the accessibility and affordability of the vaccines in developing countries, said Wang.

The Southeast countries have spoke highly of China's vaccine research and development and expressed the hope to conduct all-dimension cooperation with China in vaccine research and development, purchase, production and use, he noted.

China is ready to help more countries get access to and be able to afford the vaccines, assist countries eventually overcome the epidemic, and make China's contribution to safeguarding the lives and health of people in the region and around the world, Wang added.

<https://nation.com.pk/17-Oct-2020/china-willing-to-help-more-countries-access-to-covid-19-vaccine-fm>

October 18, 2020

Daily Times

Agro-industrial cooperation gains momentum under CPEC

Agro-industrial cooperation under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been getting momentum in recent months, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday.

This cooperation is an important area of CPEC phase II, under which China announced to set up eight new agricultural institutes in Pakistan. In this connection, private sector has a major role, to

be facilitated by both the governments. As agreed, in this area the Chinese private sector will form joint ventures with Pakistani companies.

It was decided that a leading research center focusing on pest control will be in Karachi. The research will be done on insects and pests and how to protect seeds and plants from these pests. According to the report, both countries agreed to work together to produce high-quality inputs, especially seeds, which are direly needed in Pakistan.

The quality of the seed is the foremost priority for healthy production. Therefore, to improve the seed quality, another research institute will be established from where quality seeds will be provided to the farmers. Moreover, the standards would be set to increase the production.

The CPEC Authority has also prioritized it and is working to make it operational as soon as possible. Agriculture is one of the seven pillars of the long-term CPEC plan. It has been agreed that both countries will work on enhancing cooperation in the agriculture sector.

The Authority's sources said, China will assist Pakistan in developing an agro-industrial base, which is negligible at present. The Fatima Group and China Machinery Engineering Corporation have already signed a MoU for enhancing cooperation. The cooperation will serve multiple objectives.

As Chinese firms are way ahead in terms of technology and experience, it will help to build the capability of Pakistani companies. It will also build the way for technology transfer. The cooperation will help Pakistani companies to secure business due to the presence of Chinese companies in their markets.

Processing of agricultural produce is another weak area where China has started providing assistance to Pakistan. It will donate a date processing plant to Balochistan in accordance with the commitment to investing in areas of southern Balochistan. Dates are an important food product in Balochistan but due to unsatisfactory processing facilities, every year the province loses a huge quantity of dates. Onion, mango and meat processing are other areas which will get assistance from China, the report added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/679118/agro-industrial-cooperation-gains-momentum-under-cpec/>

The Express Tribune

Pakistani students bag 'dream awards' in Beijing

BEIJING: Pakistani students showcased their talent and won prizes in the speech, photography, music, singing and sand painting competitions during the annual 3rd Silk Road and Young Dreams Award ceremony held in Beijing, China.

The ceremony hosted by Silk Road Cities Alliance, China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development, Beijing Belt and Road Cooperative Community and Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies of Renmin University was attended by participants from more than 30 countries.

Deputy Head of Mission, Pakistan Embassy Beijing, Ahmed Farooq graced the occasion and distributed prizes among the winners.

Muhammad Ali Asad from Pakistan Embassy College Beijing (PECB) served as the judge of speech competition.

The contestants from Pakistan, as usual, rocked and won hearts of the viewers of this platform through their speeches, singing, music and art work. The students from Pakistan Embassy College Beijing (PECB) managed to secure a few positions in different categories.

In speech competition, Danish Yaqoob from Pakistan bagged the first prize while Abdul Rehman, a student from PECB secured third position.

Maaz Ali Nadeem, a student of PECB, won the most popular award in photography competition while Areeba Ali and Thembekile, students from PECB, secured the excellence of music and speech contest awards.

Moreover, students from PECB were among the team who read the Health Declaration on the platform of Silk Road and Young Dreams.

This year, all the competitions were held online in the wake of Covid-19 with a theme of Health – amidst this pandemic. •

The participants from across the world took part enthusiastically in the annual contest and spread colors with their enlightened thoughts and performance in all categories.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2268920/pakistani-students-bag-dream-awards-in-beijing>

Banning TikTok and after

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority has blocked the video-sharing app TikTok citing “immoral and indecent” content. PTA says that in view of complaints and the nature of content being consistently posted on TikTok, it had issued its final notice. PTA also claimed that TikTok was given considerable time to respond and comply with instructions to effectively moderate unlawful online content but since it failed to fully comply, directions were issued for blocking.

This is nothing new for TikTok. A social media platform that has done a lot of growth in a very short time, TikTok has been banned in India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Egypt and Malaysia. What is interesting is that the reason behind the ban differs from one country to another. For example, TikTok, which is owned by Chinese technology company Byte Dance Ltd, was banned in India along with 58 other Chinese phone apps, after relations between the two countries deteriorated. India says that these apps are using data illegally, and secretly collecting information from people’s phones.

Bans are being considered by the United States and other Western countries. But is more an effort to punish or censure China and less about the workings of the actual app itself. And it is not the first time that TikTok has been accused of misusing users’ data. TikTok hit back at these claims in 2019 by insisting that they were not influenced by any foreign government, including

the Chinese government. TikTok does not operate in China nor does it have any intention of doing so, it said, adding that the data it stores is based outside of China and is not subject to Chinese law.

In contrast to other countries, Pakistan enjoys excellent relations with China. TikTok has a sizable user base in Pakistan. The app has been installed nearly 43 million times in the country, including 14.7 million installations this year alone, according to data from research firm Sensor Tower. That makes Pakistan TikTok's 12th largest market. The US, by comparison, has seen over 200 million downloads.

But the issue here is internet censorship, which is not new in Pakistan. The government blocked YouTube from 2012 till 2016 after blasphemous content was not removed by the platform. Since 2016, a cyber-security law is in place to regulate internet content. Between June 2018 and May 2019, the country blocked more than 800,000 websites. This year, the Imran Khan government gave regulators power to demand social media platforms remove a range of content. Several apps have already been removed this year. In September, for example, the government said it blocked access to the dating apps Tinder, Tagged, Scout, Grinder and Say Hi on the grounds of "immoral and indecent content".

The PTA has informed TikTok that it "is open for engagement" and will review its decision. For its part, TikTok has already employed a Pakistani-origin content manager in Malaysia to oversee what was being produced here.

The company's transparency report shows that it removed nearly 6.5 million videos in Pakistan between January and June, the third-most of any country behind India and the US. The same report shows the Pakistani government made four requests to TikTok about content, citing 40 user accounts. Only two of those accounts were removed or restricted.

There is a bigger issue at play here. Initially mainstream journalists in Pakistan, like the rest of the world, were amused by TikTok and those on it. But by 2020, that amusement had changed to concern. Audiences were shifting. Jannat Mirza with over 4 million followers and Pinky Francis with over 2 million are just two examples of the birth of the TikTok stars in Pakistan, at the expense of the mainstream media. Unlike websites, literacy is not an issue with digital platforms like TikTok, where most content is in audio or video form.

Some say that these platforms provided the real democratization of the media, given that television channels in comparison were owned and operated by rich and powerful interests. TikTok's growth within Pakistan's lower middle-class — especially during the Covid-19 pandemic — is phenomenal. This has caught everyone by surprise. In contrast, the voices of poor Pakistanis are not well-represented on other social media platforms like Face book and Twitter. Possibly its success led to its demise. In the meantime, TikTok hopes to get back online in Pakistan as it seeks to avert bans elsewhere. Stay tuned for more.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2268934/banning-tiktok-and-after>

October 19, 2020

Daily Times

TikTok services restored in Pakistan

Chinese-owned video-sharing app TikTok has reportedly been restored in Pakistan, it emerged on Monday.

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) had on October 9 banned TikTok for failing to filter out “immoral and indecent” content.

The telecom regulator had said that the decision to ban the app was taken after the authority received a number of “complaints from different segments of the society against immoral and indecent content on the video sharing application.

Earlier, The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority said in a statement on Friday that it was banning TikTok “in view of number of complaints from different segments of the society against immoral/indecent content.” It said it had already informed the company about complaints about its content, but TikTok’s administrators did not address their concerns.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/679596/tiktok-services-restored-in-pakistan/>

Pakistan Observer

With \$103.6 m, China tops FDI country in Pakistan

Islamabad: In terms of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) 2020-2021, China has consolidated its first position as topmost FDI country in Pakistan, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

It poured \$103.6m during the first quarter of FY21 in comparison to \$55.4m last fiscal year. Meanwhile, Hong Kong also increased FDI to \$38.4m during the first quarter compared to just \$6.9m in the same period last fiscal year.

The data mentioned above has been released by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). China’s FDI is proving as a breather for Pakistan as except China the rest of FDI’s outlook has presented a bleak outlook. As per SBP’s recent data, foreign direct investment (FDI) into the Pakistan dropped 50.7 per cent year-on-year in September to \$189 million against \$383.5m last year.

<https://pakobserver.net/with-103-6-m-china-tops-fdi-country-in-pakistan/>

Pakistan keen to learn from China’s experience for poverty alleviation

Beijing: The Chinese government and private institutions play a key role in poverty eradication, and have set an example for the entire World to follow while Pakistan is also carefully watching to learn from their experience.

This was stated by Badar uz Zaman, Commercial Counselor of Pakistan Embassy here, according to China Economic Net (CEN). During the last four decades, more than 700 million people have been taken out of poverty in China, due to the active measures of the Chinese government and at the end of this year China would successfully complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all aspect of life, said Badar uz Zaman.

“It is estimated that around 100 million people worldwide could fall into extreme poverty again due to COVID-19” he added.

He stated that in the far-flung areas, the Chinese government has provided strong support to the farmer’s community, and now they have access to the e-commerce sites, they can sell their products through those websites and making much money.

Similarly, there is a lot of emphasis on the skill development of the Chinese people from poor provinces like Guizhou, Tibet, and Xinjiang.

“China is one of the fastest-growing nations. There has been increasing in GDP on regular basis, and growing income is giving an opportunity to the middle class and the poor segment of the society, to get benefit from it”, he told.

Talking to CEN, the Commercial Counselor said that there is a focus on the high-end industry, like Information Technology and cloud computing. And there is a built-up of infrastructure in those areas where there is a lot of investment going in and the people from those poor areas are getting employment opportunities.

“First China has developed infrastructural even in small and the far-flung areas, then focused on agriculture by providing subsidies to farmers and the poor people across the country. There is also one approach of urbanization They relocate the poor people to the cities, that increased the income level that is far higher than what they were getting in the villages” he stated.

“By learning Chinese experience, Pakistan needs to focus on its GDP growth. We have been experiencing strong growth in the services sector in Pakistan.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-keen-to-learn-from-chinas-experience-for-poverty-alleviation/>

October 20, 2020

Dunya News

China lauds NSA Moeed Yusuf's remarks about Xinjiang

BEIJING (APP) – China on Tuesday lauded Prime Minister’s Advisor on National Security, Moeed Yusuf for his remarks about the situation in Xinjiang and upholding a fair and objective stance on the relevant issue.

“China commends this position. It proves that seeing believes. China commends Pakistani side for upholding a fair and objective position on relevant issue,” Chinese Foreign Ministry’s Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing held here.

He said, in fact, the international community knows very well that what the truth is on Xinjiang related issues.

“As many as 48 countries made a joint statement at the third committee of the UN General Assembly expressing just stance on relevant issue.”

He said, these countries showed their understanding and support to China’s position and opposed politicizing and applying double standard on human rights issues and also opposed groundless accusations against China.

“This shows people know what is true and what is false,” he added.

Zhao informed that since 2018, more than a thousand people from more than 90 countries and regions have visited Xinjiang. They have seen themselves that Xinjiang is stable, prosperous and enjoying rapid development.

He said, all spoke highly on counter terrorism and de-radicalization efforts in Xinjiang. They believe these efforts are worth learning.

“We welcome all people upholding objective and fair stance to visit Xinjiang where they can see what is happening in Xinjiang on ground,” he added.

Zhao said that the Chinese side believes that more countries will speak for truth and for justice just like Pakistan has done.

National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf said in a recent interview that Pakistani delegations visited Xinjiang and saw the real situation there. People of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang enjoy equal rights protected by law and lead happy lives.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/569487-China-lauds-NSA-Moeed-Yusuf-remarks-about-Xinjiang>

The News

CPEC helps improve security situation in Pakistan promoting tourism

BEIJING: With development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), improvement of the infrastructure and the security situation, and especially when the novel coronavirus pneumonia is effectively controlled, Pakistan’s eco-tourism will definitely develop greatly in the days to come.

This was stated in a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday, quoting Prof. Cheng Xizhong, China’s former Defense Attache in South Asian countries. According to Prof. Cheng, there are various ways and means to further develop the tourism sector.

First, Pakistan's tourism industry is now at the participation stage of the development life cycle of tourist destinations, so a good job should be done in market segmentation and attraction of foreign adventure tourists.

Second, Pakistan's security situation has gradually improved in recent years. The Pakistani government should consolidate its achievements in fighting terrorism and maintaining stability.

In particular, Pakistan's security agencies should further strengthen the security protection of foreign projects and personnel, so as to give foreign tourists a strong sense of safety. Third, resolute measures should be taken to control the spread of the second wave of COVID-19. Novel coronavirus pneumonia is a serious disaster in South Asia.

Now, more than 7.45 million confirmed cases have been diagnosed in India, and the death toll has exceeded 110 thousand. The number of confirmed cases will soon surpass that of the United States and India will become the most serious pandemic country in the world. Obviously,

India has completely failed to control the pandemic. Bangladesh, with a population of 160 million, has more than 380,000 confirmed cases with nearly 6000 deaths. Nepal, with a population of only 27 million, has nearly 130,000 confirmed cases.

By contrast, Pakistan's prevention and control measures are very strong and effective. Especially with the implementation of smart lockdown and standard operating procedures (SOP), Pakistan has successfully managed to control the spread of COVID-19.

The pandemic has a fatal impact on the tourism industry. Therefore, the government of Pakistan should continue to take resolute and effective measures to prevent the new wave of pandemic spread.

Prof. Cheng Xizhong added, that he strongly believe that Pakistan has great potential to develop eco-tourism. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), in 2019, the contribution rate of tourism industry to Pakistan's GDP was 5.9%, creating 3.9 million jobs.

According to my calculation, if Pakistan's tourism industry develops to the level of China, its contribution rate to Pakistan's GDP will increase by 5.1% to 11%, and additional 2.37 million jobs will be created.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/732132-cpec-helps-improve-security-situation-in-pakistan-promoting-tourism>

October 21, 2020

Daily Times

Chinese urged to invest in SEZs in Pakistan for industrial uplift

Chinese industrial enterprises should invest in Pakistan's Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and cooperate with Pakistani partners to help improve its production and export capacity of industrial products, Cheng Xizhong, visiting professor at Southwest University of Political Science and Law said on Tuesday.

Recently, three new SEZs are formally approved by the Board of Approvals (BOA), headed by the Prime Minister Imran Khan, taking the total number to 20.

These three SEZs include National Science & Technology Park, Islamabad, JW-SEZ China-Pakistan SEZ in Punjab, and Dhabeji SEZ in Sindh, Cheng, also a senior fellow of the Charhar Institute said in his article published by China Economic Net (CEN).

Prime Minister Imran Khan said the country has entered the industrialization phase and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will help boost the industrial sector. "I remember that in March 2020, the Pakistani government approved ten SEZs in four provinces, including five in Punjab, two each in Sindh and Balochistan and one in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. After half a year, the number of SEZs in Pakistan has increased to 20, which shows that the federal government of Pakistan attaches great importance to the development of SEZs, and that local governments at all levels all are striving for the construction of SEZs," he added.

Cheng said, as Prime Minister Imran Khan said, speeding up the construction of SEZs can promote Pakistan's industrialization and modernization, adding, his analysis is that SEZs construction has at least the following functions.

Firstly, it will enhance the production and export capacity of industrial products.

Secondly, it will introduce foreign capital, advanced technology and management experience. Thirdly, it will create a large number of employment opportunities. Fourthly, it will accelerate the economic development of specific regions and form a new industrial structure and social economic structure, which will drive the economic development of the whole country.

During the four decades of reform and opening up, China has accumulated a lot of successful experience in the construction of SEZs.

He opined there are three main points in China-Pak cooperation in this regard. First of all, China may unreservedly share its experience with Pakistan on SEZ development. Pakistan may introduce capital, advanced technology and management experience from China. Chinese industrial enterprises should invest in Pakistan's SEZs and cooperate with Pakistani partner to help improve its production and export capacity of industrial products.

As the development of Pakistan's SEZs is just in the start-up step, it is naturally to encounter various difficulties. He observed that the most important thing is that we should resist the temptation to overreach. It is understandable that governments at all levels in Pakistan wish to develop SEZs, but it is not conducive to concentrating financial resources on major ones.

What is urgently needed is to build two or three SEZs first, and then put them into operation immediately, so as to produce economic benefits and demonstration effects. To realize industrialization and modernization is the only way for Pakistan to eliminate poverty, enhance its position of strength and safeguard its national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"Therefore, I have repeatedly stressed the importance of industrialization and modernization in Pakistan." China's efforts to help Pakistan build the CPEC and SEZs are all aimed at helping Pakistan realize industrialization and modernization. The construction of SEZs is the enrichment and development of the CPEC.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/680104/chinese-urged-to-invest-in-sezs-in-pakistan-for-industrial-uplift/>

Dunya News

China lauds President Alvi's remarks about CPEC

BEIJING (APP) – China on Wednesday lauded President Dr. Arif Alvi's remarks about the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and terming it as a visionary pilot project of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which not only served to promote socio economic development of Pakistan and China but also aimed to enhance regional connectivity and shared prosperity.

"We have noted these reports and we commend President Alvi's comments on the CPEC," Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson, Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing held here.

"As President Dr Arif Alvi said the visionary CPEC as important pilot project of the BRI not only serves to promote China and Pakistan's socio economic development but also aims to enhance regional connectivity and share prosperity," he added.

He said, since its launch tangible outcomes in areas like energy, transportation infrastructure and ports had been achieved making concrete contributions to Pakistan's national development.

Zhao Lijian remarked that both Pakistan and China supported exploring possibility of opening the corridor to third parties based on consensus through consultation.

"If we look at Gwadar port as an example nearly 20,000 tones of commodities such as wheat, sugar and fertilizers have been transferred through the port to Afghanistan creating almost a 1000 temporary jobs," he added.

He said that China firmly supported the development of CPEC and stood ready to work with Pakistan to fully implement the consensus reached between the two leaders, focus on cooperation, social development, livelihood, industry and agriculture while advancing current

projects to turn CPEC into a demonstration program for high quality development of the BRI and bring more benefits to the two peoples.

In an interview, President Alvi had said that he was optimistic about the future of Pakistan. As a result of CPEC projects, Pakistan was going to emerge as international geo strategic Economic hub.

He said, the CPEC also created favorable conditions for realizing connectivity between China, Pakistan and central Asian countries and Pakistan would further elevate cooperation with China various areas and accelerate high quality development CPEC.

In a response to a question, he contradicted remarks of the US Secretary of State about influence of China's infrastructure deals from Laos to Montenegro to Pakistan.

He said that for some US politicians, attacking China was a check-list they need to do every day. "This is so true for Pompeo."

Zhao Lijian said that China's relationship with Laos, Pakistan and Montenegro was a traditional friendship and the US Secretary of State Pompeo did not need to waste his breath on sowing discord between us.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/569633-China-lauds-President-Alvi-remarks-about-CPEC>

Pakistan Observer

Emerging fisheries sector in Pakistan & CPEC

FISHERIES is defined as the science of producing fish and other aquatic resources for the purpose of providing human food, apart from having fishing for recreational purposes like sports or for obtaining fish products like oils. Fisheries include wild fisheries and farm fishing both in oceans and fresh water. Generally 90 percent of fishing takes place in open seas and an estimated figure suggests that about 500 million people worldwide are economically dependent on fisheries. When we talk about Pakistan, our country is blessed with more than 1000kms long coastline which not only carries diverse types of sea food and fish but has immense economic potential which can be tapped via this coastline.

Pakistan has both marine and inland farm fishing resources and it is said that about one million tons per year economic potential can be achieved from this sector of fisheries. Apart from fishing in open seas and having farms near fresh waterways, Pakistan is also promoting aquaculture which can facilitate fisheries more. Aquaculture is the breeding, nurturing and harvesting of fish, algae and other organisms in all types of water environments. With the growing demand of seafood, western countries particularly with the advancement of technology, has made aquaculture possible both in coastal marine waters, open seas and oceans. Aquaculture is a method used to produce food and other commercial products, restore habitat and refill wild stocks, and rebuild populations of threatened and endangered fish species. Aquaculture is yet to be promoted in Pakistan, whereas this sector has immense potential for Pakistan, it needs a lot of

improvement too. According to statistics, the fisheries sector in Pakistan as a whole contributes to about one percent to the country's GDP and provides jobs for about one percent of the country's labor force, which is unfortunately very low for a country where potential exists but is not given much importance. Freshwater carp farming is the major aquaculture activity in Punjab, Sindh and KPK. The northern mountains of Pakistan have good potential for trout culture but production in these colder regions is still very small.

While considering CPEC as a golden opportunity and with the fact that China is helping Pakistan in every sector to prosper and develop, CPEC carries immense significance. CPEC after energy and infrastructure development in phase-I has now entered in phase-II where focus is on industrialization. Taking the opportunities available during phase-II developmental stage, Pakistan can improve a lot in fisheries and aquaculture sector as China in the last two decades have extensively grown in marine aquaculture and freshwater inland fisheries. In Pakistan, earlier research by teams of both China and Pakistan suggests that Khyber- Pakhtunkhwa, AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan are the major cold water fish potential areas of Pakistan. They possess a rich variety of freshwater habitats, including major rivers, streams and lakes. These fresh water resources offer significant opportunities for the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture. Pakistan Agriculture Research Council took an initiative of establishing a cold water fish laboratory at its research station namely Mountain Agriculture Research Centre (MARC) in Juglote, Gilgit with the technical cooperation of Gansu Fisheries Research Institute (GFRI), China to produce seed of new cold water fish species and to multiply them in Gilgit-Baltistan, KP and AJK after necessary initial research. Such initiatives like tapping existing industry, training of farmers, establishing industries and research on fisheries can transform opportunities into economic gains but it will also improve livelihood of particular areas. Cold water fisheries especially trout farming is an area with immense potential for the poverty reduction and providing livelihood to the population of northern areas and development of fisheries in these areas will not only help tackle food security challenge but fish as an important source of protein can be alternate to other expensive meat products. Apart from trout, other cold water fish species like Rainbow, golden trout, brook trout and salmon fish can also enhance overall yield of fish. Likewise, if northern areas have cold water fish, Pakistan's coastal region has moderate climate characterized by short and mild winters which provides appropriate environment for longer-duration production cycles of catfish, tilapia, sole, shrimp and lobster.

Pakistan, while declaring year 2020 as the year for 'Blue Economy' has realized the potential it carries in its seas and coastal areas but yet that has long way to go with more challenges. According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, in June 2019, Pakistan exported \$32.168 million of seafood, which is higher by 19 percent or \$5.125 million from \$27.043 million in June 2018. Seafood export quantity also grew by 19 percent or 2392 metric tons to 15,213 metric tons in June 2019 from 12,821 metric tons in June 2018. However, in terms of volume, Pakistan's seafood export declined to 195,523 metric tons in July-June 2018-19 from 196,927 metric tons in July-June 2017-18, showing a fall of one percent or 1404 metric tons. Pakistan has a lot of potential for sea-crop in order to fulfill demand by other countries, but yes in this regard

governmental policies, public-private partnership and more importantly we as sea-blind nation need to improve ourselves. CPEC can facilitate us in the domain of fisheries as China is world's largest producer, consumer, processor and exporter of fisheries and well understands Asian and other markets for fish.

Pakistan having different varieties of fish fauna in its waters can benefit from not only identifying potential markets but having SEZ's in particular areas can help in storage and preservation of sea food where warehouses can be established with proper requirements to maintain the quality for longer period. Worldwide fishery is considered as a cost-effective business and countries invest a lot in the development of such areas having economic potential. In Pakistan, we have major fish harbors at Karachi Fisheries Harbor, Korangi Fish Harbor, Pasni Fish Harbor and Gwadar Fish, where traditional methods of fish catching are quite helpful but support to local fisherman in terms of financial help, provision of better fishing equipment and safety boats, awareness and knowledge about sea climate and nature of fish existing in particular area can be very beneficial to them. Initiation of different projects under the umbrella of CPEC, will not only help Pakistan to work more on those areas which can give economic boom to the country and fisheries is one of those sectors where potential can be explored with joint ventures, enhanced technology, better administration and burgeoning markets.

<https://pakobserver.net/emerging-fisheries-sector-in-pakistan-cpec/>

CPEC: A grand economic alliance

THE China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a grand economic alliance and commitment of both the countries to enhance socio-economic prosperity, bilateral trade, joint ventures and last but not the least, energy cooperation. It is an ideal platform to achieve desired goals of economic self-reliance, reduction of poverty, generation of new jobs and, of course, seeking more and more inflows of foreign direct investments (FDIs).

Most recently, on October 15, 2020 the Indian Defense Research Wing (IDRW) republished a controversial article entitled "CPEC is a de facto security alliance" on its webpage. It intentionally termed it a de facto security alliance and tried to contaminate the basic concept of the CPEC being a mega economic growth engine for both the countries and rest of the region too.

The said article correlated the CPEC with so-called long term plan of China & Pakistan to guillotine occupied Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh from India. It further labeled ongoing China-India stand-off as brainchild of the CPEC. It further narrated China as "cautious bully" in its use of military, economic and strategic coercion in the region which has no substance because CPEC is purely meant for economic cooperation and further enhancing of energy mills and nothing to do with military cooperation, coordination and collaboration.

CPEC was designed to reduce physical distances, political barriers and promote blue or maritime economies. In this regard, the said article propagated against strategic importance of the Gwadar seaport and termed it a potential military port for China which is absolutely false, untrue and

speculative. The jewel of Pakistan i.e. Gwadar seaport is meant to jell sea routes for easy and smooth supplies of energy resources (oil & gas) and merchant commodities.

It may establish a shortest route between Gwadar and Kashghar region of China which is situated near the borders of Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Pakistan. It may be used for strategic expansion of the CPEC in Central Asian Region (CAR) in the days to come. Kashghar has become a trading hub and one of the important cities on the Silk Road between China, the Middle East and Europe. It has a vast Special Economic Zone (SEZ) which may be further utilized for the greater regional connectivity under the framework of CPEC.

Kashghar also holds a strategic position/location by forming a hub of the Karakoram Highway, which is under tremendous expansion and reconstruction under the umbrella of the CPEC. It criss-crosses China's energy supplies to Kashghar and western China to transport it 12,900 km from the Middle East Region (MER) through the Strait of Malacca to ports in Hong Kong and Tianjin and thereafter move it overland another 4,100 km. Thus Gwadar seaport has socio-economic significance between the two countries.

According to Chinese official figures (2020) almost 80 percent of China's oil has been shipped through the Malacca Strait, making it a potential severe choke point close to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands thus the Chinese desire to diversify its logistics and develop Gwadar seaport which has nothing to do with any military de facto alliance, base or imminent naval port. The supply route between Gwadar and Kashghar is considered an energy security lifeline for China's far west.

CPEC also develops roads, super highways, railways, digital connectivity links, energy power plants (thermal, solar, coal, nuclear and thermal) industrial units, agricultural development, and extraction and utilization of Pakistan's mineral resources. Thus it does not have any hidden agenda for military expansion in the region.

According to a most recently published article entitled "CPEC set for expansion: China Pakistan plans for additional road networks" in The Economic Times (India) Pakistan has now decided to include at least three more mega road projects in the CPEC which will be tabled and discussed in the upcoming 10th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC).

It includes construction of 210 KM western route, Swat Highway Express Phase-II and Peshawar-DI Khan Motorway under the CPEC. The Economic Times of India termed it suspicious and connected it to security of the region. But critical analysis shows that it has nothing to do with regional security but has tangible validity and relevancy with greater regional connectivity. Thus Indian media's propaganda may not succeed to tarnish the soft image of the CPEC and, of course, China and Pakistan.

Its massive digitization project includes a cross-border optical fiber cable linking Pakistan and China. CPEC is being used to further integrate the two economies, giving a golden opportunity to economic stability and sustainability to Pakistan's macro-economy. Despite regional as well

as international media onslaught CPEC is estimated to create around 700,000-1,000,000 new jobs and add 2.5 percent to Pakistan's annual GDP growth rate.

Indian mass media has been constantly and purposefully created doubts about its investment price (\$62 billion to \$ 100 billion) till 2030. It is not based on facts. CPEC's energy plants have already reduced energy deficits. Coal-fired power plants, each producing 1320 MW, at Sahiwal in Pakistani Punjab, and Port Qasim, Karachi have further reduced energy deficit. The said Indian article projected CPEC loans as high interest oriented which may trap Pakistan into deep sea of debts in the days to come which is untrue and speculative.

It categorically projected China to take equity ownership of these installed projects in Pakistan after imminent failure of recovery of loans. In this context, the Planning Commission of Pakistan, SECP and SBP have already strongly rejected these baseless allegations of all the regional countries and especially India.

India has consistently opposed the CPEC because it supports development activities and projects in Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Indian government and its External Affairs Ministry projected Gilgit-Baltistan as disputed area which needs to be re-shaped and redesigned according to wishes and designs of India's hegemony. The COAS General Qamar Bajwa had a meaningful meeting with all the political parties on the issue of Gilgit-Baltistan. So civilian-army leadership seems to be on one page.

CPEC is a mega economic program between China and Pakistan which does not have any military passion, desire of misadventure, promotion of arms race, establishment of military or naval ports and last but not the least, secretive designs of escalations. Thus CPEC stands for economic reliability, self-reliance, promotion of productive channels and last but not the least, massive industrialization.

Being a prominent regional expert of CPEC & BRI, I urge India and the international community to come out of their self-defined and self-inserted definitions of debts, security risk and violation of basic concepts of territorial sovereignty and economic supremacy of the recipient country. CPEC merely stands for economic equality and befitting equity in which capitalistic coercion has no role to play.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-a-grand-economic-alliance/>

20,000 masks donated by China distributed among local businessmen

Islamabad: All 20,000 masks donated by Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (BPAFFC) and other Chinese NGOs, were distributed to local communities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

All Pakistan-China Friendship Association (APCFA) received the masks after customs clearance and distributed the masks to local communities' members including health workers in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. APCFA also distributed masks to pedestrians on streets who haven't worn masks.

According to Gwadar Pro, recipients received the masks with much thankfulness and pleasure. They believe that those masks are useful and meaningful for Pakistani people, especially in the severe pandemic period.

APCFA wrote a letter to BPAFFC, saying “We are happy to receive from our friends in China – BPAFFC, Beijing Minhe Foundation for International Exchanges and the Beijing NGO Network for International Exchanges the timely donation of 20,000 medical masks as a token of people-to-people friendship and steadfast support to us in Pakistan.

<https://pakobserver.net/20000-masks-donated-by-china-distributed-among-local-businessmen/>

The Express Tribune

China to invest in Pakistan’s Digital City

ISLAMABAD: Chinese hi-tech companies including Oppo and Haier are interested in investing in Pakistan’s first-ever Digital City, according to K-P IT Board spokesperson Danish.

He said that the Pakistan Digital City project is presently in its planning stage. K-P has allocated an area of more than 43,000 square meters for first phase of the project in Haripur, a few miles north of Islamabad, he said.

The area has been fenced and development work is under way. This is an ideal location, being close to the communication equipment producers like Telephone Industries of Pakistan (TIP) and National Radio and Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC). The project site is also adjacent to the planned Pak-Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology.

Danish said that consultancy firm National Engineering Services of Pakistan (Nespak) is responsible for planning and designing the project, while NRTC will be a key implementing partner.

The Pakistan Digital City will host various information and communication technology (ICT) companies and form various clusters such as electronics cluster, software development cluster and research and innovation cluster, he said. It will create 50,000 direct and indirect jobs, the spokesperson said.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2269216/china-to-invest-in-pakistans-digital-city>

The News

India-China standoff termed threatening for GB & CPEC

PESHAWAR: The China Study Centre, University of Peshawar, organized a webinar on “Exploring China and India Relations in Global, Regional and Bilateral Perspectives in 2020” on Tuesday.

In his welcome remarks, Prof Dr Zahid Anwar, Director, China Study Centre, said that China and India are two important countries in the Asian continent and the two most populous states in the world as well.

He said there is a need to objectively analyze the nature of the relationship between China and India.

The director said unprecedented changes are taking place globally and regionally and this is high time to discuss this important relationship in the context of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Trade War, Indo-Pacific Initiative and other mega projects.

The webinar was attended online by a number of experts, scholars and professors from different parts of Pakistan and China. A number of students also participated in the webinar.

Those who shared their views on the occasion included Dr Talat Shabir, Director, China Pakistan Study Centre, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, Dr Ghulam Ali, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Sichuan University of Science and Engineering, Hasan Daud Butt, Chief Executive Officer, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Information Technology, Dr Minhas Majeed, Department of International Relations, University of Peshawar and others.

Dr Minhas Majeed said that the USA was trying to contain China and there was the convergence of interests on this point between USA and India.

She spoke about China-India standoff in Himalaya and its implications for regional security.

Indian aggressive moves in that region raise concern for the security of Gilgit-Baltistan and CPEC, she added. China has an upper hand in this confrontation and in case India curtails its trade with China, it will further harm its economy, she said.

Dr Talat Shabir said the current global political system was led by the USA and in this situation both China and US were furthering their own interests.

He said the USA considered India important for containing China globally and regionally.

“China is pursuing the policy of win-win and economic development. China and India should launch a dialogue to resolve their disputes, he suggested.

Dr Ghulam Ali, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Sichuan University of Science and Engineering, said wisdom would be required to contain the conflict between China and India in the long run.

Hasan Daud Butt said in 2019 trade between China and India was around \$90 billion. He said the industrial setup in India has not taken the shape the way they wanted especially under the Modi government.

Hasan Daud Butt said Covid-19 showed the vulnerability of India where its economy is sliding down with much faster pace and that its inspiration and aspiration to become a military or economic power is also going down at the same speed.

On the other hand the Chinese economy is rising in the post-COVID era. He said that it would be a momentous mistake by India to escalate the situation in the Himalaya.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/732596-india-china-standoff-termed-threatening-for-gb-cpec>

October 22, 2020

Dawn News

IG, Chinese envoy review CPEC staff security

LAHORE: Chinese Consul General Long Ding bin on Wednesday held a meeting with Punjab inspector general of police to review security for Chinese experts working on CPEC projects in the province.

During the meeting that held at the Central Police Office, IGP Inam Ghani said special security measures were taken to guard Chinese experts, including craftsmen, businessmen and other citizens, working on the CPEC projects and visiting different districts of Punjab.

He said well-equipped Special Protection Unit (SPU) was working hard to ensure the security of Chinese citizens, while district police officers were also visiting the CPEC sites on a monthly basis to review their security arrangements.

The counsel general said bilateral cooperation for providing modern resources and facilities to Punjab police would be further enhanced.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1586361/ig-chinese-envoy-review-cpec-staff-security>

Pakistan Observer

China enhances support to Pakistan for industrialization under CPEC

Beijing: China's efforts to help Pakistan build the CPEC and SEZs are all aimed at helping Pakistan realize industrialization and modernization.

According to a report published by China Economic Net, the construction of SEZs is the enrichment and development of the CPEC. Recently, three new Special Economic Zones (SEZs) is formally approved by the Board of Approvals (BOA), taking the total number to 20. CEN's Special Commentator Prof. Cheng Xizhong in his analysis said that SEZs will enhance the production and export capacity of industrial products. Secondly, it will introduce foreign capital, advanced technology and management experience. Thirdly, it will create a large number of employment opportunities.

Fourthly, it will accelerate the economic development of specific regions and form a new industrial structure and social-economic structure, which will drive the economic development of the whole country. According to Prof. Cheng, during the four decades of reform and opening up, China has accumulated a lot of successful experience in the construction of SEZs. There are

three main points in China-Pak cooperation in this regard. First of all, China may unreservedly share its experience with Pakistan on SEZ development. Pakistan may introduce capital, advanced technology and management experience from China.

Chinese industrial enterprises should invest in Pakistan's SEZs and cooperate with Pakistani partners to help improve its production and export capacity of industrial products. As the development of Pakistan's SEZs is just in the start-up step, it is naturally to encounter various difficulties.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-enhances-support-to-pakistan-for-industrialization-under-cpec/>

The News

CPEC to create job opportunities: Qureshi

MULTAN: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi Wednesday said CPEC is a game changer and it would create job opportunities.

Talking to ex-Punjab minister industries Khawaja Jalaluddin Roomi at his residence, the Foreign Minister said the government was making honest efforts to bring positive changes in life of each section of society and soon relief would be extended to the masses. He said the south Punjab is emerging as big trade centre owing to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

He said the South Punjab Administrative Secretariat has started functions and nobody would reverse the creation of south Punjab province. Qureshi said the CPEC is a game changer and it would create job opportunities and route for progress in southern Punjab. The south Punjab will be a business hub in coming days. He said the government is taking favorable measures and initiatives for the establishment of new industries in south Punjab.

Roomi said the government should devise a strategy for the promotion of high value crops. He suggested the government to allocate maximum resources for high value crops besides preparing a foolproof cotton management strategy to get a bumper crop. The strategy must ensure financial incentives to growers, he said. Roomi underlined the need for expediting work on health projects in south Punjab. He offered the philanthropists are ready to contribute in health projects. He told the Foreign Minister that his family had put up numbers of patient's health welfare projects at Nishtar hospital and he is interested to expand it to the south Punjab districts.

He underlined the need to expand education infrastructure in south Punjab to end backwardness, creating new jobs in the region.

Qureshi welcomed his suggestions and said all are practicable and valuable. He said the government would soon start work on his suggestions.

Ateel visits Vehari, Mailsi, inspects crops: South Punjab Agriculture Secretary Saqib Ali Ateel Wednesday directed the agriculture department experts to ensure off season management of pink bollworm after the last picking of crop. He visited Vehari and Mailsi and inspected the crops of cotton, maize and other crops and directed the agriculture department to instruct growers that

they should graze cattle or break open bowls before cutting the sticks after the last picking of cotton so that the next crop of cotton can be protected from the attack of Pink Cinnamon. He directed to include bio-pesticides on vegetables and herbs as well as IGR spray trials for off-season management of whiteflies. He urged farmers to cultivate approved varieties of wheat. He said farmers should also be instructed to cultivate canola or mustard on wheat field soils to protect the wheat crop from pests. He said farmers should complete the cultivation of wheat until November 30 to get better yield. Ateel directed the Director Farms and Training to conduct trails of wheat sowing on wheat beds through adoptive research and share their results and their findings with the agriculture department.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/733113-cpec-to-create-job-opportunities-qureshi>

China's plastic machinery getting popular in Pakistan

BEIJING: Commercial Counselor of Pakistani Embassy Badar ur Zaman here said that the plastic machinery exported from China is getting popular in Pakistan and collaboration in the plastic industry between the two countries is increasing.

China is one of the major suppliers of plastic materials like PVC, PE, and other materials. It's also one of the largest exporters of man-made fiber. "Chinese investors have a strong interest in investing in the textile industry of Pakistan, and we are looking forward to organizing more and more events in the machinery industry."

According to Gwadar Pro on Wednesday, he expressed these views at the opening ceremony of the 18th International online Exhibition for Plastic & Packing Industry, 17th International Exhibition for Food & Beverage Processing Packaging Technologies.

The event was co-organized by China National Machinery Industry International Co. Ltd, CMEC International Exhibition Co., Ltd, and Pegasus Consultancy Pvt. Ltd.

Guo Chunshui, Commercial Counselor of the Economic and Commercial Office, Chinese Consulate General in Karachi, said at the occasion that there is a great potential for cooperation between China and Pakistan.

"The Chinese government encourages Chinese companies with strength and reputation to invest in Pakistan to deepen exchange and cooperation in the sectors of the economy, trade, ecology, science and technology, culture, people's livelihood, and other fields,."

We jointly build China-Pakistan relationship as an example of good neighborhood, a pillar to support regional peace and stability, and a benchmark of international cooperation in the BRI, and build a closer China-Pakistan community with common future in the new era.

China is willing to build more platforms to promote the world's economic and trade cooperation, especially the exports from other countries to China."

Hassan Daud Butt, CEO of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade pointed out that the active participation of Pakistani enterprises in the online exhibition would provide a

great stimulus to Pakistan's packaging industry, food and beverage industry, and plastics industry. KP province has exported a lot of products to Afghanistan and beyond.

He believes industrialists and investors can benefit a lot from the cooperation and use of Pakistan's geo-strategic location, as well as the leverage policies of the Pakistani government and government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Saadat Eijaz, Former Senior Vice Chairman of Flexible Packaging Association of Converters of Pakistan stressed that in the past, the flexible packaging sector has shown remarkable potential for development and has successfully attracted many leading enterprises to establish cooperative relations with local industries and buyers.

"I am sure that international buyers and sellers from China will find Pakistan as their next destination of doing business in this region." He said.

Ms. Su Dongping, Executive Vice President of China Plastics Machinery Association, Abdul Rehman Akzaz, President of Pakistan Association of Automotive Parts and Accessories Manufactures and Mr. Xia Wendi, President of China National Machinery Industry International Cooperation also attended the opening ceremony and gave speeches on the basic situation of the exhibition.

According to resources, this exhibition brings together about 80 exhibitors from China and Pakistan, and it is expected that about 1,000 professional buyers will log on to the cloud platform for online exhibition to communicate with the exhibitors.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/733115-china-s-plastic-machinery-getting-popular-in-pakistan>

October 23, 2020

Daily Times

Business community hopes new Chinese envoy will help promote industrialization

The business community of Pakistan has widely welcomed the appointment of Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday.

People in Pakistan believe that Mr. Nong, with his strong credentials will play a pivotal role in facilitating the CPEC as it enters the second phase with a particular focus on agriculture, industrialization and socio-economic development.

President of Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry SM Naveed, welcoming the appointment of the new ambassador, said, "We hope that the new Chinese Envoy would be focusing on the second phase of CPEC and will push forward the process of industrialization in

Pakistan. His background in trade and economy gives him an added advantage to promote CPEC projects and reinforce Pakistan-China Economic ties.”

Ambassador Nong Rong is also known as ‘Mr. Double Port’ as he has been credited with building two ports in East Asia. “We hope that he will play a critical role in the completion of Gwadar Port as well as the projects allied with it,” Adil Mahmood, President of Sheikhpura Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said. “The business community was keenly looking forward to welcoming the new ambassador to Pakistan and there was a hope that he will build stronger and durable bridges between the business communities of both countries.”

The academic community of Pakistanis also quite hopeful that the new Chinese envoy will open a new chapter in the Pakistan-China ties. Lt Col (r) Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director of Center for Global Strategic Studies (CGSS), a think-tank based in Islamabad, while expressing best wishes for Ambassador Nong Rong to further deepen Pakistan-China All-weather strategic partnership maintained, “We hope Mr. Nong will deepen Pakistan and China’s academic relations enabling both countries to become intimately aware of their common destiny and future.”

Nong Rong’s experience in the trade, economics, and investment will help steer close coordination and consultations between Pakistan and China to complete CPEC, a landmark project of President Xi’s BRI. The new envoy has been closely associated with administering multi-cultural and multi-lingual administrative units. He served as the Vice Minister of the United Front Work Department of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Party Committee. Nong Rong has also served as the deputy to the 13th National People’s Congress and member of the 11th Party Committee of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. He is expected to reach Pakistan soon.

Meanwhile, former president ICCI Shahid Rasheed Butt on Thursday lauded the decision of Prime Minister Imran Khan to boost trade and ties with African nations by opening new diplomatic missions in twenty countries. The business community fully backs the government’s decision, as it will boost exports while these countries can start investing in Pakistan, he said.

Shahid Rasheed Butt who is also honorary Consul General of Ghana said that the decision is well in time as the implementation stage of the African Continental Free Trade Area is due to begin in a few months.

Many African nations are also interested in CPEC and opening embassies there will result in enhanced economic cooperation, he observed. He said that the government has planned to discover new markets to improve exports to Africa, the second largest continent in the world with 54 sovereign states, almost 1.5 billion of population and a collective GDP of \$2.6 trillion.

The business community has been demanding for linkages to Africa but the former governments relied on promises while the current government has moved in this direction which is laudable.

The government should develop a plan to identify mutual partners from different countries as India and other countries continue to expand their presence in Africa since years, he informed.

He said that all embassies should establish display centers for exportable products and the private sector should also play their role to get into these new markets.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/680959/business-community-hopes-new-chinese-envoy-will-help-promote-industrialisation/>

Pakistan Observer

China's appreciation for Pakistan

SPOKESPERSON of Chinese Foreign Ministry Zhao Lijian has appreciated Pakistan's objective and just position on issues relating to Xinjiang. While praising Pakistan for its stand, he expressed the confidence that more and more countries would voice their just observation, just like the Pakistan side.

It is regrettable that despite transparent policy and attitude of China, some countries of the world and some sections of the Western media continue to harp on the theme of human rights violations in Xinjiang just to malign Beijing. Unlike India, which is not allowing access to media and neutral observers in Occupied Kashmir, China has nothing to hide and is liberally allowing visit to the region by members of the international community to see for themselves what is actually happening there. This is evident from the fact that more than one thousand people from over 90 countries of the globe have visited Xinjiang during the last one and a half year and have spoken high of the policies of China aimed at welfare and progress of the people of the area. Those visiting Xinjiang also included a Pakistani delegation, led by National Security Advisor Moeed Yusuf, who commented that people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang enjoy equal rights protected by law and lead happy lives, adding that Xinjiang was a non-issue. Zhao Lijian has also pointed out that not long ago, 48 countries made a joint statement in support of China on issues relating to Xinjiang at the UNGA Third Committee, voicing their understanding and support for China's just position and their opposition to politicization and double standard on human rights issues and to wanton accusation and interference targeting China. Propaganda on the issues of Xinjiang and Hong Kong is, in fact, designed to create hiccups in the steady march of China on the road to economic progress. However, despite attempts by ill-wishers, China is determined to continue its march forward as has been confirmed by the recently released report by IMF "World Economic Output 2020" which said China has overtaken the US to become the world's largest economy. Instead of indulging in rhetoric, the critics should enter into collaborative arrangements with China to share fruits of accelerated economic development, a path that Pakistan has chosen and is reaping the benefits.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinas-appreciation-for-pakistan/>

The Nation

'Parwaaz Hai Junoon' to become first Pakistani film to release in Chinese mainland theaters

Ahead of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan in 2021, a Pakistani air force film has been scheduled to hit Chinese theaters on November 13, making it the first Pakistani movie to release in Chinese mainland cinemas in decades.

The film, Parwaaz Hai Junoon, is a 2018 Pakistani military action film directed by Haseeb Hassan. It tells the story of a group of young patriotic cadets who become the best fighter pilots in Pakistan after experiencing all kinds of challenges and hardships, Global Times reported on Friday.

One of highlights of the film is that the JF-17, a fourth-generation fighter jointly developed by China and Pakistan, makes a surprise appearance in the film, which has aroused the interest and expectations of military fans.

The movie also focuses on the growth of female pilots. One Pakistani woman in the film gives up a life of luxury and overcomes many difficulties through the power of love and finally achieves her dream to become a pilot of the JF-17 fighter jet.

The film had a positive reception in Pakistan – it has an 8.1/10 on film platform IMDb – opening well and eventually going on to become the fifth highest-grossing Pakistani film of all time.

The agreement to bring the film to the mainland was signed in April 2019 at a China-Pakistan economic and trade cooperation forum during the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. A film company from Shenyang, Northeast China's Liaoning Province is in charge of distribution.

The news about the film's release was hailed by Chinese netizens on China's Twitter-like Sina Weibo, with many taking delight in talking about the friendship between China and Pakistan.

Some netizens recalled how Pakistan offered help to China when the COVID-19 epidemic was at its most serious in the country at the beginning of 2020.

At the beginning of the outbreak in China, the Pakistani government allocated 300,000 medical masks, 800 hazmat suits and 6,800 pairs of gloves from public hospitals around the nation and transported them to China.

After China's COVID-19 situation improved, the Chinese government and military, as well as the nation's enterprises and organizations, also lent support to Pakistan, buying and shipping medical supplies including test kits, real-time fluorescent kits, scanners, KN95 masks, gloves, goggles and protective clothing to Pakistan as well as sending medical teams.

In a March interview with China Central Television, President Dr Arif Alvi described the relationship between China and Pakistan say that "a friend in need is a friend indeed."

<https://nation.com.pk/23-Oct-2020/parwaaz-hai-junoon-to-become-first-pakistani-film-to-release-in-chinese-mainland-theaters>

PIA special flight carries 165 Pakistani citizens from Chengdu to Islamabad

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) special flight carrying 165 Pakistani citizens left from Shuangliu International Airport, Chengdu, China to Islamabad on Thursday evening.

In view of the disruption in the regular flight operations, it was tenth special flight of the national flag carrier to transport Pakistani nationals from China to back home, said Qadir Bux Sangi, PIA Country Manager for China.

He informed that all possible arrangements were made at the airport to facilitate the passengers of the special flight.

He said that the special flights are being arranged and operated by PIA with the help of the relevant Chinese and Pakistani authorities.

The PIA country manager said that earlier this morning, this special flight had brought 255 Pakistani passengers mostly diplomats, officials, businessmen and workers.

The next special flight is likely to bring around 260 Pakistani passengers from Islamabad to China on October 30.

It may be mentioned here that PIA started special flight operation in May this year when a special flight PIA-8872 airlifted 274 returning Pakistani students from Wuhan and Hubei province to Pakistan.

A special unit of Embassy of Pakistan, Beijing and Consulates Generals' officers has been constituted to liaison with the PIA, relevant Chinese departments and Pakistani community members for finalizing the arrangements of flight operations.

Special arrangements were made with help of the Chinese government and relevant authorities during special flight operation to ensure the health and safety of all Pakistani passengers.

<https://nation.com.pk/23-Oct-2020/pia-special-flight-carries-165-pakistani-citizens-from-chengdu-to-islamabad>

KP CM for adding mega uplift plans to CPEC portfolio

Peshawar - Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan on Thursday held meetings with the Federal Ministers to discuss matters regarding inclusion of various mega development projects of the province in CPEC portfolio.

In separate meetings with Federal Ministers Asad Umar, Muraad Saeed, Umar Ayub and Special Assistant to PM Nadeem Babar, the Chief Minister underlined the need to make important development projects of the province a part of CPEC. The meeting thoroughly discussed the proposed projects for inclusion in CPEC including Peshawar to D.I. Khan Motorway, Dir

Motorway, Swat Motorway and Mega Hydel Power Projects of the province. Higher authorities of communication, water and power and planning division were also present in the meetings.

On the occasion, concerned federal ministers assured their full cooperation for inclusion of the proposed development projects in CPEC portfolio. The Chief Minister said that inclusion of these projects in CPEC and their subsequent completion would prove to be a milestone towards sustainable development of tourism, energy, communication, agriculture, industry and other relevant sectors. He said completion of mega hydel power projects of Chitral would provide all time solution to the issues of electricity in Chakdara, Swat and Chitral.

The Chief Minister also raised the issue of power load-shedding in the newly merged tribal districts and asked the relevant quarters for immediate steps to resolve the issue. He also urged upon the authorities to speed up work on up gradation of grid stations in merged areas.

Meanwhile, chairing a high-level meeting, the Chief Minister said that in order to boost industrial sector in the province, the KP government has finalized preparations for the commercial launching of six new economic zones including Nowshehra Economic Zone, Rashakai Special Economic Zone, Ghazi Economic Zone, Chitral Economic Zone, Mohamed Economic Zone and D.I. Khan Economic Zone. These all economic zones would be launched phase wise from November this year to February next year.

The Chief Minister on the occasion said that future of the province was linked with industries and the provincial government was working under the integrated development strategy for the establishment of industries and promotion of economic activities. He directed the authorities concerned to ensure visible progress on the economic zones in accordance with the stipulated timelines.

Special Assistant to Chief Minister on Industries Abdul Kareem Khan, Secretary Industries Javed Marwat, Principal Secretary to CM Shahab Ali Shah, Chief Executive Officer of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company and authorities of Finance and P&D Departments attended the meeting.

The meeting was informed that launching of 76-acre Nowshehra Economic Zone extension project was expected till the end of present month. Investment of Rs.1.6 Billion and roundabout 12000 direct and indirect employment opportunities were expected through this project. Construction of access road to the project site has been completed and 200KVA transformers have been installed to provide electricity. It was further informed that all pre-requisites had been completed for the inauguration of 1000-acre Rashakai Special Economic Zone which was scheduled to be launched by the next month.

The project would have space to accommodate 400 industrial units through which investment of \$1.9 billion approximately and two lac direct and indirect employments were expected. 70% work on the access road to the site has been completed.

Similarly, 89-acre Ghazi Economic Zone and 40-acre Chitral Economic Zone would also be launched in December 2020 whereas commercial launching of 350-acre Mohamed Economic Zone has been scheduled in January 2021. Mohamed Economic Zone would have space for 300 industrial units with expected investment of Rs.7.6 billion and 56000 direct and indirect employment opportunities.

The meeting was informed that the project had been divided in three zones, Zone-A had totally been leased out. Under the project 25 units were under construction while construction of five additional units would soon be started, the forum was informed. The authorities told that formal inauguration of 189-acre D.I Khan Economic Zone were expected in February 2021. Investment of Rs.1.5 billion and over 30 thousand direct and indirect employments were expected through this project.

Four industrial units are operational; two units are under construction and construction of five additional units to be started very soon. The meeting was told that 424-acre Hatter Special Economic Zone extension project was also in progress under which six industries were already in production and 32 under construction. A total of 125 units were expected in this economic zone.

It was also revealed in the meeting that 92-acre Export Processing Zone in Nowshehra was also being established with the expected investment of over 166 million dollar and more than 30 thousand employment opportunities. The forum was also briefed about the economic zones to be established during the next financial year including 3125-acre Daraban Special Zone, 408-acre Bannu Economic Zone and 126-acre Buner Economic Zone. Similarly, establishment of Women Business Development Complex Peshawar and Salt and Gypsum City at Karak were also in pipeline.

<https://nation.com.pk/23-Oct-2020/kp-cm-for-adding-mega-uplift-plans-to-cpec-portfolio>

The News

Report of immunity to CPEC Authority chairman misleading: ministry

ISLAMABAD: The government on Thursday said it is misleading to say that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority chairman has been given 'immunity' from National Accountability Bureau (NAB) investigations.

"It has been reported that the new CPEC Authority Bill, 2020, will give immunity to chairman (of the) CPEC Authority and other officers from investigations (by) NAB and (the) Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). Such news reports are misleading," the Ministry of Planning said in a press release. It explained that the reports "probably referred to the indemnity clause" (Section 23) of the bill, which it described as "a standard clause in many similar laws which indemnify authorities for actions done in good faith".

According to Geo News, the Planning Ministry highlighted that similar indemnity clauses are provided for in Public Procurement Regularity Authority (PPRA) Ordinance 2002 (Section 23), Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) Ordinance 2002 (Section 39), Alternate Energy

Development Board (AEDB) Act 2010 (Section 21), Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) Act 2010 (Section 48) and Public Private Partnership Authority (PPPA) Act 2017 (Section 26) and similar other laws.

The Planning Ministry further said that the clause in question was also a part of the CPEC Authority Ordinance promulgated in Oct 2019 and was not a new insertion.

"It is in consonance with other similar laws," it insisted. "The speculation regarding this clause is therefore misplaced and unfounded," the statement said.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/733551-report-of-immunity-to-cpec-authority-chairman-misleading-ministry>

Nawaiwaqt News

ہم خوش قسمت ہیں چین جیسا ملک ہمارا دوست ہے،: نثار مبین

اسلام آباد (نوائے وقت رپورٹ) سابق سفیر جاوید حافظ نے کہا ہے کہ سکیناگ آج چین کے تیزی سے بڑھتے ہوئے علاقوں میں سے ایک ہے، اس میں بڑی صنعتیں قائم کی جا رہی ہیں، چینی حکومت غربت کے خاتمے، انتہا پسندی پر قابو پانے اور اس خطے کو ترقیاتی سرگرمیوں کا مرکز بنانے میں کامیاب رہی ہے، مرکزی حکومت نے سکیناگ میں گزشتہ کئی سالوں کے دوران 2.35 ٹریلین آراہمی کی سرمایہ کاری کی ہے۔ گو اور پرو کے مطابق سکیناگ میں انتہا پسندی کے خلاف چینی پالیسی کی کامیابی کے عنوان سے ویبنار کا اہتمام پاک چین سنٹر فرینڈ شپ اینڈ کو آپریشن نے سکیناگ میں معاشی ترقی کو اجاگر کرنے کے لئے کیا۔ ویبنار میں غیر ملکی صحافیوں نے شرکت کی جن میں ایڈیٹران فرانسسی ماہانہ نوولی سولڈیر اینٹ کر سٹین ہیری، نیوزی لینڈ چین دوستی سوسائٹی کے قومی صدر ڈیو بر موج، واشنگٹن نیورو کے چیف آف ہفتہ میگزین ایگزیکٹو انٹیلی جنس ریویو، چینی گوانگ منگ ڈیلیکے چیف پروفیسر چارونگ شامل تھے۔ مقررین نے امید ظاہر کی کہ چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری (سی بیک) کی تکمیل سکیناگ میں ترقی اور خوشحالی کے ایک نئے دور کی شروعات کرے گی۔ کالم نگار اور سابق سفیر جاوید حافظ نے کامیابی پر روشنی ڈالتے ہوئے کہا 2014 اور 2018 کے درمیان، صوبائی آبادی کا تقریباً 10 فیصد غربت سے دور ہو چکا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ پچھلے سال سکیناگ کی دیہی جی ڈی پی (مجموعی گھریلو پیداوار) میں 9.7 فیصد اضافہ ہوا ہے۔ "آج، سکیناگ میں کوئی بچہ اسکول سے باہر نہیں ہے۔ ماہر سائنسی پروفیسر انجینئر ضمیر احمد اعوان نے کہا کہ چینی حکومت نے ترقی کے انوکھے ماڈل کو اپناتے ہوئے، 19 دیگر صوبوں سے سکیناگ کی ترقی کے لئے کچھ رقم مختص کرنے کو کہا ہے۔ سابق فضائیہ کے افسر سلطان محمود حالی نے کہا کہ من گھڑت جعلی خبریں جھوٹ پر مبنی ہیں اور سکیناگ کی زمینی صورت حال کی نفی کی گئی ہے۔ ہالی نے کہا کہ چینی صدر شی جن پنگ نے بیلٹ اینڈ روڈ انیشی ایٹو کے آغاز کے ساتھ ہی اس پالیسی کو آگے بڑھایا جس کی وجہ سے سکیناگ نے یوریشین براعظم کی چوکی بنادی۔ مقررین نے سکیناگ میں انتہا پسندی کے پھیلاؤ کے بارے میں غیر ملکی میڈیا کے پروپیگنڈے کو بھی مسترد کیا اور اس حقیقت کی تائید کی کہ یہ خطہ معاشی ترقی اور خوشحالی کا مشاہدہ کر رہا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ بیلٹ اینڈ روڈ انیشی ایٹو نے سکیناگ میں روشن مستقبل کی امید پیدا کر دی ہے کیونکہ وہ چین کو افغانستان، ہندوستان، قازقستان، کرغیزستان، منگولیا، پاکستان، روس اور تاجکستان سمیت آٹھ ممالک سے جوڑتا ہے۔ ویبنار کی صدارت کرتے ہوئے، سابق وزیر اطلاعات نثار مبین نے کہا کہ چین نے دنیا کے لئے نئی مثال قائم کی ہے۔ انہوں نے مزید کہا، "ہم خوش قسمت ہیں کہ ہمارا چین جیسا دوست ہے۔ وہ ہر چیز کا حل دیتے ہیں۔"

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2020-08-23/page-10/detail-23>

October 24, 2020

Daily Times

Kashmir, a buffer zone for India, Pakistan and now China

Chanchal Manohar Singh

The abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A from Jammu and Kashmir has apparently added a new dimension to the already contentious dispute, which no one has ever thought of. Now, the Peoples' Republic of China has raised serious objections to the nullification of Article 370, claiming Ladakh to be its part.

J&K, which has been considered as the major bone of contention between India and Pakistan has witnessed over seven decades of skirmishes, making it a bilateral issue, but after the abrogation of Article 370, J&K issue has now become a trilateral issue, despite the fact that India has strongly rebuked China for its interference in its internal affairs. China has brought in or deployed its Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) close to Ladakh border and also crossed Line of Actual Control (LAC) and reported to have taken into possession over more than 1000 kilometers of area in the Galwan valley.

However, India does not recognize China's claims in the eastern Ladakh region over its territory, and the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi without naming China has expressed that expansionism has no place in the 21st century. In fact, China has been trying to force upon India a new LAC that suits its design. Pertinently in 1963, Pakistan gifted Shaksgam Valley, which is part of Jammu and Kashmir, to China. Its area is said to be about 4500 square kilometers. The Chinese have established PLA's regional headquarter there. The Chinese have also occupied the strategic Aksai Chin in the 1962 war.

These past and recent developments in and around J&K indicate that it has become a tri-party issue, in which China is strongly interfering, showing its interest and concern as well, whether India likes it or not.

Any Indian leader, who supports the restoration of Article 370, is immediately dubbed as Chinese stooge, anti-national and agent of Pakistan. The clubbing of China and Pakistan with the J & K issue is a recent development that appears to have provided a new dimension to the J&K problem. It is the BJP leaders who have highlighted it more than any other political party or leader.

It was National Conference President and former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Farooq Abdullah's recent interview to The Wire, a prominent Indian news portal, in which he, for the first-time mentioned China for having not reconciled to the splitting of J&K into two Union Territories. Farooq has also said that Kashmiris do not feel like Indians, even claiming that they would rather have the Chinese in the area.

The BJP has dubbed Farooq's statement as 'seditious and anti-national.' He has been called an agent of Pakistan and its prime agency ISI. Even former Home Minister, P. Chidambaram who has also asked for restoration of Article 370, has been accused of having links with Pakistan's ISI. In strongest words the J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina attacked Chidambaram by accusing him of 'toeing the line of Chinese's President Xi Jinping and Pakistan's premier Imran Khan.'

Dr. Farooq, in his passionate, frank, and strongly-worded interview, expressed his anguish while replying to questions. The Wire has invited lots of brickbats on prime time on some TV channels and in some newspapers as well. Some excerpts from Farooq's interview with eminent Indian journalist Karan Thapar's have been discussed to have an insight into the ground realities existing in J&K following the abrogation of Article 370.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah said that Kashmir's do not feel like Indians, even claiming that they would rather have the Chinese in the area. "Today, when China is advancing the other side, you know, many of them would rather have the Chinese coming in," Abdullah told The Wire in an interview with journalist Karan Thapar's. "They know what the Chinese have done to the Muslims in their region."

Dr. Abdullah also refuted the Bharatiya Janata Party's claims that Kashmiris have accepted the Centre's move in August 2019 to revoke the special status granted to the erstwhile state.

"How can you have protests, if every street is full of your soldiers standing there," Abdullah said. "Can you have [a] protest? Would you be able to do [a] protest here in Delhi, if every street was littered with armed gunmen?"

If Section 144 and the security forces were removed, people would come out on the streets in lakhs, he said.

The National Conference chief further said that Kashmir's had no love for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. He said that there was a difference between Modi and former Prime Minister Atal Bihar Vajpayee.

"He [Vajpayee] was also RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh]," Abdullah said. "But you remember how he won the hearts of people by talking about – Insaniyat, Jamahiriya and Kashmiriyat [humanity, peace and keeping the sanctity of the people of Kashmir]."

Abdullah also revealed that he had met Modi about 72 hours before the decision to revoke Article 370 was announced. The prime minister had told him that the increase in the number of troops in the region was due to security purposes, Abdullah said, adding that he left the meeting feeling assured.

On a question whether the prime minister deceived him, Abdullah said, "He is deceiving the nation now so deceiving Farooq Abdullah does not make a damn difference."

He said that after the move to revoke special status, residents of Kashmir saw him as a servant of the central government, not the state. He, however, added that after his detention, his standing, along with the National Conference and other mainstream parties in the Valley, has been restored.

When asked how Kashmiris feel when they read about atrocities committed against Muslims in other parts of India – including lynching people in connection with selling beef, and the Delhi Police allegedly targeting members of the community during the February riots even while BJP members who had made remarks against the Muslims were spared – Abdullah said people were feeling bitter.

Abdullah said they would continue to fight for the statehood of Kashmir without "guns and bombs" and die fighting, but would "not give up till the last breath". "Our fight will continue till you [the Centre] return our dignity."

The former chief minister also agreed to Thapar's statement that Centre was bringing in domicile laws to change make the Muslim-populated region a Hindu-dominated one. "Don't do anything that will hurt the country," he said.

Dr. Abdullah also spoke about his son and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, who had said that he will not contest elections as long as Kashmir remained a Union Territory. It is his personal decision and not that of the National Conference, Farooq Abdullah said, adding that he would abide by whatever decision the party takes.

But one day this volcano will blow. Do you know? India fought 200 years British rule. And after 200 years, we witnessed the rise of the Tricolor. We will continue to fight for our rights. Not by guns, not by bombs. But by Gandhi an methods, we are fighting, we may die fighting. Lots of people have died. India became free. We are never going to give up until the last breath. I have said our fight will continue until you return our dignity.

The unity of the Muslim majority states with the rest of the nation was based on trust, despite the fact that we had Pakistan, an Islamic country as other option. We could have easily chosen the other side. I wonder whether they'll find somebody who will call himself an Indian today. What they did. It was already difficult. But what they did on the 5th of August last year was the last nail in the coffin and that's what they did. You go and talk to anybody; they don't feel like Indian.

The chief secretary is non-Muslim, DGP is non-Muslim. Both divisional commissioners are non-Muslim. Both IGs are non-Muslim. The chief justice is not Muslim, says former chief minister. It hurt me tremendously that the nation I defended everywhere, whether in Geneva, Austria or United Nations, they treated us like as if we are the ones who are the traitors to this land, if there is a need for us to look like traitors in the eyes one billion people, they make us look like traitors.

BJP leaders to counter dissent of Dr Abdullah have tagged him Chinese stooge, but the matter of fact remains that China has been deliberately made party to J&K dispute by the present dispensation in India.

China has clearly said that India should avoid "unilateral actions" in Jammu and Kashmir that could spark tensions in the region even as it described New Delhi's decision to reorganize Ladakh as a union territory as "unacceptable".

They asked India to be cautious in its words and deeds on the border issue, strictly abide by the relevant agreements reached between the two sides, and avoid taking actions that further complicate the border issue. From Beijing's perspective, the August decision also complicated the ongoing boundary talks between the two sides. Pakistani appeals to Beijing to push back against India may have sharpened the Chinese reaction. There is also some similarity between the Pakistani and Chinese positions on India's August decision: both sides argue that India changed the status of a territory (J&K) whose borders were still being negotiated.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/681446/kashmir-a-buffer-zone-for-india-pakistan-and-now-china/>

Dawn News

Legal Status of CPEC Authority questioned in Senate

ISLAMABAD: Months after expiry of an extended term of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority Ordinance, legal status of the CPEC Authority was called into question in the Senate on Friday.

“Under which provision of the law the CPEC Authority is operating,” PPP leader and former chairman of the Senate Senator Raza Rabbani asked while speaking on a call-attention notice.

He pointed out that the ordinance promulgated last year had been extended by the National Assembly through a resolution in January for 120 days. Therefore, the extended life of the ordinance came to a close in June.

Through the ordinance promulgated by the president on Oct 8, 2019 a 10-member CPEC Authority had been established with the task of expediting projects related to the multi-billion-dollar road and rail networks that link Chinese territories to the Arabian Sea through Pakistan.

The authority was given the mandate to find new drivers of economic growth and unlock the potential of interlinked production network and global value chains through regional and global connectivity.

Opposition members walk out of house over delay in tabling of Pida ordinance

Senator Rabbani said the CPEC Authority had its own funds and bank accounts and wondered how these were being operated to pay salaries to employees and make other payments.

He also voiced concern over the promulgation of Pakistan Island Development Authority (Pida) Ordinance. He regretted that the federal government finalized the ordinance on its own, without discussing the matters involved with Sindh and Balochistan.

He said the controversial Pida ordinance was kept under wraps for many days “to take ownership of the properties and assets” that rightfully belonged to the two provinces.

Senator Rabbani said that under Article 89 of the Constitution an ordinance has to be laid in both the houses of parliament during their first sessions after it is promulgated. He said there were rulings in this regard by both the Senate chairman and the National Assembly speaker.

An ordinance remains in force for 120 days, unless a house disapproves it through a resolution, he said. He asked Senate chairman Sadiq Sanjrani to either order the Ministry of Maritime Affairs to lay the ordinance in the house or refer his motion about breach of privileges to the standing committee concern.

He regretted that the parliament was not allowed to do what it was supposed to do on its own. After that, the opposition members walked out of the house in protest over the delay in tabling of the ordinance.

In the absence of the minister concerned, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan said that CPEC was the country's "flagship programmed" and that it would be "taken forward" even though some people wanted it to fail.

About the delay in tabling of the Pida ordinance in the house, he cited Article 89 of the Constitution and said the government could lay the ordinance within 120 days of its promulgation. The government would do so within the given time period.

He claimed the Sindh cabinet in its July 6, 2020 meeting had decided to "make the said land available to the federal government" and this decision was conveyed to the Centre through a letter.

"[Mr.] Rabbani should advise his party's Sindh government to honor the cabinet decision," he concluded.

After the opposition members returned to the house, Senator Rabbani said the Sindh government's letter had mentioned certain terms and conditions while the federal government promulgated the ordinance on Sept 2 without consulting the provincial government.

He said the ordinance was neither shared with the provincial governments of Sindh and Balochistan nor the media until the matter came into public domain on Oct 3. He said the Sindh government had withdrawn its letter because the terms and conditions had not been agreed upon.

The PPP senator was of the view that the state minister had interpreted the Constitution wrongly as the time period of 120 days had been allowed only for moving a resolution of disapproval.

"If the minister's claim is accepted, then the government can lay the ordinance on the 120th day since its promulgation, thus depriving the house of its constitutional right to move a resolution of disapproval," he said.

Later, the house was adjourned until Monday.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1586720>

October 25, 2020

Dawn News

Orange train on its way today

Jan 29, 2014: International tenders for the project were floated.

Feb 19, 2014: A meeting of the president of Pakistan with Chinese premier was held where China decided to fund the project.

June 24, 2014: China recommended CR-NORINCO Joint Venture to execute the project.

Aug 4, 2014: CR-NORINCO emerged as lowest bidder with bid price of \$2.139 billion.

Oct 2015: The LDA started acquiring land under Land Acquisition Act, 1894. Civil work on the project started. Up to 620 trees were to fell.

Dec 21, 2015: The federal government and Exam Bank of China signed an agreement under which the bank was to provide a Rs162 billion loan for the project and it released the first tranche of \$331.08 million. 2016: Civil society launched massive protests against the project for being damaging to the heritage sites, such as the Shalimar Gardens.

The timeline of the mass transit project

2016: The World Heritage Committee of the UNESCO directed the government to halt the construction activities.

2016: Civil society challenged the project in the Lahore High Court that issued a stay order in this regard. Later, the court scrapped the project.

2016: The government challenged the decision in the Supreme Court of Pakistan that allowed the government to execute subject to protecting the all heritage sites under immense care.

June 21, 2017: Up to 25 construction workers died in various incidents at orange line sites. The incident included death of seven workers in a fire that erupted on the third storey of a makeshift residence for workers in Mahmood Booty area and seven killed when a wall of a go down collapsed on their makeshift residence.

May, 2018: Then chief minister Shehbaz Sharif inaugurated the trail run of the train.

Dec 10, 2019: Test run of the Orange Line Metro Train began on the entire 27-km route (Dera Gujran to Ali Town).

Oct 20, 2020: The government sets Rs40 flat fare per passenger per trip.

Oct 25, 2020: The train is chugging.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1586848/orange-train-on-its-way-today>

Pakistan Observer

Govt. to construct three new motorways under CPEC

Islamabad: A complete design and paperwork for three new motorways passing through Pakistan's least developed areas have been completed by the government, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday. These new motorways would provide rapid transportation facilities and promote tourism and trade in the region.

These three motorways, including Peshawar-DI Khan Motorway, DI Khan-Zhob Motorway and Zhob-Kutchlaak Motorway, will eventually reduce the distance from 12 to 5 hrs. The formal approval of these projects will be given in the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of China-Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC) in November next month.

The motorway starting from Peshawar to D.I Khan will cost around 250 billion rupees. This motorway will pass through Pakistan's most underdeveloped areas, including Darra Adamkhel, Kohat, Hangu, Karak, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, ending up at DI Khan. The 339 kilometers-long motorway would link all southern districts and merged districts and boost the region's economy, bringing it on par with the rest of the country.

The road project is expected to change the fate of these deprived and ignored areas. The second motorway and the next segment will be starting from DI Khan to Zhob in Baluchistan. This patch will be 210 km long and it will cost 76 billion rupees.

The paperwork of this patch of motorway is almost done as well. The tenders will be opened for the public next month after approval. The motorway from DI-khan to Zhob has almost 10 km of area passing through Koh-e Suleman which is very rough and problematic area with land sliding and traffic jams.

People face great difficulties to travel through this area, but now under the plan, this area will have tunnels making the way easier for the general public. Once the work is completed on this motorway, large vehicles like trucks would be able to pass through. This will boost tourism and other trade activities in the area, creating lots of employment opportunities as well. The third motorway is from Zhob to Kutchlaak, which covers 198 km area and will cost around 63 billion rupees.

<https://pakobserver.net/govt-to-construct-three-new-motorways-under-cpec/>

The Express Tribune

Orange Line Metro inaugurated amid govt. PML-N squabble

LAHORE: The Orange Line Metro Train (OLMT) project was inaugurated on Sunday amid the government and the Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) both laying claim to its ownership.

Scheduled to be inaugurated by Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar, the Lahore's famed train project was 'inaugurated beforehand' by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders at Jain Temple.

Carrying pictures of PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif, party leaders and workers reached the Anarkali station where PML-N leader Khwaja Saad Rafique carried out the ribbon cutting.

Inaugurating the project separately, Buzdar said the OLMT was "a culmination of Pakistan-China friendship that began with the China - Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)".

He said the metro project was a part of CPEC, which is a result of the decades-old friendship between the two neighboring countries.

"It is the first transport project under CPEC and a gift to the people of Lahore," the Punjab CM said. He added that the Punjab government welcomes all development projects that may accompany the joint venture.

The chief minister further revealed that the OLMT project will be provided with a Rs15 billion subsidy by the provincial government.

The Opposition

Addressing PML-N workers, Rafique said that the former chief minister of Punjab and the founder of OLMT project, Shehbaz Sharif, is in jail under false accusations.

"Shehbaz is being convicted for demanding the rights of common man and improving the conditions of Punjab," Rafique added.

Questioning the incumbent government, the PML-N leader said that the delay in Orange Line train has costed the national exchequer billions of rupees.

Referring to the Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) December 13th rally, scheduled to be held in Lahore, PML-N leader Ayaz Sadiq said that PTI's judicial attacks have failed and all political parties have united against the government. He said the country would witness a "historic" rally in Lahore.

PML-N's Ataulah Tarar also said that PTI had taken a deliberate stay order on the project to stop Shehbaz Sharif from inaugurating it.

Responding to the PML-N leader's actions and remarks, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz said CPEC was the project of people of Pakistan and not of any specific party.

In a tweet, he said PML-N's NAB victims were actually celebrating the plundering of national exchequer and public resources on the self-proclaimed inauguration of the orange train. He said that it was the people who had to bear the burden of expensive projects.

The Orange Line Metro Train comprises 26 stations and tracks spanning over 27.12km. This is the first electricity-run public transport project through which around 250,000 commuters will travel daily.

The train service is scheduled to start for general public from tomorrow.

This project is said to lessen transport load on Multan Road and provide 'world-class' public transport facility to Lahore's residents.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2269843/orange-line-metro-inaugurated-amid-govt-pml-n-squabble>

The Nation

Pakistani products displayed at Chinese fair

BEIJING-Pakistan products were displayed at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Agricultural Exhibition (SCO Life Hall) at the 27th Yangling Agricultural Hi-Tech Fair, in Yangling, Shaanxi province of China. Pakistani products like grape-shaped jade, black tea, curry powder, jelly powder, rice, noodles, scarves and other exhibits from Pakistan were displayed at the annual promotion and exhibition for agricultural development.

“I come to the fair every year, and bring Pakistani products to the customers here. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the products shipped from Pakistan are limited, so this year, we just showcase our products here,” Mansoor Ahmed Koondhar, head of the exhibition area of Pakistani products at SCO Life Hall told China Economic Net (CEN) on Saturday. A special exhibition area - SCO Life Hall - has been opened on October 22 to expand economic and trade exchanges between China and SCO member countries and promote international agricultural technology exchanges and cooperation.

In addition, it gathers investment information, provides business matchmaking services, displays high-quality agricultural products, and promotes international exchanges and cooperation in agriculture with SCO member states. Eight SCO member countries, including Pakistan, Kazakhstan and Russia, have been invited to participate in the exhibition at the SCO Life Hall, and it will be open to the public all year round after the fair.

In the future, beef, flour and other agricultural products may be imported. Currently, compared with other countries, there are not many Pakistani products. Therefore, we expect more high-quality agricultural products, such as Pakistan mango, as well as Pakistan SCO Gift Pack, to be introduced, said Zhang Xingwei, a staff member of the operation and management department of Yang Ling Modern Agriculture International Cooperation Co., Ltd., which is responsible for the construction and operation for the SCO Life Hall. As for how to introduce Pakistani products to the SCO Life Hall and whether rent is needed, “It is rent-free. If the suppliers want to market and sell their products here, they are welcome. We will pay them after the products are sold,” said Zhang.

Commenting on Yangling Agricultural Hi-Tech Fair, Abdul Ghaffar, a Pakistani student studying at Northwest A&F University said, “I come from Pakistan and this is my second visit to the fair. It is very practical. Pakistan imports rice seeds from China. Pakistani farmers have gained a lot from hybrid rice cultivation in the past 20 years, as the per acre yield goes higher. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor can promote the development of agriculture and industry in Pakistan.”

Another Pakistani student Abdul Kareem, also studying at Northwest A & F University said, “That’s really a great experience for us. There is a lot of new technology and instrument regarding agriculture. Thank you so much, China, for arranging such kind of things for international students to learn. Agriculture is being a main GDP sector in Pakistan. So we are

working on agriculture sector.” The China Yangling Agricultural Hi-tech Fair will continue till October 26 in the Yangling agricultural hi-tech industrial demonstration zone. Established in 1994, the fair is one of the largest and most influential events dealing with agricultural science in China.

<https://nation.com.pk/25-Oct-2020/pakistani-products-displayed-at-chinese-fair>

The News

Pak-China technical and vocational institute shows progress

GWADAR: As the first teaching building of the Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCTVI) topped out a couple of days back, the project demonstrated major progress which would herald the completion of the construction works and its scheduled delivery.

According to Gwadar Pro on Saturday, the China-supported construction project is undertaken by China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd. (CHEC).

The PCTVI, as a project supported by China, covers an area of about 7,350 square meters, with teaching buildings composed of classrooms, offices, and laboratories, training workshops, reading rooms, dormitories for both students and faculties, and other supporting rooms. The construction of the project commenced in January 2020 and was scheduled to be finished within about 20 months.

“With the unique geographical location of Gwadar and the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak combined, the project schedule is facing multiple hindrances, which ranges from the hardship in accessing the site on the part of the Chinese technicians, the delayed arrival of construction materials, the difficulty in recruiting Pakistani workers, and the anti-terrorist pressure,” according to Huang Jiehua, leader of the construction works.

He said that to continue the progress as expected, all the participating parties have been rising to the challenges with multiple endeavors.

Based on corresponding construction stages, regular epidemic control measures were compiled and updated, which include closed-off and grid management, daily body temperature measurements, and daily key area disinfections.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/734495-pak-china-technical-and-vocational-institute-shows-progress>

Nawaiwaqt News

چینی یونیورسٹی میں پاکستان ریسرچ سنٹر کا قیام

سلام آباد (نوائے وقت رپورٹ) گلوبل اینڈ اسٹریٹجک اسٹڈیز (سی جی ایس ایس) اسلام آباد کے اشتراک سے کمیونیکیشن یونیورسٹی آف چائینہ (سی یو سی) میں "کیونٹی ود شیئرڈ فیوچر" کے نام سے پاکستان ریسرچ سنٹر قائم کر دیا گیا۔ گوادر پرو کے مطابق افتتاحی تقریب سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے بیجنگ میں پاکستانی سفارتخانے کے ڈپٹی ہیڈ مشن

احمد فاروق نے کہا کہ پاکستان اور چین کے درمیان تعلقات کئی دہائیاں قبل انسانیت کے مشترکہ مستقبل کے اصول پر مبنی ہیں، وقت کے ساتھ اس کا مستقبل شاندار ماضی کے مقابلے میں اور زیادہ روشن ہوتا جا رہا ہے کیونکہ یہ اصولوں پر مبنی ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ سنٹر نے خیالات کا تبادلہ کرنے اور ایک دوسرے کے ساتھ تعاون کرنے کے بہتر طریقے پیدا کرنے کا موقع فراہم کیا۔ فاروق نے مزید کہا یہ بہت ضروری ہے کہ ہم ایک دوسرے کے ساتھ مشغول رہیں اور ایک دوسرے کو سمجھیں اور یہ صرف ایک ملک ہی نہیں جو ایک امتزاج ہے، اور اس طرح کے نظریات کے تبادلے کے لئے بہت سارے دوسرے ممالک اکٹھا ہو رہے ہیں، ہم سب مفاد کے لئے ایک دوسرے سے بہتر تعاون کیسے کر سکتے ہیں۔ کمیونیکیشن یونیورسٹی آف چائینہ کے صدر لیاو ڈیانگ چونگ نے اس موقع پر کہا کہ ہر انسٹی ٹیوٹ کو بین الاقوامی تعلیم کے فروغ اور بنی نوع انسان کی بہتری کے لئے جدت، تحقیق، ترقی، بین الاقوامی تبادلہ، اور تعاون کو آگے بڑھانا چاہئے۔ ہمیں امید ہے کہ ہم امن کے استحکام اور تہذیب کے مکالمے کو مزید فروغ دے سکتے ہیں۔ ہمارے پاس یہ ذمہ داری ہونی چاہئے کہ ہم تعلیم کو عام کریں اور ایک اعلیٰ مقصد کی تلاش کریں۔ چنانچہ، چیلنجوں اور کساد بازاری کے سامنے ہمارے پاس وسیع دماغ اور بلند تصورات ہونے چاہئے۔ لیفٹیننٹ کرنل (ر) خالد تیور اکرم کو پاکستان ریسرچ سینٹر کا پہلا ڈائریکٹر مقرر ہونے کا اعزاز حاصل ہے۔ چائنا اکنامک نیٹ کو انٹرویو دیتے ہوئے تیور اکرم نے کہا کہ یہ واقعی سی جی ایس ایس اور خود پاکستان میں ریسرچ سنٹر کی شراکت دار تنظیم بننا بہت اعزاز کی بات ہے اور مشترکہ مستقبل کے ساتھ کسی کمیونٹی کے فروغ کے لئے تعاون کرنے کا موقع دیا جا رہا ہے۔ جیسا کہ ہم سب جانتے ہیں کہ عالمی سطح پر ریسرچ تیزی سے باہمی تعاون اور مسئلہ پر مبنی ہوتی جا رہی ہے۔ یہ منتقلی نہ صرف عالمی سطح پر بلکہ علاقائی اور قومی سطح پر بھی پیش آرہی ہے۔ لہذا مزید جامع اور جوابدہ تحقیق کا باعث بننا امور نوجوان کو اجاگر کرنے میں مددگار ثابت ہو گا جن پر فوری توجہ کی ضرورت ہے۔ خالد نے امید ظاہر کی کہ اس اقدام کے ذریعے وہ پاکستان، چین، اور دیگر ممبر ممالک کے مابین تعلیمی اور ثقافتی وسائل کے تبادلے کے فروغ میں اپنا کردار ادا کریں گے۔ میں پاکستان، چین، اور پوری دنیا کے درمیان تعلیمی تعلقات کو مستحکم کرنے کا منتظر ہوں۔ چین کی موصلاتی اقلیت سے تعلق رکھنے والے اپنے ساتھیوں اور باقی ممبر ممالک کے ساتھ وہ تعلیمی تعاون کا نیٹ ورک قائم کرنے کی کوشش کریں گے۔ لہذا دنیا کو ترقی پسند اور خوشحال مقام بنانے کے لئے اجتماعی طور پر کام کرنا ہے۔ یہ بات قابل ذکر ہے کہ سی یو سی سات ممالک کے ساتھ مل کر پاکستان، جرمنی، جنوبی کوریا، ملائیشیا، انڈونیشیا، اور تھائی لینڈ کے تعاون سے ریسرچ سنٹر قائم کر رہا ہے۔ یہ مراکز کو آپریٹو منصوبوں کی سہولت کیلئے چین اور معاون ملک دونوں میں مشترکہ تعمیراتی نیٹ ورک کے لئے مشترکہ تعلیمی پلیٹ فارم کے طور پر تیار کیے گئے ہیں۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2020-10-26/page-10/detail-26>

October 26, 2020

The Nation

Chinese brown rice useful for growing, processing chain in Pakistan

BEIJING-A new type of germinated brown rice developed in China is not only popular among the Chinese consumers but also very useful for rice growing and processing chain in Pakistan. This new type was developed by Heilongjiang Academy of Agricultural Sciences (HAAS) and was unveiled at the 3rd China Heilongjiang International Rice Festival. At the festival, Ren Chuanying, an expert with the Institute of Food Sciences of HAAS, talking to media said both Heilongjiang province and Pakistan are important rice planting areas, according to CEN on Sunday. China and Pakistan are close all-weather cooperative partners whereas HAAS is very concerned about the food security of friendly countries along BRI while boosting the development of local agriculture.

<https://nation.com.pk/26-Oct-2020/chinese-brown-rice-useful-for-growing-processing-chain-in-pakistan>

October 27, 2020

Business Recorder

Pakistan proposes making Chitral to Chakdara Highway part of CPEC

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday proposed inclusion of Chitral to Chakdara Highway (N-45) connecting Swat Motorway as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) western route.

The 8th meeting of the CPEC Joint Working Group on Transport Infrastructure was held via video link at the Ministry of Communications, here on Monday.

Besides Federal Secretary Communications Zafar Hasan, Vice Minister of China on Transport DAI Dongchang, Deputy Director General for International Cooperation China Shan Hongjun and Chairman National Highway Authority Capt Sikander Qayyum (retd) also participated. The representatives of Foreign Office, CPEC Authority, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Sindh Government, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan Government, and the Civil Aviation Authority were also present.

After deliberations, the meeting adopted construction of a motorway from Peshawar to DI Khan (320km), Swat Expressway from Chakdara to Fatehpur Phase-II (182km) and Dir Expressway (30km).

Pakistan side gave briefing on ML-1 project, Karachi Circular Railway, Peshawar Circular Railway, and Quetta Mass Transit Project.

Chitra – Shndoor - Gilgit, Nokundi – Mashkhel - Panjgur and Mirpur – Muzaffarabad - Mansehra projects were also brought under discussion

Secretary Communications Zafar Hasan said the CPEC was the vision of both the neighbouring countries' leadership.

He proposed inclusion of Chitral to Chakdara Highway (N-45) connecting Swat Motorway (Chakdara to Col Sher Khan Interchange on Motorway M-1) as part of the CPEC Western Route.

He said government of Pakistan was planning for the remaining sections of Gwadar-Ratodero Motorway M-8.

He desired study of those parts of Karakoram Highway which were affected by the landslides, so that remedial measures could be devised to ensure smooth flow of traffic.

Terming the meeting meaningful, he hoped that the meeting would remain successful and achieve its objectives.

A senior official, who attended the meeting told Business Recorder that Chitral to Chakdara Highway (N-45) was already being constructed with Korean cooperation; however, the government wants to add this portion to the CPEC.

After inclusion to the CPEC, it would be up-graded, sources added.

This correspondent repeatedly tried to contact Secretary Zafar Hassan; however, till the filing of this report no response was received.

Addressing the meeting, Chinese Vice Minister on Transport DAI Dongchang said friendship of China and Pakistan was higher than the mountains and it was being strengthened and deepened with the passage of time.

He said cooperation in the construction sector was gradually expanding between the two countries, which would accelerate pace of development in Pakistan.

He desired to realise CPEC schemes with quality construction through mutual cooperation.

Besides challenges both the countries are cooperating with each other. He termed video link meeting result oriented. He appreciated the progress and commitment of Pakistan on CPEC projects. He said China wanted to enhance the scope of the CPEC by including a few more projects.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/10/27/15-page/856188-news.html>

Dawn News

First-Day OLMT travelers thankful for facility

LAHORE: Over 40,000 passengers travelled on the Orange Line Metro Train (OLMT) on the first day of its operation for the general public on Monday.

Passengers could be seen standing in queues on various stations to get tickets for the train.

The Orange Line track is 27.1 kilometers long and has 26 stations, including 24 elevated and two underground. The train is operating from 7:30am to 10pm and would stop at every station for three minutes.

On the first day of operation, most of the passengers seemed to be travelling on it for recreation; they were seen making videos, taking pictures and selfies.

Some of the passengers were of the view that they were impatiently waiting for the train to begin operations. “We have not seen this kind of a train in our lives and today we are travelling on it. We give its credit to PML-N supreme leader Nawaz Sharif,” they added.

One of the passengers, who boarded from Baghbanpura, said she was travelling to visit her sister in Samanabad and that this was not only one of the world’s safest means to travel, but affordable also. She said if she had travelled on a rickshaw it would have cost her Rs300, but she was spending Rs40 on the train.

She said governments should focus on providing services to the public and she would credit PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif for this train.

Some youths were of the view that they were travelling on the train for pleasure as they had seen this type of train in Hollywood movies only. “Although we voted Imran Khan in the 2018 elections, this world-class facility has been provided to the public by former chief minister Shehbaz Sharif,” they said.

OLMT General Manager Uzair Shah told *Dawn* that the train had finally begun operations for the general public. “I visited Anarkali station and checked the number of passengers travelling on the first day. I educated the people about ticketing, seating and other systems of the station and train. They were very happy to travel on it,” he claimed.

He further said the number of passengers on the first day was low as over 40,000 people travelled till 8pm. But the number would increase to the maximum in the coming days, he hoped.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1587212>

Pakistan Observer

Modi has set date for war with China, Pakistan

New Delhi: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set a date for war with Pakistan and China, according to a senior official of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) quoted by the Press Trust of India on Sunday. The news agency said the BJP’s Uttar Pradesh chief, Swatantra Dev Singh, told a meeting of party functionaries that Mr. Modi had decided when the country would be at war with Pakistan and China. The remarks were made on Friday amid tensions at the Line of Actual Control between India and China. According to the report, quoted by several news outfits including NDTV and Indian Express, the BJP leader linked his claim to the beginning of construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya following a Supreme Court judgment and the abrogation of special status to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the constitution.

<https://pakobserver.net/modi-has-set-date-for-war-with-china-pakistan/>

The Express Tribune

Sharp price gap of bezoar

BEIJING: If China has a demand for anti-pandemic resources, Pakistan may have “inventory”, what would the result be?

By the end of the third quarter, China’s total volume of trade in goods turned positive for the first time in 2020, according to the release from the National Bureau of Statistics in China this week.

Relying on the special access to rice, sugar and other commodities from China, Pakistan’s exports to China reached \$1.86 billion in fiscal year 2018-2019. And in the upgraded free trade

agreement (FTA) between the two countries, China gives Pakistan zero tariffs on 313 items. Both sides have high expectations and are looking forward to the further rise of Pakistan's exports to China. However, affected by Covid-19, the figure fell to \$1.66 billion in fiscal year 2019-2020, by 10.8%.

The high-level political relation between China and Pakistan are reflected in the economic and trade agreements.

China has signed FTAs with 16 countries and regions. With Pakistan only, there are three versions. According to the reporter's preliminary calculation, there are dozens of zero-tariff items of raw materials in traditional medicine.

With the preferential western medicine items in the agreement of the early harvest programme in 2005, the total is nearly 100. In the catalogue of non-first-time imported medicinal materials revised and merged by the National Medical Products Administration in China, only four kinds are from Pakistan. Why is there such a difference between the actual imports of Pakistan and the preferential items in the FTA?

Zhu Hongli, head of cross-border pharmaceutical e-commerce in Zhongdamen Network Technology Company in Henan province was one of the earliest to enter traditional Chinese medicine e-commerce business in China.

"Among all the products we have access to now, those from the 'Belt and Road Initiative countries' are increasing, such as the origin of saffron is Persia, and saffron in Iran is famous-region medical materials. The price of it domestically is RMB 20,000 per kg, whereas it is only RMB 5,000 or 6,000 per kg for imports. The saffron introduced in Shanghai costs high, although the quality is better, the profit is not satisfying. Thus 90% relies on imports nowadays."

"Pakistan also has its famous-region medicinal materials," Yu Zhibin, the director of TCM Department of CCCMHPIE (China Chamber of Commerce of Medicines & Health Products Importers & Exporters), told the reporter.

Bezoar regarded "soft gold" in China

Bezoar refers to dry gallstones of buffaloes and cattle. "The stock of bezoar is not enough in the last two years. Underground smuggling has been carried out. The discounted price of bezoar is 600,000 RMB per kilogram nowadays." said Yu.

What caused the stock shortage of bezoar? According to China's Beef Industrial Analysis Report, due to the impact of African swine fever, the demand for beef cattle has increased in China recently while the growing feeding cost has led to the decrease of cattle stock, resulting in high price of beef.

"High demand of beef brings out early killing of cattle before they might grow bezoars," a chief representative abroad of a Chinese enterprise told the reporter,

“China is an aging society right now with more demands for medicine of cardiovascular diseases, for example, Angong Niuhuang Wan (Bolus of Bezoar for Resuscitation), is also used against Covid-19 now. With less supply and more demand, the price of bezoar will certainly rise, that’s why we call it ‘soft gold’.”

No one exploring bezoar in Pakistan. Recently, Mohammed Mustafa Kaman, the chairman of Big Bird Group in Pakistan and a DVM, in a written interview with the reporter, said, “No one has looked at the presence of bezoar in Pakistan. At abattoirs hardly anyone looks for the presence of bezoar. However, a few workers do understand its unique worth. In a few slaughter houses workers do gather gallbladder secretions based on its demand.”

The three products mentioned; bezoar, bile and beef, according to the reporter’s review of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement(CPFTA), the HS code of bezoar was first listed in the annex to CPFTA signed on November 24, 2006 -Products List Of Tariff Reduced to Zero Within Three Years. And what was added in the upgraded CPFTA “China Zero Tariff Schedule” is just “fresh or chilled beef” and “bile, glands used in the preparation of pharmaceutical products”.

In a recent interview with the Commercial Counselor of Pakistan Embassy in China Badar U Zaman said, “We didn’t know about bezoar before, but since the second half of last year, it seems that a Chinese has begun to contact the Pakistan Beef Association.”

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2270010/sharp-price-gap-of-bezoar>

The Nation

OLMT most advanced railway transport project in South Asia: China

BEIJING - A Chinese foreign ministry’s spokesperson on Monday warmly congratulated Pakistan for the opening of the Orange Line Metro Train (OLMT) and said that it was one of the most advanced railway transport projects in South Asia.

“I noted this information. This is good news. I like to send warm congratulations for the opening of this railway project,” Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing while commenting on the launch of OLMT in Lahore. Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar inaugurated the country’s first electricity-run public transport project on Sunday. The inaugural ceremony of OLMT was also held in Beijing, which was attended by senior authorities of China’s National Development Reforms Commission (NDRC), Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque, CR Norinko and top Chinese officials.

Zhao Lijian said that the Orange Line was an early harvest project under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the opening of this project marked that Pakistan had entered era for metro train just like Chief Minister Usman Buzdar said at the launching ceremony.

Terming the Orange Line as one of the most advanced railway transport projects in South Asia, he said, “It will provide the residents in Lahore with a modern, efficient, environment friendly

and safe traffic service and also help the city to reduce air pollution.” He observed that in its construction, this project had created more than 7,000 job opportunities and it would further provide 2,000 jobs after its operation and maintenance.

“The completion of Orange Line is another major outcome in the CPEC building and also a demonstration for all-weather partnership between China and Pakistan,” he added.

The spokesperson maintained that China would continue to work with Pakistan to make the Belt and Road and CPEC a high standard project.

According to reports, the Orange Line project comprises of 26 stations including two underground stations and tracks spanning over 27.12km and besides providing people with a world class transport system, the project intends to lessen traffic on the Multan Road.

<https://nation.com.pk/27-Oct-2020/olmt-most-advanced-railway-transport-project-in-south-asia-china>

The News

CPEC meeting discusses construction of motorways, other projects

ISLAMABAD: The 8th meeting of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Joint Working Group on Transport Infrastructure was held via video link at Ministry of Communications here Monday.

Besides Federal Secretary Communications Zafar Hassan, Vice Minister of China on Transport DAI Dongchang, Deputy Director General for International Cooperation China Shan Hongjun and Chairman National Highway Authority Capt. (R) Sikander Qayyum also participated. The representatives of Foreign Office, CPEC Authority, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan governments and Civil Aviation Authority were also present.

After deliberations, the meeting adopted construction of motorway from Peshawar to DI Khan (320km), Swat Expressway from Chakdara to Fatehpur Phase-II (182km) and Dir Expressway (30km). Pakistani side gave briefing on ML-1 project, Karachi Circular Railway, Peshawar Circular Railway and Quetta Mass Transit Project. Chitral-Shandoor-Gilgit, Nokundi-Mashkhel-Panjgur and Mirpur-Muzaffarabad-Mansehra projects were also brought under discussion.

Secretary Communications Zafar Hassan said, CPEC is the vision of leadership of both the neighbouring countries. He proposed inclusion of Chitral to Chakdara Highway (N-45), connecting Swat Motorway (Chakdara to Col. Sher Khan Interchange on Motorway M-1), as part of CPEC Western route. He said, government of Pakistan was planning for remaining sections of Gwadar-Ratodero Motorway M-8. He desired study of those parts of Karakoram Highway, which are affected by the landslides, so that remedial measures could be devised to ensure smooth flow of traffic. Terming meeting meaningful, he hoped that the meeting will remain successful and achieve its objectives.

Addressing the meeting, Chinese Vice Minister on Transport DAI Dongchang said, friendship of China & Pakistan is higher than the mountains and it is being strengthened and deepened with the passage of time. He said, cooperation in construction sector is gradually expanding between the two countries, which will accelerate pace of development in Pakistan. He desired to realise CPEC schemes with quality construction through mutual cooperation. He termed video link meeting result oriented. He appreciated the progress and commitment of Pakistan on CPEC projects. He said, “China wants to enhance scope of CPEC by including a few more projects.”

Chairman National Highway Authority Capt. (R) Sikander Qayyum told the meeting that Sukkur-Multan Motorway and Havelian-Thakot Motorway projects are completed in record time frame with quality construction. He said, 136 KM long Thakot-Raikot section of Karakoram Highway is an important link and that TOR has been approved for hiring consultant for re-alignment. He stressed upon the need of upgradation of D.I.Khan-Zhob Section on priority.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/735486-cpec-meeting-discusses-construction-of-motorways-other-projects>

October 28, 2020

Pakistan Observer

CPEC: Pakistan should focus on its Development despite its Spoilers’ Role

The CPEC, being built to connect the Kashghar city of China to Gwadar port of Pakistan, with China’s US \$ 62 billion investment is a pilot project of the China’s B&R project. The CPEC comprises the construction of a network of energy projects, roads, railways, dry, air and sea ports, fibre optic based internet and communication facilities, industrial zones and cooperation in the modernization of industry and agriculture.

Whereas the CPEC is a symbol of Pakistan-China’s long term and ever growing friendship, it is also a source of developing people to people contacts between both countries. Moreover, the CPEC is meant to develop roads, railways and communication infrastructure in Pakistan, which is very essential for its economic development. Therefore, the development of the CPEC will facilitate Pakistan’s economic development by enhancing its economic growth and trade.

While the CPEC carries immense economic benefits for Pakistan, China, Russia, South Asia, Central Asian Republics (CARs), the Middle East, North Africa and other regions of the world being an economic-oriented project, it is facing veiled opposition by the regional spoiler forces to contain CPEC-related economic development of Pakistan. These forces are being encouraged by those forces, which are opposing the development of the B&R.

Obviously, the numerous investment and trade-related economic benefits of the CPEC will be available for Pakistan, China, Afghanistan, CARs, Iran, India and even Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives. If these countries can mutually cooperate, they will be able to carry out speedy trade and investment using the CPEC, that will help in their economic development

and keeping the daily use commodities available in their markets, thus keeping the prices within the reach of the poor people of these countries.

To mutually cooperate to draw full potential of the CPEC for their economic development and welfare of their people, the regional countries, especially, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, have to prefer geo-economics over the geo-politics, as the former is much more beneficial than the latter. For this purpose, it is important for Pakistan and India to resolve their issues, especially the Jammu and Kashmir dispute through dialogue and they should also facilitate the intra-Afghan dialogue process to achieve an early peace in Afghanistan.

But, currently the regional countries, particularly India and the present Afghan government are working on advancing geo-politics rather than the geo-economics. For example, instead of starting a dialogue with Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute, Modi government in India, on 5 August 2019 divided the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOK) into two union territories in utter violation of the UNSC resolution 47, which grants the right of self determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Moreover, the Indian leaders have threatened Pakistan of attacking the Azad Jammu and Kashmir and capturing it. This means, India has the plans to grab the IOK forcefully and it has no programmed to improve relations with Pakistan and join the CPEC. In this whole game plan, India seems to have been encouraged by being a partner of the US in its Indo-Pacific strategy and now being its close defense partner to contain China.

Despite that all neighbors of Afghanistan, including Russia and China want intra-Afghan dialogue to succeed, India and the current Afghan government seem to be working in coordination to delay/stall the dialogue, as while the present Afghan rulers want to perpetuate their rule, India wants an unstable Afghanistan to use its soil to sponsor terrorism in Pakistan's Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and Karachi, to disturb the construction of the CPEC, and create a two front war scenario for Pakistan. The US also wants intra-Afghan dialogue to succeed and it desires to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan as per its agreement signed with the Taliban on 29 February 2020.

In view of the above mentioned huge benefits of the CPEC to Pakistan, despite the efforts of the spoilers like India and its friends, Pakistan should remain steadfast in developing the CPEC as per the plan to complete it on time. In this regard, Pakistan should not be distracted by India and the US efforts to oppose the B&R project and the CPEC as part of their China containment strategy. This is because China's policy of preferring geo-economics over geo-politics, its non hegemonic politics, and its policy of investing in the regional countries based on its concept of shared destinies will be more appealing to the regional countries than SA's coercive policies and the development of the CPEC and B&R will get the popular support.

Moreover, to focus on economic development and making its people prosperous, China is not going to get into any war-like situation with the US or any other country for at least next 40 years. Therefore, while working to construct the CPEC, the least US pressure is expected as its

anti-China policies will not get a wider acceptance in the world, because of China's much tolerant policies. And, after 40 years Pakistan will be economically much stronger to withstand foreign pressures.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-pakistan-should-focus-on-its-development-despite-its-spoilers-role/>

CPEC & Indian ill designs

Dr. Mahmood Ul Hassan Khan

CHINA Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is on fast track and appointment of new Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong a political figure but an expert of trade & commerce, economic planning, good governance, project planning/financing, social development, community development and above all interfaith harmony would further enhance its bilateral or trilateral coordination, consultation, cooperation, planning and execution in the country. Its phase-II is going to be implemented very soon which would bring drastic positive changes in the macro-economy of Pakistan. Right from the beginning, the CPEC as flagship project of the One Belt One Road Initiative (BRI) stands for greater regional connectivity and huge integration of socio-economic prosperity but somehow, due to its colossal economic impact especially on Pakistan and rest of the region, India considered it anti-Indian hegemonic and a disguised military alliance for China-Pak strategic expansion in the region.

The two countries, being bearers of regional peace and prosperity, have been advocating CPEC's real aims, objectives and end goals to regional governments and international mass media alike. But unfortunately, India and its regional allies and global masters did not borrow national narratives of China and Pakistan and persistently indulged into dirt blame game of propaganda, sabotage activities and patronized culmination of 5th hybrid war against Pakistan. The most recent surge in cross infiltration and escalation incidents from Afghanistan's soil, ambush activities on defense forces of Pakistan in Baluchistan, reformation and reactivation of secretive cells alongside Afghan border, incapacitated make-over and last but not the least, anti-Pakistan political rhetoric of Indian politicians and its rough establishment are the prime examples of Indian impatience, discomfort and fear against easy and smooth sailing of the CPEC in Pakistan because expected economic self-reliance and massive diversification of national economy and qualitative & quantitative improvement in capacity building of productive channels would be strategic fall-out of Indian hegemonic designs in the region.

Indian mass media has been projecting the CPEC as a military alliance. On the contrary, the CPEC has developed a noble concept of commercial diplomacy and sustainable economic development. BRI and CPEC are the projects of 21 century. Both are custodians for the rise of Asian Century. Both supplement the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) vision of regional connectivity and economic integration too. The CPEC is the icon of tremendous socio-economic prosperity. It provides a strong foundation of prosperity, economic stability, sustainability, industrial progression and systemic coaxing of social development and improvement of capacity building system in health, education and housing sectors. The CPEC

has become a hypnotic gravity to eliminate poverty, generate new jobs, bring lights by developing more and more energy projects (thermal, coal, hydro, solar, nuclear) in the country, smarter infrastructural development by developing vast interconnected network of roads, super highways, motorways and tunnels and above all brighten prospects of economic recovery in the country especially in post COVID-19 period. Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan has rightly tagged economic prosperity of Pakistan with successful implementation and execution of the CPEC projects in the country.

CPEC was designed to reduce physical distances, political barriers and promote blue or maritime economies. The jewel of Pakistan i.e. Gwadar seaport is meant to jell sea routes for easy and smooth supplies of energy resources (oil & gas) and merchandized commodities. CPEC is the mega project amounting to US\$60 billion. It would revolutionize industries and humanities. It would achieve greater socio-economic prosperity, regional connectivity and above all shared human survival in the days to come. China has invested around \$25 billion dollars in various CPEC projects in the country so far with total financial commitments up to \$62 billion. Presently, the work has been going on in various 22 CPEC projects. Currently, 15 energy projects in Pakistan with a total capacity of 11,110 megawatts are planned as a priority, of which, 11 are under construction or in operation with a total capacity of 6,910 MW. Moreover, around 25000 Pakistani citizens are working in various projects of CPEC.

It can work as a catalyst especially in trade promotion, expanding markets, regional activity and socio-economic uplift in Pakistan. CPEC can be termed as a gateway of expanding economic activities and a corridor of prosperity. The wide-range projects in the areas of agriculture, industry and services under CPEC will open a corridor of options for the Pakistani masses. The Corridor is expected to fuel economic growth of Pakistan by adding 2.0% point to its growth between 2016 and 2020; another 1.5 percentage point between 2020 and 2030. It is likely to create 800,000 to 2.0 million new jobs. The length of newly-built or upgraded roads and railways should reach 3871km and 1529km, respectively. Power generated by newly-built sources will reach 19.785 million KW, and length of optical fiber cable will reach 2084km.

China, the 2nd largest economy of the world, has unique model of commercial diplomacy and economic development. Chinese soft power and economic diplomacy have brought many nations closer to each other. China's peaceful rise has been cited as a role model for the rest of the world and CPEC is the prime example of its commercial diplomacy. Moreover, IMF's most recently published report (October 15, 2020) has declared surpassing of the Chinese economy (US\$ 24.34 trillion) over US economy (US\$ 20.87 trillion) in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). So BRI & CPEC upholds its superior commercial diplomacy instead of constant relying on secretive plotting, conspiracy and machination like India. In this connection, Indian government and its jagged establishment should amend its archaic approach of regional domination through military means (Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives & Bangladesh). Real politick does not provide real essence of regional domination rather regional development, connectivity, socio-economic integration and diversification of economies & resources are the way forward.

BRI & CPEC maintains characteristics of “Asian Century” and diminishing of “virtual colonization”. Both reflect new economic model of productivity, peaceful co-existence and human survival. Both showcase new economic thinking through which even political survival may also be attained and subsequently sustained without the support of the West in the days to come. Under flagship project of the BRI & CPEC China sees relationships among states as a partnership not competition. It has no political agenda or military need to be imposed on participating countries. It believes in participatory approach for conflict resolution. Being expert on CPEC and BRI, I personally believe that BRI & CPEC are the best hope to achieve and secure a just and equitable world which is not dominated by a few. Only in such a world will human dignity flourish. China has emerged as super economic power in the world which cares about regional countries and its BRI & CPEC mega projects provide golden opportunity to all the regional countries especially CARS to be connected via extended projects of the CPEC in shape of seaports and railways.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-indian-ill-designs/>

The News

China’s first non-career envoy to Pakistan Nong Rong assumes office

ISLAMABAD: China has designated first non-career ambassador for Pakistan in more than 40 years as its new ambassador Nong Rong has assumed his assignment in Islamabad and had important meetings with senior top officers including that of the Foreign Office since his arrival.

He has brought a special message of goodwill of his country’s President Xi Jinping for the government and people of his host country that he would deliver to the president here next week when he will be formally submitting his credentials to him.

Ambassador Nong Rong has been dealing in foreign trade and economic affairs in 29-year of his service in China in various capacities. He was never associated with the Chinese Foreign Office but has tremendous skill of negotiating and comprehending trade and economic matters. Nong Rong, 53, belongs to remote southern Chinese autonomous region of Guangxi Zhuang which is located near the Vietnam’s border close to the picturesque Beibu Gulf and the whole area is known for its majestic rivers and rich cultural background. Nong Rong was regional minister before his ambassadorial appointment. He was secretary of the prestigious CPC Group, ethnic and religion affairs commission of Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region and deputy head of the United Front Work department of CPC committee. The diplomatic sources said that Nong Rong would provide much needed push to the historic China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) plans which is flagship project of its gigantic Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), connecting China with the whole world through new highways and routes.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/735983-china-s-first-non-career-envoy-to-pakistan-nong-rong-assumes-office>

October 29, 2020

Dawn News

Chinese group offers help in developing Karachi's infrastructure, coastal area

KARACHI: A delegation of the Peoples Republic of China called on city administrator Iftikhar Ali Shallwani on Wednesday and discussed matters of mutual interests.

The delegation was led by director of Houji Group Mr. Xiang Qiwen and Miss Wang Huayu and Coordinator Friendship of Foreign Country Mr. Yang Haiming.

The delegation offered China's support for uplift of Karachi infrastructure, coastal areas and construction of parking plaza.

They also offered to sign a memorandum of understanding for declaring Karachi and similar cities of China 'Sister Cities'.

The administrator welcomed the offer and said that Pakistan and China had ironclad friendship, adding that a mega project like CPEC brought both the countries even more closer. He said that Pakistan's economy was likely to be lifted through CPEC.

Mr Shallwani said that Pakistan and China were already working on several joint projects and the latter's experts had played vital role in Pakistan's development. "Karachi Metropolitan Corporation wants to uplift infrastructure of the city and carry out road construction and other works," he added.

The administrator said that they also wanted to develop coastal areas while parking plazas were the need of the hour, adding that China's experience and expertise in these fields would surely help the local administration. He said that Karachi was a gateway and economical hub of Pakistan and offers plenty of opportunities for investors owing to its geographical situation.

Mr Shallwani said that there were four economic zones, two ports and an international standard airport in Karachi. "This city is known as commercial capital as business activities are done throughout the year," he said.

The administrator said roads and footpaths were being constructed or renovated in residential as well as commercial areas.

The delegation members said Karachi was the biggest city of Pakistan and China wanted prosperity and development of the city's people, adding that China was ready for all-out support.

Liaquatabad flyover

The KMC on Wednesday started replacement of Liaquatabad flyover's joint expansion.

During the replacement work, one track of the flyover would remain closed and the people have been advised to use alternative route.

The administrator took notice of media reports about deplorable condition of the flyover's expansion joints and directed the department concerned to fix the issue at the earliest.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1587482/chinese-group-offers-help-in-developing-karachis-infrastructure-coastal-area>

Departments asked to priorities CPEC projects

ISLAMABAD: Enhancing export-led growth, reducing imports, strengthening local industries and creation of jobs for people in the country can be achieved through timely provision of basic services, MNA Sher Ali Arbab said on Wednesday.

He was talking to members of National Assembly Standing Committee on CPEC, of which he is chairman.

The parliamentary body directed the departments concerned for provision of utilities to expedite the process of industrialization in order to attract foreign direct investment along China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Mr. Arbab, who is also chairman of the committee, directed ministries, divisions and departments concerned to priorities projects related to CPEC. He said the project carries national importance and needs to be finished timely and effectively.

The meeting was held to discuss provision of basic utilities to people including gas, electricity, roads and so on.

In the past, allied government departments have been criticized over providing NA and Senate committees with insufficient details about different projects. Members said that departments shifted the blame towards one another and there seemed to be no institutional collaboration.

Earlier this month, a Senate committee headed by PPP leader and Senator Sherry Rehman, had called for attention towards projects in Balochistan. Members discussed that no tangible progress was made during the last few years and despite recommendations, provision of gas and electricity supply in Bostan, Balochistan and its development as a special economic zone (SEZ) seemed like a farce.

“Correspondence between federal and provincial governments takes too long. The best solution to this problem is to sit all the relevant officials together and settle matters immediately,” Mr. Arbab said.

In response, the officials concerned assured committee members that their recommendation to include ML1 (Torkham to Peshawar) in CPEC, would be taken up in the 10th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC).

“We have also been assured that our recommendation to include electric powered trains instead of diesel trains will be included in CPEC,” he told Dawn.

Members of the committee were briefed by additional secretary and representatives from the planning ministry whereas the Board of Investment sought the committee's assistance in 53 different areas concerning SEZs.

Secretary (Ministry of Industries and Production), secretary (Ministry of Railways), additional secretary (Power Division), additional director general of Nepra, managing director of NTDC, chief executive officer (CEO) of Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company, chief technical officer of Sindh Economic Zone Management Company, CEO of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company, managing director of SNGPL and SSGCL briefed members regarding various issues pertaining to CPEC.

Moreover, members were informed about the business plan chosen for SEZs and the road map to improve investment opportunities in prioritized SEZs was also presented. Work on CPEC concerning gas, electricity and roads seems to be going well without any hurdles, Mr. Arbab said, adding in its next meeting the committee will invite representatives from various industries to discuss the business plan further.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1587507/departments-asked-to-prioritise-cpec-projects>

Pakistan Observer

Pakistani pine nuts fly to China to satisfy Chinese foodies

Beijing: A flight carrying 25 tons of Pakistani pine nuts arrived at Kunming Changshui Airport in southwest China's Yunnan Province, says a report published by China Economic Net. "Baxi pine nuts", a snack popular in China in recent years, has always been mistaken by Chinese consumers as being produced in Brazil. In fact, they are from Chilgoza pine forest in Pakistan's western region Parachinar. According to the report, historically Pakistan has been a traditional exporter of pine nuts, most of which are sold to China through the Khunjerab Port in Kashgar, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. Nowadays some vendors are purchasing such pine nuts in Xinjiang because of its advantage of road traffic. Pakistan pine nut is of the best quality in the world with its large kernel, thin skin, high nutritional value and medicinal value.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistani-pine-nuts-fly-to-china-to-satisfy-chinese-foodies/>

The Nation

NA extends CPEC Authority Ordinance for four months

The National Assembly on Thursday extended the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Ordinance 2019 for another 120 days.

The federal government had earlier introduced a resolution seeking an extension for the Ordinance, which expired in June.

The Ordinance, promulgated by the president on October 8, 2019, had established a 10-member authority tasked to expedite projects along the multi-billion dollar road and rail network that links China to the Arabian Sea through Pakistan.

The authority is mandated with exploring economic growth and unlocking the potential of an interlined production network through regional and global connectivity.

The Ordinance had been extended by the lower house through a resolution in January 2020 for 120 days.

Meanwhile, in the Upper House, Senator Raza Rabbani questioned the legal standing of the CPEC Authority now that the presidential ordinance had expired.

The PPP leader made a call to attention on the matter during today's session, questioning the PTI-led government's handling of CPEC.

“How can the authority function when the ordinance has expired?” he asked, pointing out that the authority's utilization of CPEC funds was illegal.

He accused the federal government of purposefully allowing the ordinance to lapse.

“There is no law governing the project at the moment. The federal government should introduce new legislation.”

The upper house of Parliament saw commotion as Rabbani finished his argument.

Responding to Rabbani's statements, Federal Minister for Information Shibli Faraz insisted that the federal government will now allow anyone to derail CPEC projects.

“We designed the CPEC Authority to make it more efficient. We are here to build the same institutions that you destroyed.”

“We will not let you destroy CPEC,” he added.

Shibli said the government intended to present a bill concerning the CPEC Authority in the National Assembly soon.

<https://nation.com.pk/29-Oct-2020/na-extends-cpec-authority-ordinance-for-another-120-days>

CPEC Authority Bill for 26th amendment tabled in NA

Advisor to Prime Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan on Thursday tabled China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Bill 2020 and 26th amendment of constitution in National Assembly.

Deputy Speaker of National Assembly Qasim Khan Suri has forwarded both bills to concerned standing committees while opposition lodged protest against not providing copies of the bills in National Assembly.

National Assembly also extended tabled ordinances for 120 days. Babar Awan, while responding to protest by JUI-F's Shahida Akhtar against the extension, said that under the constitution of the country, parliament can grant extension to ordinances.

Earlier, PPP leader Naveed Qamar said that the House is being paralyzed as the work of parliament was being taken from an ordinance factory.

Fazl says CPEC future ruined, blasts new bill

JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Thursday said the future of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had been ruined, as he blasted the PTI government's policy on the venture which is vital to the country's future.

China wasn't happy with Pakistan, he told reporters in Multan, adding that the country has been facing isolation in the world.

Describing it as a blatant attempt to protect corruption in the multi-billion-dollar project, Fazl said a bill was being introduced in the National Assembly later in the day to exempt the CPEC Authority chairman from any accountability.

When asked about the absence of any guarantor and the future line of action in this scenario, he said their demand was to hold fresh elections. "We neither hold talks nor are in favor holding dialogue," the JUI-F chief replied in response to another question.

The Election Commission of Pakistan should announce the annulment of 2018 elections and give a date for new polls, he demanded

Fazl again reminded the reporters that dividing Kashmir into three was a formula presented by Prime Minister Imran Khan. The stakeholders were not even being listened to in Gilgit-Baltistan, he added.

Stating that he never compromises on principles, the JUI chief said there was no government in the country and "whatever there is, it is standing on crutches."

Fazl also made it clear that they would make the necessary arrangements themselves if the government could not provide security. The opposition rallies would go ahead as per schedule, he said, adding that protecting the citizens was a government responsibility.

<https://nation.com.pk/29-Oct-2020/cpec-authority-bill-for-26th-amendment-tabled-in-na>

The News

Pakistan, China discuss healthcare challenges in post-COVID era

BEIJING: Universities and medical institutions from 11 countries, including China, Pakistan attended an international online forum and discussed post-COVID healthcare opportunities and challenges.

The Forum was organised by South and Southeast Asia Medical Education and Service Alliance (SSAMESA), China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Wednesday.

The participants exchanged in-depth views on the opportunities and challenges facing the higher medical education and healthcare industry in the post-COVID-19 era.

Titled “New Challenges, New Opportunities, New Cooperation - The Reform and Development of Higher Medical Education and Health Care in the Post-pandemic Era”, the seminar was set to strengthen exchanges and cooperation in higher medical education, medical and health services, public health systems and smart medical construction in the post-epidemic era among medical institutions from South and Southeast Asia.

It is one of the sub-forums of the 2020 Online Forum on Education Cooperation in South & Southeast Asia organized and sponsored by China’s Yunnan Provincial Department of Education.

According to the event organizer and also the SSAMESA secretariat Kunming Medical University (KMU), China, 16 medical experts including Prof. Li Song, President of KMU, China, Prof. Javed Akram, Vice Chancellor of University of Health Sciences (UHS), Lahore gave speeches on medical personnel training, medical services and COVID-19 prevention and control.

]Yuan Bin, Party Secretary of KMU, said, “The COVID-19 epidemic is a common challenge facing all mankind. Only through solidarity and cooperation can countries overcome the epidemic and promote new progress in medical education and health care.”

Prof. Javed Akram from Pakistan delivered a well-received speech with the theme “Challenges & Opportunities in Medical Education for Health Universities”.

He and other experts had a full exchange on the reform and development of medical education and health care in the post-epidemic era, and put forward opinions and suggestions on promoting regional cooperation in medical education and health care.

SSAMESA, initiated by KMU and Shanghai Jiaotong University (SJTU) in 2019, is a non-government and non-profit international medical institutions consortium joined by 39 medical institutions from 12 countries in the South and Southeast Asia.

It was established to promote exchange and cooperation between medical institutions in China and South and Southeast Asian countries in the fields of medical education, scientific research, medical training and healthcare services.

The Alliance also aims to promote the improvement of regional higher medical education and medical and health services, and make positive contributions to the development of global medical and health care.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the Alliance has donated masks, forehead thermometers and other PPEs to some of its members. And an online sharing session on COVID-19 clinical

diagnosis and treatment was held with more than 100 medical experts from 13 universities and medical institutions in 7 countries to share their successful experience and practices in epidemic prevention and control and patient treatment.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/736485-pakistan-china-discuss-healthcare-challenges-in-post-covid-era>

IRS holds round-table on Pak-China relations

Islamabad : Naghmana Hashmi who served as Pakistan's ambassador to China from 2019 to 2020 has said that Chinese political system is way more pluralistic than is generally perceived.

Ms Naghmana was addressing a roundtable organised by Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here Wednesday.

Ms Hashmi stated that the Communist Party of China had an elaborate process of soliciting feedback from party cadres and other relevant stakeholders on important national matters before a decision is taken at the top. She said that very body who matters is consulted before taking any decision. Commenting on China-India relations, she opined that while the Chinese public had started warming up to India and the West in early 2000s, their perceptions about the West as well as India completely changed after both tried to pressurize China when it was battling the pandemic of Covid-19 early this year. She said that China did not consider India a serious competitor militarily, economically or culturally. She observed that Beijing would try its best to avoid an all-out confrontation with India because it would jeopardise its long-term plans of economic development.

The speaker credited the long-term planning of the Chinese government for its rapid rise in the late 20th and early 21st-first Centuries. She said that Chinese did not want to be humiliated ever again because of their internal weaknesses. She added that Chinese economic development was a product of technological progress, peaceful resolution of border disputes with all the neighbours and a forward-looking trade and economic policy. She insisted that China had improved its relations not only with Pakistan but also with other South Asian countries excluding India.

Naghmana Hashmi said that China had allowed duty-free access to various Bangladeshi products to its market, it was rapidly improving transport links with Nepal and making economic inroads into Sri Lanka and Maldives.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/736414-irs-holds-round-table-on-pak-china-relations>

Huawei to establish ICT academy at Air University

Islamabad: Air University, in its endeavor towards establishment of cyber security ecosystem in Pakistan, signed an MoU with Huawei to establish Huawei ICT (cyber security) Academy on its premises, says a press release.

The academy will specially focus on cyber security certifications. This initiative will produce Huawei Cyber Security product line experts and is a major step in training youth on cyber

security and providing them hands-on learning experience on state-of-the-art products and solutions.

Air University Vice Chancellor Air Marshal (r) Javaid Ahmed welcomed the Huawei team and inked the MoU in a graceful ceremony by following the COVID-19 SOPs. Zhang Wenwu, Zong Xinyuan, and Dia Kang represented the Huawei team.

The Huawei Cyber Security Academy will not only benefit the Air University's students, but it will also attract external students owing to the trust, which the university has developed by leading several cyber security related initiatives in Pakistan. It is pertinent to mention that Air University also houses the Secretariat of National Centre for Cyber Security (NCCS) having 11 different labs across the country.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/736415-huawei-to-establish-ict-academy-at-air-university>

October 30, 2020

Business Recorder

Decisions taken in 'good faith'

ISLAMABAD: The government on Thursday introduced 'The China Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority Bill, 2020' and 'The Constitution (Twenty-sixth Amendment) Bill, 2020' in National Assembly.

The National Assembly also passed two bills – The Control of Narcotic Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and The Emigration (Amendment) Bill, 2020.

The statement of objects and reasons of 'The China Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority Bill, 2020', says: "No Suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the authority, the chairperson, member, executive director operations, executive director research, employees, officers, experts, consultants or advisors of the authority, in respect of anything done or purported to be done in good faith, under the provisions of this Act or the rules and regulations."

It also says that "the authority would be responsible for planning, facilitating, coordination, monitoring, and evaluating to ensure implementation of all activates related to the CPEC, ensuring inter-provincial and inter-ministerial coordination, organizing and coordinating meetings and joint cooperation committee and joint working groups, conducting sectoral research for informed decisions making and along terms planning; monitoring and evaluation and to ensure implementation beside narrative building and communication of CPEC and other related activities from time to time."

According to statement of objects and reasons of The Constitution (Twenty-sixth Amendment) Bill, 2020, "the bill is aimed at transparent Senate elections without manipulations that have happened in the past and grant full voting rights to the overseas Pakistanis are the long outstanding demands of almost all the political parties including PTI. Federal Cabinet has also

constituted a Cabinet Committee to formulate recommendations regarding electoral reforms to ensure transparent, free and fair elections in the country. Based on the recommendations of the committee, the Cabinet approved electoral reforms package consisting of the Constitution (twenty-sixth) Amendment) Bill, 2020 and the Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2020. These bills broadly cover the Senate elections, women and minorities reserved seats, delimitation of constituencies on the basis of enrolled voters instead of population, voting rights to overseas Pakistanis and conditional participation of dual nationals in elections”.

According objects and reasons, “The Control of Narcotic Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2020”, ‘if any offence is committed relating to psychotropic substance (more than three kilograms and up to four kilograms) inside or near a school, college, university, educational setting or any other educational institution, he/she shall be punishable with imprisonment but shall not be less than twenty years along with fine which shall not less than two million and five hundred thousand rupees.

“If any offence is committed relating to psychotropic substance (1000 grams to 4999 grams), the imprisonment which may be extend to twenty years but shall not be less then fifteen years along with fine which may be up to two million and five hundred thousand rupees but not less than five hundred thousand rupees”.

RESOLUTIONS

The House also passed three resolutions extending Public Procurement Regulatory (Amendment) Ordinance, the Public Private Partnership Authority (Amendment) Ordinance and the Corporate Restructuring Companies (Amendment) Ordinance for a period of one hundred and twenty days. Prime Minister adviser on parliamentary affairs Babar Awan moved the resolutions.

Naveed Qamar of Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) said that the government is extending ordinances in spite of legislation. He said that the government is being run through ordinances and it rendered the parliament paralyzed.

“We are against ordinances and we strongly opposed them. The government should make legislation by taking the opposition into confidence,” he said.

CALL ATTENTION

Responding to a calling attention notice, state minister for parliamentary affairs Ali Muhammad Khan said the government has brought a change in the drug policy under which the pharma companies cannot increase the prices of medicines without approval of relevant ministry. He said the prices of medicines have been rationalized to ensure their availability in the market, adding that the prices of 89 medicines have also been reduced.

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) MNA Noor Alam Khan criticized the government over increasing rates of medicines, electricity, gas and other items of daily use.

He said that ‘we are elected representatives and we are answerable before the people, adding, “the lives of people have become miserable due to price hike in the country”.

He said that the price of medicines have been increased three times in two years.

PTI MNAs Riaz Fatyana and Khawja Sheraz also expressed concern over the increase in the prices of medicines and other commodities.

Fatyana said that 200 percent price of 12000 medicines has been increased, adding the government should reduce customs duty on the import of drugs' chemical to decrease the prices of medicines. He said that there is also need to formulate general policy for medicines.
POINT OF ORDER

Speaking on a point of order, minister for science and technology Fawad Chaudhary asked the opposition parties to sit with the government for talks on electoral reforms and better future of the country.

However, he said no compromise will be made on their corruption cases.

“They [opposition] should not target the state...the language used against state institutions by the opposition parties in their protest gatherings is pathetic,” he said.

The House prorogued sine die.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/10/30/1-page/856487-news.html>

Faraz tells Senate

Country's enemies trying to sabotage CPEC

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Shibli Faraz said in the Senate on Thursday that enemies of Pakistan were trying to sabotage the all important China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project and accused Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) of serving the ‘designs of the enemy’ by trying to create instability and unrest in the country.

Responding to a Calling Attention Notice regarding the lapse of China Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority Ordinance 2019, moved by Raza Rabbani from Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the minister said that CPEC is not the project of any political party. “It is the project of the people of Pakistan and China. No conspiracy can derail the project.”

The minister strongly criticised the PPP senator for moving a Calling Attention Notice regarding CPEC. “There are many enemies of the CPEC project and we should not play in the hands of enemies. We need to be very cautious while raising questions about the projects that are regarded as lifeline for this country. When we raise questions about CPEC from the forum of the Parliament, our enemy finds a chance to unleash its heinous propaganda against this country, the CPEC and our brave armed forces,” he said.

The Senate session presided over by Deputy Chairman Saleem Mandviwalla saw exchange of heated arguments between the treasury and opposition benches immediately after the Question Hour was over and the information minister took the floor on the pretext of giving an important policy statement.

However, when he criticised the opposition, the chair intervened and asked the minister to deliver his speech only after the disposal of house business agenda. “Shibli sahib, I thought there is something important that you want to share that prompted you to take the floor in the middle of the session,” said the deputy chairman.

“What could be more important than this country? I want to say something that is related to the sovereignty of this country. What could be more important than that?” he asked.

Leader of the House in Senate Dr Shahzad Waseem intervened and requested the chair that Faraz be allowed to give a policy statement regarding arrest of Indian pilot on February 27, 2020, but the chair said he would be allowed after the disposal of house business. “I assure you the minister would be given ample time to speak after the disposal of house business,” the deputy chairman said.

Leader of the Opposition in Senate Raja Zafar-ul-Haq criticized the treasury benches for defying the instructions of the chair and insisting to take the floor before the disposal of the house business.

Later, the information minister was given the floor and he strongly took on the opposition and its Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). “Your brave Pakistan Air Force (PAF) shot down an Indian Air Force (IAF) fighter jet on February 27, 2019. And by trying to undermine that historic achievement, you are serving the agenda of the enemy,” the minister said taking a jibe at the remarks of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ayaz Sadiq regarding the arrest of IAF pilot Abhinandan by Pakistan military last year.

“Our people and armed forces valiantly combated the war against terrorism. We need to promote unity amongst our ranks to defeat the conspiracies being hatched by our enemies.” The entire country is grieved over the Peshawar seminary blast incident, he said.

Earlier, during Question Hour, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan said that Dr Afia Siddiqui has signed her clemency petition in the United States, which he said is a great achievement for federal government to convince her to sign the clemency petition. On September 24, 2020, the officials of Consulate General of Pakistan in Houston, US, met with Siddiqui in the prison and then met the US authorities following which she was allowed to contact her lawyer and family members through video link and her email address was not blocked, he said.

Federal Minister for Communications Murad Saeed informed the house that National Highway Authority (NHA's) revenue has increased by Rs 50 billion under the tenure of the present government. He said there was no increase in toll tax at any of the 117 toll plazas under NHA control. The toll tax, he said is increased by 10 per cent each year at two motorways as a result of an agreement signed by the former PML-N government that allowed increasing the toll tax at those two motorways by 10 per cent annually for the next 20 years.

The agreement was signed in 2014, he said. The present government, he said has increased the NHA revenue by 103 per cent without making any increase in toll taxes, by taking a number of steps including stopping the 'leakage' of toll taxes, Saeed said. The groundbreaking of Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway will be performed next year, the minister said adding that the reconstruction of Karachi-Hyderabad Motorway M-9 is being done as per international standards. Education Minister Shafqat Mahmood said the process to introduce a uniform syllabus in the country to remove the existing disparity in the education system has started.

State Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan informed the house that eradication of polio in Pakistan has been declared as a national public health emergency. He said the government has started different polio campaigns to eradicate the polio disease. The house prayed for the martyrs of Peshawar seminary blast. The senators strongly condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment for the perpetrators of the terrorist activity. The house has now been prorogued.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/10/30/2-page/856499-news.html>

CPEC's M-6 project: govt considering taking PPP mode

ISLAMABAD: The government intends to take Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway (M-6), a critical component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode with an estimated cost of Rs175 billion.

In order to ensure better planning of Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway project and attract private investment in this scheme, the National Highways Authority (NHA) arranged a stakeholders' consultation with the cooperation of Public Private Partnership Authority (PPPA) at the NHA Headquarters, where professionals hailing from the construction industry, contractors, and financiers were invited at large.

Commercial Attaché of Saudi Arabia based in Islamabad, representatives of the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank Group also participated in the session via video link.

Chairman National Highways Authority Capt (retired) Sikander Qayyum said the main purpose of inviting the best professionals in their respective field was to invite fresh ideas regarding procurement of only missing motorway link i-e-Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway to complete the North-South Economic Corridor.

Capt (retired) Qayyum said the NHA was endeavoring hard for early start of construction activity on this mega project.

Prime Minister Imran Khan also desires provision of strong infrastructure for rapid socio-economic development in the country.

To this effect, he said, the role of motorways and national highways is an accepted one. He further said the NHA was obtaining cooperation of the private sector in motorways and highways building schemes with the view to reduce financial load on the national exchequer.

He said the Public Private Partnership (PPP) had been prevalent nowadays in developing as well as developed nations of the world.

Creation of the private sector's interest in infrastructure projects for better service delivery is the tool being used successfully.

Capt (retired) Qayyum also recalled countrywide motorways and national highways projects being undertaken under the gigantic China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) programme.

The NHA is committed to put the country on the track towards socio-economic development. He hoped that that consultative session of the professionals would pave the way to formulate viable recommendations to achieve the objective.

The length of proposed Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway will be 306 km, 14 interchanges, one major bridge on River Indus, six flyovers, 10 Service Areas and 12 Rest Areas will also be built on this motorway.

The project is planned to be completed in 30 months at construction cost of approximately Rs175 billion with Intelligent Transport System (ITS).

The CEO of the Public Private Partnership Authority (PPPA) Malik Ahmad Khan expressed deep sense of gratitude to the participants for expressing interest in the consultative session. He said deliberations of consultation session on every phase and aspect of the Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway procurement starting from alignment, structuring and financing had been very informative and thought provoking.

He said this consultative session had opened up numerous vistas of procurement methodologies and helped us to outline proposed structure of the project.

Proposals and recommendations put forward by the professionals will be forwarded to high government authorities for decision, he added.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/10/30/31-page/856605-news.html>

The Nation

Pakistani researcher dreams big on Pak-China cooperation in cotton research

The flow of knowledge is an important part of scientific research and will be really to see Pakistan and China to cope with the climate change and associated risks in cotton.

This was stated by Mian Faisal Nazir, who currently works as a postdoctoral research fellow at Institute of Cotton Research (ICR) of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS).

During the course of his PhD, he studied the genomic aspects of genetic differentiation and adaptive evolution of upland cotton in Anyang, China, according China Economic Net (CEN) on Friday.

Now his work is basically about investigating the primitive nature of a landrace “G. purpurascens” identified by Prof. Du Xiongming, director of Cotton Germplasm Resources Division, ICR, CAAS and his colleagues and its differential behavior with other landraces and modern cultivars.

“The dimension of Pakistan and China’s research on cotton is different, or you can say that it has a wider scope in China, while in Pakistan it is limited. Most of the cotton research work in Pakistan is focused on field-based evaluation and developing new cultivars.

However, in China, besides field-based work, lots of advanced molecular research is also going on. In Pakistan we are also doing molecular research, but due to the limited resources, its scope isn’t much wider,” he explained.

He sees clearly what difficulties are faced by Pakistan’s and China’s cotton planting.

“Recently a study described how climate change is influencing cotton production in Xinxiang, China. Similarly in Pakistan climate change associated with unpredicted rainfalls and increasing temperature are major concerns for scientists. In coming years its impact would be huge if we don’t take timely measures.”

Therefore, “there is a lot of potential in Pak-China cooperation on cotton research,” he mentioned. “The flow of knowledge is an important part of scientific research.

China has moderate weather conditions during cotton cropping season, while Pakistan has higher temperature during the season. So, it will be really interesting to see efforts from both sides to cope with the climate change and associated risks in cotton.”

<https://nation.com.pk/30-Oct-2020/pakistani-researcher-dreams-big-on-pak-china-cooperation-in-cotton-research>

The News

AGP, Audit Office China host joint video seminar

ISLAMABAD: The Department of the Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) and the National Audit Office of China jointly hosted the video-conference seminar on ‘Audit Quality Control and Assurance.’

The seminar marked continuity of the tradition and practice of technical cooperation between the auditor general offices of both countries in the areas of public sector auditing, which has helped both institutions in knowledge development and continued professional growth of public sector auditors.

The Auditor General of Pakistan Javaid Jahangir was the head of the Pakistan delegation. The delegation was comprised of Additional Auditor General Farrukh Hamidi, Deputy Auditor General Sardar Azmat Shafi, director generals Jawad Zaka Khan and Hasan Masud and Afnan Alam, Director International Relations.

The Auditor General of China Hou Kai was the head of the Chinese delegation. The Chinese delegation consisted of HU Jiajun, Director General of Department of Audit Quality Review, Jiang Haiying, Director General of Department of International Cooperation, Zhang Xinfang, Deputy Director-General, Zhang Xin, Director and Deputy Directors Wang Rui and Ding Yue. Deputy Auditor General of China Qin Boyong and Additional Auditor General of Pakistan Farrukh Hamid co- moderated the opening session.

The AGP, in his inaugural address, reiterated that the ongoing collaboration between two institutions is a model of state-to-state relations with different social systems and historical background.

Javid Jahangir congratulated Hou Kai on his appointment as Chinese Auditor General and expressed his confidence that under the new Auditor General's stewardship, the relations will continue to foster in years to come.

Auditor General of Pakistan briefed the Chinese Auditor General about the progress on the ongoing institutional reform process in the country's Supreme Audit Institution. Pakistan's delegation made a comprehensive presentation on the agenda of reforms to improve the quality of its audit reports.

The Auditor General of Pakistan further stressed that the improvements during the last three years had mainly been possible owing to the government's continuous support to strengthen the accountability and transparency of public spending. He also briefed the Chinese delegation on Auditor General Department's efforts in implantation of an integrated Audit Management Information System (AMIS) and integrating it with other relevant information systems, such as the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS).

The adoption and roll-out of these ICT systems, the Department of Auditor General of Pakistan believes will help minimize human intervention and inconsistency in audit planning, execution and reporting.

Also, it will help in standardization and archiving of audit working papers, which will facilitate improved/consistent quality assurance and control procedures in an efficient manner.

The Auditor General of China said in his opening speech that the SAIs of China and Pakistan had long maintained good relations. The mutual support and help has yielded positive results.

During the COVID-19 pandemic both SAIs have overcome various difficulties to attend the bilateral seminar virtually, a concrete action to strengthen friendship.

The Auditor General of China appreciated Pakistan's government's efforts in controlling the pandemic. He also emphasised that rapid economic and social development had exerted higher requirements for SAIs.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/736805-agp-audit-office-china-host-joint-video-seminar>

Senate session: Govt, opp in heated debate over CPEC Authority Ord

ISLAMABAD: Former Senate chairman Mian Raza Rabbani alleged in the Senate Thursday that the government had deliberately let the CPEC Authority Ordinance lapse, as it wanted to put CPEC on the back burner and give exemption to Authority chairman and its members from accountability.

Speaking on his call attention notice about CPEC Authority Ordinance 2019, which is still holding the field, he noted that the ordinance was promulgated on October 08, 2019 and it lapsed in February this year after 120 days as per Article 89 of the Constitution, and it was re-promulgated and lapsed on June 04 after 120 days.

However, he pointed out that from June 04 onwards to this day, there was no law under which the Authority was working, having big funds and staff and carrying out activities, and replied himself that obviously the Authority was working in the air without the related law.

Rabbani said he knew through a bill, the government wanted to give immunity to the Authority chairman and its members so that the NAB could not be applied on them but on all others. He also noted that the Authority chairman, who was no more after the lapse of the ordinance, faced very serious allegations. “Is this not an effort to give an NRO to him and the members through the bill?” he asked.

Replying to his notice, Information and Broadcasting Minister Shibli Faraz said the CPEC Authority was working hard but the opposition members tried unsuccessfully to destroy it like the rest of the institutions. “And we will not allow you to do so. A bill is being presented in the National Assembly on this count,” he said, and during his speech, the opposition senators staged a token walk out from the House.

Shibli said there were political, foreign and legal aspects of CPEC and that the project was between the two countries, people and the states and when it was talked about negatively, and confusion created, it affected the project as well as our foreign policy. He alleged that the opposition was trying to please their enemies, but were upsetting their friends in the process.

To this, Rabbani rose to explain that the minister himself conceded that the ordinance was objected and it was not the job of the opposition but of the government to bring a law, as the law did not exist from June till to date and the Authority was working illegally. And now, he noted, the government was bringing a bill, which was sheer discrimination in terms of giving immunity.

Shibli maintained, “I want to reassure the House, the people of Pakistan and China that various departments of the CPEC are working in the Planning Commission. Work is being done everywhere. We have come here to set up institutions.” During the question-hour, speaking on behalf of foreign minister, Adviser on Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan informed the House that Dr Aafia Siddiqui had now signed the clemency petition, which was being sent to the US president through the jail department. Previously, she had certain reservations but agreed to it on September 24. He said that her COVID-19 test was negative.

Babar Awan was replying to questions from JI senators Mushtaq Ahmed and Sirajul Haq. The adviser said anyone could approach courts with regard to those, who had handed over Aimal Kansi, Dr Aafia and others. He assured the senators that there was email and phone facility available to her. Replying to questions, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan said the government would like to fill 900 vacant posts at four government hospitals in the federal capital. This surprised many senators, who wondered, how they would be catering to the patients in the absence of 900 staff members.

The House presented scene of a fish market when Maritime Affairs Minister Ali Zaidi said since the matter relating to the islands was sub judice, he could not talk further, as several opposition senators and treasury members started speaking at the top of their voice. The PPP Senator Bahramand Tangi had asked a written question regarding the Islands Authority Ordinance.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/736827-senate-session-govt-opp-in-heated-debate-over-cpec-authority-ord>