



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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Data collected and compiled by Almas Noor and Rabeeha Safdar.

October 16, 2019

Pakistan Observer

China's Western Development Strategy and CPEC

Forty years ago, China introduced major economic reforms, lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty, leading it to become the second largest economy in the world. In the last 70 years, China has adjusted its regional development strategy three times. The first stage (1949-1978) is known as Balanced Development. Its major component was to seek a balanced development. The second stage (1979-1991) was Unbalanced Development with a focus to develop regions with special advantages (eastern & coastal cities). The third stage was Coordinated Development, which concentrates to stimulate the development of underdeveloped regions to reduce regional socio-economic disparity.

In continuation of coordinated development strategy, the government invested in developing transportation, energy and communication infrastructure, irrigation systems and urban infrastructure in the interior regions to develop public services which helped to narrow the gap between west, countryside and the other regions of China. Under this strategy, a considerable amount of investment was also dedicated for the development of highly populated ethnic autonomous regions, economically poor border-states and other underdeveloped regions to reduce the gap that was created during the first two stages of China's development. Although, policy environment was same for eastern and western regions but this strategy could not reap the real benefit for western part of China. The economic imbalance between them continued despite equal efforts.

To define a more focused policy that could work according to the economic situation of western regions, China in the year 2000 announced the "Western Development Strategy". This strategy aimed to address the socio-economic, ecological and security issues in order to set an environment in western China at par with eastern and central China to accelerate the development. Agenda of this strategy is to focus on six provinces (Gansu, Guizhou, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Sichuan and Yunnan), 5 autonomous regions (Guangxi, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Tibet and Xinjiang) and includes one municipality (Chongqing). China has a border with 14 countries out of which eight are sharing a 5,600 km long border with Xinjiang including Pakistan, Mongolia, India, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Russia.

The strategic location of Xinjiang making it economically viable for the investment. Xinjiang is the home of 24.4 million people with 47 ethnic groups the larger ones include Uighur, Han, Kazak, Hui, Mongolian, Kirgiz, Xibe, Tajik, Uzbek, Manchu, Daur, Tatar and Russian. The most populous ethnic group is the Uighur, and mostly are Sunni Muslims. Tianshan mountain divide the Xinjiang into "South Xinjiang" and "North Xinjiang". This province is also the home of large mineral reserves including iron, copper, gold, chrome, nickel and salt minerals.

Currently, 19 Chinese provinces and municipalities pledged their financial and technical support for the development of Xinjiang. These initiatives help to minimize the intraregional disparity and to address other bottlenecks including education, poverty, health and most importantly security. Xinjiang witnessed remarkable progress in other areas including improved housing conditions, tourism, agriculture, sanitation and poverty alleviation. The most important aspect is security situation in Xinjiang which is being combated in a unique way through rehabilitation centres/vocational and technical institutes that is exemplary for other conflict-prone areas. The outcome of this strategy is significant that from last four years Xinjiang has not faced a single incident of terrorism. On the other hand, western propaganda simply ignores all the major achievements made so far by Beijing in uplifting the socio-economic conditions of Xinjiang. In the recent past, 37 countries, including Pakistan, applaud the China's human right achievements in Xinjiang.

Previously, Xinjiang foreign trade and economic cooperation lagged behind as compared to other regions because of delayed opening up, poor infrastructure and connectivity and other negative conditions including terrorism. With much improved economic pre-requisites, presently within the framework of western development strategy, efforts are being exerted to make this region an economic hub and an engine to uplift the other connected areas. Realizing the economic potential of Xinjiang, the central government has announced to establish two special economic zones (SEZs) in Kashgar and Khorgos after 15 years of having successful SEZs development experience in other parts of China. These economic zones were announced not only to address the socio-economic discrepancies of western China rather it will also benefit the regional countries. Last year Xinjiang's GDP reached 1.22 trillion Yuan, more than 200 times of that in the initial years of China.

Logistics, electronics, textiles, construction material and renewable energy would be key industries in a 50 square kilometre development zone in Kashgar, whereas SEZ in Khorgos, would focus on chemicals, farm products and pharmaceuticals. The 73 square kilometre zone will also become an important point for Central Asian Republics (CARs).

To extend the trade from these economic zones to the Middle East, African and European countries, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would be a hook between these potential markets and Xinjiang and defining CPEC as a complementary tool to achieve the vision of western development strategy. Xinjiang being bordered with Gilgit-Baltistan would get benefit of approaching these markets through deep sea port of Gwadar in Balochistan and bring stability to the region. Gwadar will provide the shortest route to these giant markets.

Xinjiang is not only sharing border with Gilgit-Baltistan but also shares a long history from the era of old Silk Road. Furthermore, the two territories are crucial in rejuvenating the dream of new 'Silk Road'. The former Ambassador of Pakistan to China, Mr. Masood Khalid, once stated that the long-term plans include the option of instituting a trans-regional economic zone in Kashgar comprising China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia. China is planning, and in some cases, already, modernizing trans-continental highways, railroads and telecommunication

lines. The enhancement will boost the infrastructure and industrial and financial cooperation with the emerging markets that reside along the Silk Road. For instance, cross border optical fibre project to connect Islamabad and Khunjerab has been completed under CPEC. The fibre optical cable covers an area of 820 km that would help improve the telecom, ICT industry, tourism, trading opportunities in northern areas whereas it also enhances the communication security. The cultural and religious harmony between them would open another door of opportunity that would make these economic ties deepen at heart.

China and Pakistan relations are termed as 'all weather friends' & 'iron brothers'. The vision of Chinese President Xi Jinping about CPEC is neither infrastructure nor energy projects whether he always emphasized to foster a closer community with a shared future for both countries. The successful implementation of western development strategy and CPEC will ultimately be beneficial for both countries in terms of poverty eradication and economic development.

The Express Tribune

CPEC and the wages of mismanagement

During Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to China, on October 8, 2019, no particular mention was made on the halting pace of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Though Khan expressed his desire to emulate the Chinese model of beating corruption, through either hanging or incarcerating the fraudulent, he could not openly confess about the CPEC becoming victim of corruption itself. Corruption has become both an anomaly and a noose that could choke Pakistan's efficiency to deliver on economic front. Ever since the drive against the so called corrupt bureaucrats, a reluctance to perform has made them incapacitated. A general perception is that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has unleashed a witch hunt in the name of accountability.

It is too early to predict the effectiveness of the CPEC Authority in materializing the government's objective of executing the CPEC projects without hurdles. Not that it is the CPEC that has run into snags. Every developmental project in the country has faced bureaucratic, administrative and financial bottlenecks.

CPEC has been hailed in Pakistan as a game changer. The experts and the dreamer of the project believed it to change the economic calculus of the country and usher it into a new era of prosperity and development. Originally it was a \$46 billion project which has now gone to \$60 billion. The current CPEC portfolio consists of 43 projects, of which 22 are under implementation. Another 157 projects of the corridor will be gradually completed in the next 12 years.

Though this vast infrastructural network of the project would lift a substantial number of people from poverty, it is difficult to perceive as to how this corridor alone will pull Pakistan out of its economic woes, such as the low tax to GDP ratio and dwindling export, without the government changing its way of managing the economy. Unless Pakistan has decided to become China's client state, CPEC alone should not be the only economic issue concerning Pakistan.

The CPEC is a recent phenomenon in the Pakistan-China relationship spanning 70 years. And appallingly, during these seven decades, except Pakistan, almost every country in the region has benefited from China's rising stature as the economic power.

The bilateral trade between India and China has reached \$7.70 billion in 2019. Philippines' trade volume with China is three times higher than that of Pakistan. Vietnam, which is half of Pakistan's economy, has four times higher bilateral trade with China. Bangladesh's export to China has been recorded at \$3.3 billion in July 2019, as compared to Pakistan's that stands at \$1.9 billion.

Pakistan's lopsided economic relation with China was usually attributed to the lingering energy crisis, infrastructural and logistical problems, and corruption. With CPEC resolving much of the first two issues, an improvement was expected in trade relations. It was not to be, because the real spanners, mismanagement in capacities and the subsequent inefficient use of resources, were not removed. People are hired, on a political basis, on posts that do not match their caliber. Notwithstanding financial misappropriation, politicians have been treating state institutions as employment exchanges to deliver on their electoral promises.

While we choose to arrest people on financial corruption, we refuse to admonish them for displaying indifference towards institutional integrity. Frequent movement in goalposts makes financial misappropriation relatively easier. In fact, they both breed on one another.

It is just not enough for Pakistan to make multiple visits to China for the restoration of faith and revival of enthusiasm on CPEC. The right way to follow through the progress path on CPEC is to revive and renew faith in the corridor at the home turf, among the vying domestic partners.

This corridor has a cost to it, which Pakistan will have to pay off. Already the accumulating debt has been a cause for concern and one of the major reasons for Pakistan's balance of payments crisis.

October 18, 2019

Daily Times

Pakistan alongside China beats Indian lobbying against Islamabad

With longtime ally China providing diplomatic cover, Pakistan is confident it can avert being blacklisted by a global watchdog group over "terrorism" financing on Friday.

But the country will not be completely off the hook until Islamabad proves it is genuinely severing ties with various groups of fighters, say officials and analysts.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) – the Paris based intergovernmental organization that combats money laundering and "terrorism" financing – last year placed Pakistan on a grey list of countries with inadequate controls.

During its five-day meeting, FATF will decide on Friday whether to retain that designation, or blacklist Pakistan alongside Iran and North Korea.

If blacklisted, Islamabad faces financial consequences and economic setbacks at a time when its economy is facing a balance of payments crisis.

“The main challenge for Pakistan is to convince the FATF that it is taking complete and irreversible steps against terrorist financing,” said Michael Kugelman, the deputy director of the Asia Program at the Wilson Center think-tank.

Pakistan, which blames archrival India for lobbying to blacklist it, is relying for support on friendly countries like China, as well as Turkey and Malaysia.

Three votes are mandatory for any country to escape the blacklisting, and China is presiding over the ongoing FATF plenary in France.

Two top government officials and a security source told the Reuters news agency that in a recent visit to Beijing, Pakistan’s civil and military leadership secured a guarantee from Chinese leaders that Pakistan would not be placed on the blacklist.

Pakistan Observer

CPEC increases Pak-China people to people contact: Hashmi

Pakistan Ambassador to China Naghmana Hashmi has said that the bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and China has now touched US \$19.08 billion and both countries aim at raising it further. The bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and China has now touched \$19.08 billion. We aim at raising it further, she said in her article published in China Daily.

Ambassador Hashmi said that joint ventures in defence production have led to the manufacture of the MBT 2000 Al-Khalid Tank and JF-17 Thunder, a fighter aircraft. On the diplomatic front, the two countries are committed to protecting and promoting multilateralism and upholding the UN Charter, while our cooperation has extended to science and technology, socioeconomic sectors and nuclear cooperation for peaceful purposes, she said.

Pakistan and China is historically connected through the cultural and knowledge corridor. More than 1,000 years ago, famous Chinese monks such as Fa Xian and Xuan Zang travelled to South Asia (modern-day Pakistan) to study Buddhism. The famous book Journey to the West lists the names of areas in Pakistan, like Peshawar, Swat, Taxila, and Kashmir that Fa Xian and Xuan Zang travelled to.

Remarkably, these days around 28,000 Pakistani students are studying in top Chinese universities. Likewise, Chinese students are studying in universities and centres of excellence in Pakistan. The number of visitors from China has exceeded the accumulated number of visitors from the rest of the world.

Ambassador Hashmi said that people to people contact and cultural exchanges have increased. Hence, despite different political systems, social orientations, cultural roots and heritage, Pakistan and China are a unique example of civilizational harmony and peaceful coexistence.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is also a revival of the ancient Silk Road.

FPCCI hails establishment of CPEC Authority

Engr. Daroo Khan Achakzai, President of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry hailed the Prime Minister of Pakistan decision to establish China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority with an objective to accelerate the pace of CPEC related activities, find new drives of growth, unlock the potential of the interlinked production network and global value chains through regional and global connectivity.

The President FPCCI termed it a positive development for early completion of ongoing projects and removal of hurdles/bottleneck in the projects. He hoped that the creation of CPEC Authority would start a new phase of Joint Ventures and investment in Pakistan that would promote industrialization, create new jobs, help in alleviating unemployment & poverty and enable the economy to be on the path of sustainable growth.

The President FPCCI also appreciates the Government for granting tax and tariff concession to Gwadar ports and its adjunct Special Economic Zones and emphasized the granting same facilities to the local investors and businessmen. He also underscored the need to take FPCCI on board of CPEC Authority so that the stance of private sector can be incorporated in CPEC related projects.

The Express Tribune

China offers Pakistan an avenue for jewelry exports

LAHORE: Being the largest global consumer market for gems and jewelry, China offers a vast opportunity to Pakistan for lifting its exports in this segment, remarked Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI), President Zarak Khan.

He was speaking at a meeting of the PCJCCI Export Promotion Committee at the chamber on Thursday.

The PCJCCI president pointed out that Pakistan had the fifth largest gemstone reserves but unfortunately it was unable to benefit from its natural resources due to a lack of skills, technology, and knowledge for processing the precious stones.

Khan said Pakistan had potential reserves of 800,000 carats of ruby, 87,000 carats of emerald and 5 million carats of Peridot, which had remained unutilized due to the absence of appropriate cutting and polishing facilities in the country.

He was of the view that Pakistan's pink topaz and Kashmir ruby were considered unique all over the world.

PCJCCI Senior Vice President Moazzam Ghurki suggested collaboration between Pakistan and China in a bid to acquire knowledge of the latest techniques for the cutting and polishing of gemstones.

He called for taking the National Productivity Organization (NPO) onboard along with the Asian Productivity Organization (APO). “Chinese professionals should be invited to train Pakistan’s labour force and mining engineers in manufacturing and designing state of the art jewelry in this vital segment of the economy,” he said.

PCJCCI Secretary-General Salahuddin Hanif told the meeting that China began capturing the attention of the global jewelry industry in 1978 and with the passage of time it had emerged into a rapidly growing consumer market.

Nawaiwaqt

گوا در میں پاک چائینہ فرینڈشپ ہسپتال پر 100 ملین خرچ ہونگے

اسلام آباد (اے پی پی) چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری (سی بی سی) منصوبے کے تحت گوا در میں پاک چائینہ فرینڈشپ ہسپتال کی تعمیر پر 100 ملین ڈالر خرچ کئے جائیں گے۔ سی بی سی اتھارٹی کے حکام کے مطابق بلوچستان اور گوا در کے عوام کو صحت عامہ سے متعلق جدید سہولیات فراہم کرنے کے لئے 100 ملین ڈالر کی لاگت سے پاک چائینہ فرینڈشپ ہسپتال تعمیر کیا جا رہا ہے۔ ہسپتال 68 ایکڑ کے رقبے پر محیط ہو گا اور اس میں چھ بلاکس ہوں گے۔ ہسپتال کی رہائشی تعمیرات 20 فیصد کے قریب مکمل ہو چکی ہیں۔ گوا در میں انٹرنیشنل ایئر پورٹ اور 300 میگا واٹ کول فائر ڈپاؤر پلانٹ بھی تعمیر کیا جا رہا ہے۔ اس کے علاوہ پانی کی نمکینی ختم کرنے کے واٹر پلانٹ بھی لگا یا جا رہا ہے جو روزانہ 5 لاکھ گیلن پانی انسانی ضرورت کے لئے قابل استعمال بنائے گا۔ انہوں نے گوا در کو ترقی و خوشحالی کے سفر گامزن کرنے کے لئے اربوں ڈالروں کے مختلف پراجیکٹس کے آغاز اور مقامی آبادی کو روزگار کے مواقع فراہم کرنے کے ذریعے اسے بین الاقوامی اہمیت کا حامل شہر بنانے کے عزم کا اعادہ کیا۔

October 19, 2019

The News

Contractors terminate work on CPEC Western Route

ISLAMABAD: The Subcommittee of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) was Friday informed that the contractors of the packages 4 and 5 of Burhan-Hakla, DI Khan, of the Western Route under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) sent the notice of termination of contract due to non-release of funds for the ongoing projects.

The PAC Subcommittee recommended to the Finance Ministry and Planning Commission for release of the funds on priority basis for the ongoing projects under the CPEC.

The Subcommittee was held with the chair of its convener Noor Alam Khan in which the audit paras related to the Ministry of Communication for the year 2017-18 were examined.

Secretary Communication Jawad Rafiq told the committee that the Planning Commission did not release the funds for the ongoing projects of the Ministry of Communication during the first

quarters of the current fiscal year while for the second quarters, the Planning Commission released Rs07 billion, but the expenditures and payment were pending of Rs20 billion.

He further told the committee that he was writing a letter to the Planning Commission every month and tell them clearly that if the cost of the projects were increased then the Communication Ministry would not be responsible but the Finance Ministry and Planning Commission.

He told the committee that the NHA will initiate the projects only on the commercial basis as in the past many projects were started on political basis.

Senator Shibli Faraz drew the attention of Communication secretary for not starting the projects for the western rout under the CPEC.

The Communication secretary replied that agreement was made in the recent meeting with the Chinese officials in China on the inclusion of road projects of the western route.

While briefing the committee with regard to three project that the committee referred to NAB, the NAB officials told the committee that it has completed the inquiry of these projects, and now, the technical opinions were sought from Pakistan Engineering Council and PPRA and hopefully their opinion comes up in one month time.

The PAC Subcommittee directed NAB to update on these projects when the technical opinion comes from Pakistan Engineering Council and PPRA.

Examining the audit para, the Audit officials objected to keeping Rs11 billion of the NHA in Zardari Tariqati Bank and it was not transparent.

The officials of the Communication Ministry told the committee that the bids from five banks were invited, and the bank which gave the best rates of profit, so the amount was kept there and in next year, it was also kept in the same bank without offering a tender.

The PAC Subcommittee directed the Finance Ministry for inquiry and to submit the report to the committee.

October 20, 2019

The News

CPEC project: SEZs' foreign companies may be given 100pc ownership

ISLAMABAD: The PTI-led government is all set to allow 100 percent ownership for foreign companies going to invest in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The proposed incentives for SEZs included income tax exemptions, no taxes on non-residents and income tax exemptions for expatriates till 2040.

In a meeting held among different ministries/divisions and FBR for finalizing incentives for SEZs, a threadbare discussions showed that there was proposal to allow 100 percent foreign ownership and no minimum investment requirement for upcoming SEZs because these incentives are not part of present SEZ Act.

The meeting decided that it should be made part of the existing SEZ Act, at least for those sectors, which have been notified by the government. The meeting also asked for sharing justification of sectors, which could not be included for 100 percent foreign ownership.

The meeting discussed the issue that there should be no taxes on non-resident's other income sources of enterprises including property, investments including profit on debt, dividends and capital gains if it constitutes 5 to 10 percent of annual gross revenue.

It was decided that both FBR and Board of Investment (BOI) will get back on this point after completing their internal discussion. It was proposed that this clause for 100 percent exemption on import duties on plant and machinery for 10 years to be granted. This incentive may be applied to only capital expenditure but exclude Balancing, Modernization Replacement (BMR) for machinery.

It also came under discussion that before the revision of the SEZ Act, the word "Equipment" was also part of the older version of this Act, but in revised Act 2015 "Equipment" was excluded and now only plant and machinery is included. However it was suggested that equipment may be included.

The meeting discussed that there will be no turnover tax for export companies; 25 percent corporate tax exemption beyond 23 years and 12 years (total 35 years if exports are more than 75 percent of gross revenue); no income tax for expatriates till 2040 and 100 percent tax exemption on local sourced raw material used for export/import substitution sectors. It was decided that FBR would share its response after internal consultation.

The corporate tax exemption for 23 years from certain time was proposed that the same should be provided for SEZs as FBR has already agreed to a concession agreement for Gwadar Port & Free Zone.

Now the FBR will send their response on this proposition after consultation with all the stakeholders.

With regard to incentives provided to bonded warehouses and customs facilities, ready to use offices, light industrial units, warehouses, it was told that all these facilities are included in the rules but the bonded warehouse facilities are missing.

It was decided to incorporate all these incentive details including bonded warehouse facility in the SEZ Act, to reduce complexity and for better comparative advantage.

It was suggested in the discussion that concession agreement for Gwadar might have approval of Board of Approval (BoA). BOI agreed to this suggestion but they told that Ministry of Ports and

Shipping has some reservation. It may be requested to Ministry of Ports and Shipping to share their reservation to resolve this issue.

The News

Chinese Realme plans android manufacturing facility in Pakistan

LAHORE: Director Marketing Pakistan, He Shunzi aka Harvey, overseeing the operations of Realme in three countries Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh shared the future plans of the company, including establishment of the first ever mobile phone manufacturing factory in Pakistan by a Chinese manufacturer.

Q. Realme established manufacturing plants in different countries where it was in the market, including in India – any such plan for Pakistan?

A. Yes of course – this is the core part of the Realme success strategy to establish a manufacturing factory in the country where it is doing business. So, is the case for Pakistan; we are in the process of establishing a manufacturing unit in Pakistan like in India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Bangladesh and others. Initially we launched in these markets with the same model that started business in Pakistan.

Later, we acquired land and other permissions to establish a manufacturing unit there. So in Pakistan, for this purpose, Realme has already looked for a place to establish a factory and we are seriously looking for land. We have already visited Islamabad and Peshawar for this purpose besides Faisalabad Industrial Estate. Once we find required land, the work on the factory will gear up.

Q. What is the prospect of the mobile industry of Pakistan in ongoing economic pressure when consumer's purchasing power is shrinking?

A. Despite all economic odds, Pakistani mobile market has great potential which was proved with Realme positioned in top five in less than nine months, capturing almost 8.0 percent of total market share in the budget class range of android phones. The company has already launched seven products across different price segments from premium flagships to trendy mid-rangers, all designed particularly for the youth. We are planning for the launch of the next products in the classic Realme series in the coming months. The company has been proving it has planned an even steeper growth trajectory than its parent company Oppo through a targeted focus on youth.

Q. Any future plan of joint venture with local partner for establishment of manufacturing facility?

A. Not yet. Realme is already working in partnership with Oppo everywhere it is producing mobile phones. Both Realme and Oppo mobile phones are being produced from the same factories. However, any local partnership cannot be overlooked in future.

Q. How are Pakistan's tax policies affecting the mobile segment?

A. I don't believe the high taxes have affected the mobile industry growth. However, the industry is smart and managed its business accordingly. Further, we respect and follow the country's taxation and other laws as it is the country's sole decision to impose taxes to run the financial affairs. We always support and back the respective countries taxation policies and other laws. Taxes are same for everyone and every company faced it. However, it is a fact that taxes affect the consumers and so the companies too. But, we manage the tax issues from supply side and bring down the prices within the consumers brackets to minimize the impact of taxes on the consumers.

October 21, 2019

The Nation

Fawad invites Chinese entrepreneurs to invest in Pakistan

BEIJING: Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Hussain Chaudhry on Sunday invited the Chinese companies to take advantage of incentives being offered by the government for investment and set up solar panels and lithium battery manufacturing units in Pakistan.

“Pakistan has a huge potential in solar and lithium battery manufacturing and there are great opportunities for exports to Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and Afghanistan,” he said in a meeting with CEO of MERA PC Solutions here.

The minister, who arrived at the Chinese capital this morning on a five-day visit to China, said the government would provide all facilities to the Chinese companies, including land, technical support and human resource besides opportunities for joint ventures. He said the government was also keen to build agro-mechanic complex to increase the production of agriculture products in the country adding, “We will have 45 percent shares while the remaining shares will be owned by the private companies.”

Fawad said that the network of motorways was near completion which would enhance connectivity in the country while ML-I railways would also be completed in the next five years. About Gwadar, an important component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), he said it was on the right path as work on the new airport and other mega projects was underway at a fast pace.

The News

China to help in turning Thar coal into diesel

ISLAMABAD: China will help Pakistan turn Thar coal into diesel and to this effect, the Pakistan authorities managed to contact Chinese Shenhua Ningxia Coal Industry Group, which is known for turning coal into liquid.

The Shenhua Ningxia Coal Industry Group, a subsidiary of China's biggest coal producer, the Shenhua Group has already successfully installed the project to convert coal into oil in the northwestern Chinese region of Ningxia, the biggest plant of its kind in the world.

The coal-to-liquid (CTL) project, which has an annual production capacity of 4 million tons of oil, was built by the Shenhua Ningxia Coal Industry Group, a subsidiary of China's biggest coal producer, the Shenhua Group.

“We have held preliminary meeting with the management of the said company and more talks will also be held for reaching a win-win agreement and this very important development took place when Prime Minister Imran Khan visited China on October 8 and being a member in his delegation managed to have meeting with top management of the said Chinese company Shenua-Ningxia, which has the expertise to turn coal into liquid (synthetic diesel). And if the said company comes and installs the Coal to Liquid (CoT) plant in Thar and starts turning the coal into diesel, it will prove not less than a game changer as there are huge coal deposits in Thar,” Adviser to Prime Minister on Petroleum Nadeem Babar who was part of entourage of Prime Minister during the recent visit of China, told The News.

It is the same Chinese Shenua Group, Mr Babar said that had earlier quit the Thar power project because the government of former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz during Musharraf regime had backed out of already decided tariff rates of 5.67 cent per unit with the group and demanded a rate of 5.39 cent per unit. Shenua Group was interested in setting up two power plants of 350MW each in Thar coalfield.

“This Chinese company has developed the expertise to turn the coal into synthetic diesel and if it is happened in Pakistan, the country will have sustainable diesel supply in the country at affordable prices, which will play pivotal role in stimulating the economic activities in the country,” he said.

According to oil and gas sector sources, Pakistan's monthly diesel requirement stands at average 600,000 tones according to which annual need stands at 7.2 million tons and the project to make Thar coal liquid (diesel) will also help reduce the import bill of diesel.

Thar coalfield in Sindh province is bestowed with 185 billion tons of lignite coal, which can fuel power generation of over 100,000 megawatts for more than two centuries. Pakistan needs to increase share of coal in country's energy mix to at least 19 percent by 2030 and 50 percent by 2050. And if the diesel production from Thar coal has started then sky is the limit. In 1992, Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP) discovered coal deposits worth 175-185 billion tons of lignite in Thar.

However, the total reserves of block II alone are sufficient to support 5000MW of energy for 50 years; enough to pull the country out of the energy crisis. At present, system is getting 602 MW electricity from Thar coal based power plants.

October 22, 2019

Business Recorder

ML-1 to be initiated next year under CPEC, says Rashid

ISLAMABAD: Around \$8.2 billion worth Railways Main Line (ML-1) project would be initiated in March 2020 under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework, said Railways Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed.

Addressing a press conference, the railways minister also announced the Free Track Policy (FTP) where private sector could utilize Railways tracks while bringing their own engines, wagons and fuel after paying fare.

He said Free Track Policy will encourage private sector to run its own freight trains. The move would eventually increase Pakistan Railways' (PR) earning, besides boosting the country's economy, the minister said. Under the policy, he said the private freight trains would only be charged with the track fee that would be fixed by following the international market rates.

Rashid invited the prime minister and transport minister of China to witness the start of ML-1 project under which 1,800 km track would be upgraded.

He further said that PC-1 of the ML-1 would be submitted to the Planning Ministry on Oct 23, and after getting approval from ECNEC, a tender of the project would be issued.

The first package would cost \$2.248 billion while the cost of second and third packages would firm upon completion of preliminary design. The PC-1 for Package-1 based on cost estimates is validated by third part review consultants.

The ML-1 upgrade has been declared a strategic commercial project with loan on favorable terms as it presents a perfect business plan covering 75 percent traffic/population and 65 percent industrial areas.

With the upgrade of ML-1, train speed will increase from the current 65-105 km to 120-160 km, line capacity from 34 to 171 trains each way per day, freight volume from 6 to 35 million tons per annum by 2025, and railway share of freight transport volume would increase from less than 4 percent to 20 percent.

The project would create around 0.1 million jobs for the young people.

The minister announced that five freight trains have been given to private sector at Rs 160,000 each against the current Rs 80,000. He further said that 16 freight and 138 passenger trains are being run and there is no capacity to run any additional train. The minister further said that railways will carry 8 million additional passengers in the current year and is expecting additional revenue of Rs 2 million.

He further said seven railway stations have been upgraded and Chinese investors are keen to build commercial plazas and shopping malls on public private partnership basis.

He further announced 50 percent increase in the basic pay of railways police while bringing them at par with the civil armed forces, Islamabad police, and national highway and motorway police.

Replying to a question, the minister said if war is imposed, it would be an atomic war. He appealed to JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman for reconsidering the decision of ‘Azadi March’ while saying that there is tense situation at border. He further said politically matured people are part of Rahbar Committee and they would take a decision in the best interests of the country.

Notification for establishment of CPEC Authority Issued

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform has issued notification for establishment of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority and now the Law Ministry is preparing rules and procedures for appointments under Ordinance promulgated by the President, it is learnt.

Sources told this correspondent that it is now the responsibility of Law Ministry to prescribe rules and procedures for qualification, experience and terms and conditions for appointments to CPEC Authority.

According to notification issued by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms available with Business Recorder, “In exercise of powers conferred by sub-section (3) of section 1 of the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority Ordinance (XII of 2019) the Prime Minister is pleased to appoint the 11th day of October, 2019, to be date on which the provisions of the said Ordinance shall come into force.”

When contacted sources in Law Ministry stated that the process to prepare rules and procedures for appointments for CPEC Authority is ongoing and the Law Ministry would complete its work within the next two to three days.

The opposition criticized the PTI government for setting up the CPEC Authority through a presidential ordinance and termed it an “illegal” move in violation of recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on CPEC and was tantamount to “backdoor legislation” and that they would not accept the move.

According to the Ordinance, the CEPC Authority will consist of a Chairperson, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director (Operations), Executive Director (Research) and six Members to be appointed by the prime minister for a period of four years who shall be eligible for re-appointment for one similar term.

The head office of the Authority shall be at Islamabad and subject to the provisions of this Ordinance.

The Chief Executive Officer will be a civil servant of BS-20 or above, who shall be appointed on deputation.

The qualifications, experience and terms and conditions for appointment of the Chairperson, Executive Directors and Members of the Authority shall be prescribed by rules.

The prime minister may remove the Chairperson, an Executive Director or a Member from office if, on an inquiry conducted by a person or persons designated with the approval of the prime minister, he is found inefficient or unable to perform the functions of his office due to mental or physical disability, or to have committed misconduct.

The Chief Executive Officer shall act as Chairperson at any time when the post is vacant or the Chairperson is unable, for any reason, to exercise his powers or perform his duties.

The Authority shall exercise its powers and perform its functions in line with the framework and Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the People's Republic of China reproduced in the Schedule to this Ordinance and decisions taken at meetings of the Joint Cooperation Committee provided that the Federal Government may, from time to time, assign more functions and issue guidelines to the Authority.

Daily Times

Imran Khan inaugurates first joint power project of mega CPEC project

PM Imran Khan inaugurated first joint power project of mega CPEC project in Balochistan today, media report has revealed.

Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan has said that Pakistan is moving forward through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

Addressing inaugural ceremony of China Hub Power Generation Plant in Balochistan today, he said this is the first joint project under the CPEC umbrella and he is very happy after inaugurating it.

“The government will facilitate joint collaboration between Pakistani and Chinese businesses in various sectors.” he said.

PM Imran Khan said with the help of coal reserves in Thar, Pakistan can generate huge amount of electricity, which can be enough for at least 100 years.

He said till control over menace of corruption, we cannot attract foreign investment in the country. “We have to give Pakistan, a transparent governess.” The premier, said a small group in past, looted country's resources for its personal interests, but now the country is moving in a right direction.

Commenting on Balochistan, he said the province is rich in terms of natural resources and the incumbent government is paying special attention to uplift the province. Earlier in the day, PM Imran Khan had said the resolution of Karachi's problems is the responsibility of the Sindh government, but the federal government is also contributing from its own resources to resolve these issues in view of public welfare.

PM proposes Pakistan-China joint projects in Balochistan

Prime Minister Imran Khan Monday said Balochistan is open to the people to invest as the incumbent government is taking immense interest to attract the investment. “Balochistan is the only province which can give boost to the economic frontiers of Pakistan in future,” he said while addressing the inauguration ceremony of 1320 megawatt China Hub Power Generation Power Plant. He said Balochistan has best places for production of renewable energy and asked the Chinese firms to exploit the potential.

The prime minister said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a golden opportunity for Pakistan. “Previously, CPEC had been limited to roads and power projects; however now it is being expanded to fisheries and agriculture too to enhance the productivity,” he said, adding that China is establishing skill training centers in Pakistan to train the young population of Pakistan which will propel the national economy.

Referring to the immense potential of mining and investment in Balochistan, he asked the Balochistan chief minister to develop special economic zones in Lasbella to facilitate the Chinese firms desiring to relocate to Pakistan. He said clean governance and business-friendly policies enforced by the incumbent government are attracting giant firms from across the world to invest in multiple sectors of Pakistan. He said the red tape used to impede the foreign investment in the past. However, the current government is making dedicated efforts to bring ease of doing business, he added.

Imran Khan said the inauguration of the power project is pleasing for it being the first one having been executed in partnership between Pakistani and Chinese firms. He said the government desires to see such joint projects in future too and asked the local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to collaborate with the Chinese firms interested to invest in Pakistan. He also assured that the government will fully assist and facilitate such an engagement.

Congratulating the firms for successfully executing the project, the prime minister suggested them to utilize at least 20 percent coal from Thar Coal to save the foreign reserves to help address a major issue of current account deficit confronting the national economy. He said the government inherited a record current account deficit, which put the local currency under pressure causing inflation and other allied economic challenges. He said the government desires to promote power generation through indigenous resources as the country is rich in hydro power potential of around 50,000 MW. He said huge resources of gas and coal also remained untapped, which otherwise could have saved huge foreign reserves currently used to import oil to fuel the power plants.

He said the foreign firm which had won the litigation against Pakistan in Reko Diq case imposing \$6 billion fine on the country has again shown interest in the project. He said the company is in negotiation with Pakistan as during his interaction with them in the United States, the company chief had told him that Pakistan has the biggest quality gold reserves. The company

is interested to resume working on the project owing to the transparent policies of the government, he added.

He said Pakistan has been deprived of billions of dollars due to corruption. “Not only that firm, many other companies too, including an Australian mining giant, are also interested to invest in Pakistan,” he said, and reiterated that investment cannot be attracted until the country is purged of corruption.

The ceremony was also attended by Federal Minister for Water Resources Faisal Vawda, Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan, Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing and senior officials of the Chinese contractor firm.

Addressing poverty to super economic growth

In times of severe economic crises, it is not business as usual. It is the political economy that tends to play, sooner or later, the primary role in setting the correction course, particularly during the transformational phase in an extended period of hard times.

Responding to mounting domestic business, citizen and political pressures to revisit the government’s policies, Prime Minister Imran Khan has reiterated that his foremost priority is to run the economic system on a sustainable basis: a system which would help create job opportunities, enhance investor’s confidence and promote local industry. His focus is also shifting to achieving price stability to subdue the growing double digit rate of inflation.

In this endeavor, the prime minister has called for regular meetings of his economic team so that enhanced inter-ministerial coordination is ensured for formulation and implementation of policy decisions. The finance team may have to be more receptive to what other economic ministries have to say. Currently, it is too preoccupied in tackling challenging twin deficits while dissenting voices are becoming louder that it needs to look at a much bigger picture. The prime minister has himself started weekly monitoring to ensure that ensuing problems are quickly resolved.

The finance team is too preoccupied with tackling the twin deficits to look at the bigger picture and be more receptive to what the other economic ministries are saying

Similarly, the powers to allow supplementary grants have been transferred to the federal government from the finance division. And no grant was issued during the first quarter of the current financial year.

The policy to boost tax revenues at the cost of looming de-industrialisation seems to be under review. For relocation of Chinese industrial units to Gwadar and for installation for machinery and other equipment at the port, the government has granted a 23-year tax exemption to China Overseas Ports Holding Company. There is some official talk of exchange rate stability and policy rate coming down early calendar year 2020. The pickup in economic activity may yield better tax revenues.

No doubt the immediate problem is to stimulate investment and shore up the sagging manufacturing sector when the private sector borrowings from banks are showing an alarming

negative trend. In the first quarter of the current fiscal year, the private sector retired Rs49.39 billion as compared to net borrowings of Rs113bn in the same period of last year.

In fact, the government was stated to have emerged as the sole borrower from scheduled banks. The commerce advisor Razak Dawood says industrial production is set to slow down as imports of industrial raw materials are plummeting.

For the forging of an economic system running on a sustainable basis, the prime minister may find some comfort in the statement of the new International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief who has some serious advice to offer. She says “the key is to recognise that inequalities are a drag on multilateralism and a drag on growth.”

In her first speech, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said: “policymakers for too long have ignored the people harmed by globalization which tends to be good for educated, urban, younger people.”

Incidentally, in Pakistan unemployment among the more educated and qualified professionals is disproportionately higher. And “the prevalence of decent work is extremely low,” says Dr Abdul Hafeez Pasha adding that “typically workers put in long hours but are underpaid.”

Overall, 53 per cent of the labour was not paid prescribed minimum wages, as determined by the findings of the Pakistan Labour Survey 2017-18. The ratio jumped to 89pc among farm labour and 56pc in manufacturing and 54pc in wholesale and retail trade. As against this, only 9pc of the workers in public administration and defence services earned less than the minimum wage.

And the World Bank report on South Asia Economic Focus: Making Decentralization Work says “poverty reduction, which was uninterrupted since 2001, is expected to stall during the macroeconomic adjustment period.”

As joblessness and poverty are rising, Ms Georgieva’s observations need to be translated into IMF policies being pursued by Islamabad. This creates an opportunity for borrowers like Pakistan to seek a review of the Fund’s policies to have a better adjustment of growth vs. stability strategies.

From time to time, independent economists and businessmen have stressed that policymakers have to find space, sooner rather than later, to encourage domestic industrial production.

They do not expect the government to deviate from the agreed broad IMF policy framework or the policy direction set by it but want reforms to move with a more appropriate pace to shore up growth. ‘When the majority is struggling for the bare sustenance, the need for a productivity enhancing growth strategy is absolutely critical’, says former Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Dr Nadeem ul Haque.

In the context of the much needed industrial growth, the critical problem areas are the over-ambitious tax revenue target, rising utility prices, double-digit inflation, higher than core inflation policy rate and an undervalued rupee. IMF’s economist Gian Maria Milesi-Ferretti says

the performance of the agreed programme with Islamabad has exceeded our expectations and the country is now picking up stability.

While the policymakers are still struggling with much of the conventional wisdom to resolve the current crisis, the international economic literature tends to offer fresh ideas to come out of the current difficult predicament: economies with less inequality will perform better.

Against the background of growing inequality worldwide and Sino-US trade frictions IMF Chief Georgieva said “in 2019, we expect slower growth in 90pc of the world. The global economy is now in a synchronised slowdown. It is a crisis where no one is immune and everyone has a responsibility to act. ”

Imran Khan has come up with the idea that priority should be given to small industrial units at a local level to create job opportunities. But for things to change at the grassroots it is necessary to develop participatory democracy which is considered a tool for social change. Giving voice to the voiceless or less heard and empowering the disadvantaged are crucial for removing inequity and inequality.

The investment in human capital — the primary productive asset in this digital area — will generate its own resources and momentum of economic growth

Dunya News

High Powered Commission to be set up in Pakistan with support of China:

Fawad Chaudhry

Islamabad (APP) – Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry Monday announced to establish a High Powered Commission in Pakistan with support of China. The minister along with the representatives of several Chinese companies met with his Chinese counterpart, said a message received here. The federal minister is on a six-day visit to China. The minister said that high powered technology industry would be set up in Pakistan under this commission.

Fawad Chaudhry said that the purpose of this partnership would be to strengthen the coordination and cooperation between the Ministries of Science and Technology of both the countries. He underlined the importance of modern technology industries in the second phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor, saying these industries would help strengthen Pakistan’s trade. The two ministers also discussed the establishment of Nanotechnology as well as establishment of Pakistan Science and Technology Park.

Chinese Minister of Science and Technology, Mr. Wang Zhigang appreciated Fawad Chaudhry’s efforts to promote science and technology in Pakistan and assured full cooperation in the completion of science and technology projects in Pakistan. Chinese Minister of Science also reaffirmed support for the production and import of high technology in Pakistan.

Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry also met with other representatives of the company under the leadership of General Manager of China Machinery Engineering Company Li Ken.

The meeting also agreed on the installation of solar power plants in Pakistan. In addition, the Chinese company will also help equip agriculture sector in Pakistan with modern technology. It also agreed to use 'Agriculture Precision' with the help of China. Later, Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry visited the China Electric Power Company and checked the working of the electric bus.

CPEC's dream has finally come true: Firdous

ISLAMABAD (Dunya News) – Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan said on Tuesday that the time has come for the China Pakistan Economic Corridor's (CPEC) dream come true.

In a series of tweets shared on her official Twitter account, she stated that sincere efforts in implementation of the CPEC projects has started yielding fruitful results.

Referring to the 1,320MW coal-fired Hub Power Station in Hub, a city in the Lasbela District of Balochistan, set up by the China Power Hub Generation Company (CPHGC) under the CPEC project and the first joint project of the CPEC, Firdous termed it a "good omen" for the state.

"In view of incumbent government's commitment to transparency and strict actions in eradicating corruption, foreign companies have been taking keen interest in investment in Pakistan."

"Balochistan and Sindh are two beautiful parts of Pakistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan is undertaking sincere efforts to remove the backwardness and improve the living standards of the people of the two provinces," she added.

"Balochistan is blessed with natural resources and this province will soon achieve progress and prosperity," she concluded.

Pakistan Observer

Chinese interest in Thar Coal

IN a welcome development, Pakistan has approached China for optimum exploitation of huge Thar coal deposits and received positive response. Adviser to Prime Minister on Petroleum Nadeem Babar, who was part of the PM's entourage during his recent visit to Beijing, China will help Pakistan turn Thar coal into diesel and to this effect talks are being held with Chinese Shenhua Ningxia Coal Industry Group which is known for turning coal into liquid.

If taken to fruition, the move would prove to be a gigantic step towards realization of the country's dream to exploit the world's largest coal deposits for accelerating the national growth and development. Thar coalfield in Sindh province is bestowed with 185 billion tons of lignite

coal, which can fuel power generation of over 100,000 megawatts for more than two centuries. Conversion of coal into diesel would help meet growing diesel requirements indigenously cutting the import cost of oil substantially. The country had a bitter experience of its experiment launched several years back for gasification of coal in Thar as the experiment could not yield any positive result despite investment worth billions of rupees. However, the project to convert the coal into diesel seems to be viable as the Chinese Shenhua Ningxia Coal Industry Group, a subsidiary of China's biggest coal producer, the Shenhua Group, has already successfully installed the project to convert coal into oil in the north-western Chinese region of Ningxia, the biggest plant of its kind in the world. As the proposed project can prove to be a game changer for economic development of the country, it is hoped that this would be given priority by the Advisor. Internal meetings should be held with all stakeholders to firm up details and formulate a comprehensive plan for presentation to the Chinese Company and securing a reasonable agreement. This should be done on a fast track basis as it would also help realize the cherished objective of producing cheaper energy.

The Express Tribune

Balochistan plans big shift to solar energy, says Kamal

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal on Monday expressed optimism that the China-Pakistan joint ventures in the energy sector would fulfill the requirements of Pakistan, particularly the province of Balochistan.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of the Hub Power Station in Gadani, Lasbela district, the chief minister announced that the provincial government has initiated numerous projects, including shifting of several schools, agricultural activities, tube-wells and streets lights to solar energy.

“Balochistan has full capacity of generating energy through alternative resources, particularly from its natural resources,” Kamal told the ceremony, terming the inauguration of the power plant a major milestone in the development of the province.

The ceremony was also attended by Prime Minister Imran Khan, who inaugurated the 1,320mw power plant, which was commenced by China Power Hub Generation Company Limited under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework.

“The Gadani power project was considered as the most important initiative under the CPEC projects which would fulfill the energy needs of the province,” Chief Minister Kamal said. “The project is vital to the development of Balochistan.”

Lamenting that the province was deprived of mega development schemes in the past, the chief minister said that unfortunately previous regimes neglected Balochistan in CPEC's initial development structure.

However, he added, Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision made it possible for the province to come under the umbrella of development. “Gadani power plant was included in CPEC's top two

prioritised projects that have been inaugurated by Prime Minister of Pakistan,” Kamal said. The chief minister lauded the policies and steps taken by the prime minister to tackle appalling economic crisis, adding that PM Imran confronted economic challenges with bravery, hence today Pakistan has been put on the path to development.

“The government’s measures took Pakistan out of the turmoil while the prime minister also raised the Kashmir issue globally with great courage and sincerity,” affirmed Kamal. Talking about the importance of Balochistan in regional development, he reiterated provincial government’s commitment to lead the province on the path of prosperity.

The Balochistan government has been utilizing all its efforts and resources for Balochistan and Pakistan’s development and in the near future the province will emerge as the economic hub of the entire region, he added.

“The Balochistan government has allocated Rs1,220 million for energy related projects while Rs4,226 million are being utilized to meet the energy demand in the rural areas of the province,” the chief minister said, adding that the government has initiated numerous projects in the province. Various schools, agricultural activities, tube-wells and streets lights will be shifted to solar energy, he said.

Chinese vow to make Gwadar more valuable than Karachi

Islamabad: The Chinese operators of Gwadar Port and its free zone have vowed to make the coastal city the single largest contributor to Pakistan’s national economic output in seven years, saying 47,000 jobs will be created for locals with new investments worth billions of dollars.

China Overseas Ports Holding Company Gwadar (COPHC) Chairman Zhang Baozhong on Tuesday shared his plans after the government finally stamped 23-year income tax holiday and exemptions of sales tax and customs duties for the Gwadar Port and businesses to be set up at Gwadar Free Zone.

“It [issuing of ordinance] is a turning point for Pakistan’s economy and now billions of dollars will be invested in Gwadar,” said the chairman while talking to the media persons.

Baozhong was accompanied by Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Zaidi and Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Hammad Azhar. Azhar did not speak at the press conference. The COPHC and its four subsidiaries are responsible for operating the seaport and its economic zones for a period of 23 years.

The concessions had been guaranteed in the Gwadar Port Concession Agreement but the successive governments were not notifying them. However, President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday promulgated two ordinances to set up China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority and Tax Laws Amendment Ordinance 2019.

“I believe Gwadar will be the largest contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP) growth in seven years,” said the chairman, adding that 95% of the production in the Gwadar Free Zone would be exported.

Currently, Karachi remained the single largest contributor to the national economic output.

“We have completed the master plan of the Gwadar Free Zone that will be built in four phases over a period of seven years,” said Baozhong. “Once the zone is fully developed in seven years, 47,000 jobs will be created for the locals, and its annual sales will be \$1 billion.”

On the troubles faced in reaching this point, the COPHC chairman said, “Today is a big day and I had to struggle for seven years to secure these tax concessions, which had been promised in the Gwadar Port Concession Agreement. I had been running up and down for seven years and everybody made promises with me but nobody helped.”

Baozhong’s company was lucky to get the support of the National Development Council – a joint civilian and military body – upon whose directions the obstacles were removed in obtaining these concessions. Baozhong praised the PTI government for its seriousness in honoring its promises and economic development of Pakistan, especially Gwadar. He also thanked the military and media for their support to get these concessions notified.

“So far, 41 investors have come forward to invest about \$500 million in Gwadar Free Zone in the first phase,” said the port operator. “These industries are being set up in sectors of logistics, edible oil, piping, and halal food.”

He said the \$500 million investment would create 5,000 jobs for the locals in phase one alone, adding that the free zone developer had made it binding for the investors to complete the physical infrastructure in six months and start production within one year.

The port operator said that in order to promote advanced technology based industries in the Gwadar Free Zone, the developer might offer free plots, cheap financing, and free housing facilities to such investors.

The maritime affairs minister said the required infrastructure, including the provision of electricity, water, approval of Gwadar Master Plan and other facilities needed to make the port and free zone operational, had been provided.

To a question of whether another push was needed from somewhere to approve Special Economic Zones’ incentive package, Zaidi said the push came from him and the government to approve the Gwadar tax concessions.

Zaidi vowed that the SEZs’ incentive package would be finalised soon, which remained pending for the last four years to the irritation of Chinese investors.

In May 2017, Pakistan’s federal cabinet approved the Special Incentive Package for the Relocation of Industries from China for bringing Chinese investment in nine SEZs to be set up under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The package had been developed on the demand of China that it made at the sixth meeting of the CPEC Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) held in Beijing in December 2016.

The package was primarily aimed at those Chinese industrial units which were declared sunset industries by Beijing and had chances of being relocated to Pakistan, which might create hundreds of thousands of jobs.

In the sixth JCC meeting, the two countries approved nine SEZs, which would be established in Pakistan's four provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and Islamabad Capital Territory.

The Nation

China won't abandon Pakistan

BEIJING - China will never abandon Pakistan and will remain its iron brother forever, Senior Chinese officials said yesterday.

The top officials said that China will continue to invest money and expertise in Pakistan.

"China will not leave Pakistan even if all oceans dry down," Sun Degao, Director General of Power China's party affairs as he briefed a group of Pakistani journalists in the Chinese capital regarding China's role in Pakistan's development.

Degao said that China aimed to resolve Pakistan's issues as a friend. "We will not leave Pakistan, as our President (Xi Jinping) said our friendship is higher than mountains and sweeter than honey." Vice President Power China Eurasia Li Ming said there were some pending payments amounting to \$200 million towards Pakistan regarding the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor but this issue would be settled bilaterally.

"Pakistan is our friend and we will continue to support it. There is no issue on the CPEC that cannot be resolved," he said. Shu Xi, commercial manager Power China Eurasia, briefed the Pakistani journalists about China-Pakistan cooperation. She said Power China aimed to lighten up Pakistan and help it resolve the energy crises.

Power China is a wholly state-owned company founded on September 29, 2011 on the basis of 14 provincial, municipal, and district electric power survey and design, engineering, and equipment manufacturing enterprises formerly affiliated to Sino hydro Group Ltd, Hydro China Corporation, State Grid Corporation of China, and China Southern Power Grid Co Ltd.

It is a large comprehensive construction group that offers solutions to the entire chain of the global energy and power, water resource and environment, infrastructure, and real estate industries. Its main businesses cover energy and power, water conservancy, railways and subways, roads, airports, buildings, water environmental governance, city infrastructure, large civic engineering and construction, as well as investment, planning, and design, project contracting, equipment manufacturing, and operation of projects.

Power China now has eight national research and development institutions, 82 provincial R&D institutions, eight academicians' workstations, and six postdoctoral workstations. Eighty-six of its member companies and subsidiaries have been identified as high-tech enterprises. In addition,

Power China has won 110 national science and technology awards, 2,293 provincial and ministerial-level scientific and technological progress awards, and owns 12,136 patents (including 1,890 invention patents).

Pakistan's military delegation attends China's annual security forum

A seven-member Pakistan's military delegation headed by a senior military commander of GHQ attended the opening ceremony of the 9th Beijing International Xiangshan Forum officially began at Beijing International Convention Centre here on Monday.

Addressing the opening ceremony, China's Defense Minister Wei Fenghe briefed the participants about the defensive military strategy of China. He said the size of the Chinese military was maintained at a moderate level and said, the number of armed forces personnel were reduced by 300,000. Currently, China has two million active servicemen and women.

He also talked about the transparency of China's military expenditure, adding that it has been kept under two percent of the country's GDP in the past 30 years. That's the lowest among permanent members of the UN Security Council. Themed as "Maintaining International Order and Promoting Peace in the Asia-Pacific Region", the three day forum aims to discuss how to maintain an international order with the objectives and principles of the UN Charter at its core, and safeguard lasting prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region and global peace and stability in the new situation.

The forum consists of four plenary sessions, namely "Major Country Relations and International Order, Security Risk Management in the Asia-Pacific, Interests of Small and Medium-Sized Countries and Common Security, International Arms Control Regime and Global Security".

In addition, there are eight concurrent sessions, including "Innovation in Security Concepts, Strategic Trust and Confidence building Measures, Asia-Pacific Security Architecture, Dynamics in Maritime Security, International Cooperation on Counter-terrorism, Security New Circumstances in the Middle East, Scientific and Technological Innovation and International Security, and Artificial Intelligence and Future Warfare".

There is also one special plenary session themed as "The 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the PRC and Peace and Development of the World".

Since its inception in 2006, the forum has been growing in terms of its size, level, influence and fame. It is now the largest and highest level track 1.5 security dialogue hosted by China.

The past eight forums helped countries enhance trust, coordinate policies, promote security dialogue and strengthen cooperation. Nearly, 60 countries and six international organizations attended the forum that will last three days.

The Nation

Challenges to CPEC in Pakistan

Pakistan is an important country in the south Asia. Its geo-strategic location makes it important country in the region. Pakistan, officially the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a sovereign country in South Asia with a population of 210 million people. It is the sixth most populous country in the world with this border strategically connected to South Asia, Central Asia and Western Asia.

Pakistan has a long coast line of about 1,046-kilometer with Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman. Since the independence of Pakistan India have not yet recognized Pakistan as a sovereign State. Since beginning, India occupied Jammu and Kashmir with the deployment of Army in Jammu and Kashmir against the will of people of Jammu and Kashmir, after 71 years the people of Jammu and Kashmir are struggling for their right of self-determination, UNO resolution passed in 1948 for Plebiscite in Indian held Kashmir moreover. India is not ready to do the same meanwhile.

In 1983 India suddenly captured Siachen Glacier heights and taken positions at the heights battlefield of the world, in response Pakistan also deployed troops at Siachen Glacier to stop the Indian advancement, however both countries are maintaining the same positions at Siachen Glacier, furthermore in 1998 India conducted Nuclear test and put pressure on Pakistan to get advantage of it, in response Pakistan also conducted nuclear test to stop the Indian aggression in South Asian region and maintained deterrence, again in 2002 India deployed Army on Pakistani borders for one year, furthermore India is using Afghanistan as Launch Pad against Pakistan and providing financial support and Military training to Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), through the camps situated in Afghanistan connected with Pakistani Border in Balochistan and targeting civilian and Military targets in Pakistan to disrupt the China Pakistan Economic Corridor activities.

CPEC is the Flag ship Program of Road and Belt Initiative Program of China, China have invested more than 46, Billion USD in Pakistan. CPEC is intended to rapidly modernize Pakistani Infrastructure and strengthen its economy by the construction of modern transportation networks, numerous energy projects and special economic zones on eastern and western routes of CPEC, however India is trying to disrupt this project through Indian Intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), recently a Serving Indian Naval Commander Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav has been arrested by Pakistani Law enforcement Agencies in Balochistan Province adjacent to Iran who was involved in subversive activities inside Pakistan to fail the CPEC Project in Pakistan.

India has taken the case of Kulbhushan Jadhav at International Court of Justice The Hague against sentenced announced by military court of Pakistan, India launched surgical strikes in Pakistan, on 27, Feb Indian Air Force violated Airspace of Pakistan in response Pakistan Air Force shot down two Indian Air Force Fighter Jets with JF 17 thunder Fighter jet near Line of Control (LOC) and captured one Indian Fighter Pilot Wing Commander Abhi Nandan, however

according to Vienna convention and goodwill gesture Pakistani Government handed over Indian Pilot at Wagah border to the Indian High Commission, currently India have revoked article 370 which provides special status to People of Jammu and Kashmir and curfew have been imposed in Jammu & Kashmir and situation is very critical.

Currently India is trying to put pressure on Pakistan through terrorist attacks in Balochistan and KP Province of Pakistan and India is trying to disrupt the western route of CPEC which is going through Balochistan and KP Province of Pakistan, Moreover last year Chinese Consulate was attacked by Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) in Karachi with the help of Indian Intelligence agency Raw, currently Pearl Continental HOTEL was targeted in Gwadar to disrupt the progress of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor and to put pressure on Pakistan through Financial Action Task Force (FATF), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and through other international institutions. After the USA aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln's entry into Persian Gulf tension between USA & Iran is increasing day by day.

Moreover Strait of Hormuz route for oil tankers connecting Persian Gulf & Gulf of Oman is under the fire since last month, six Oil tankers have been hit by unknown party. Furthermore, On 12th June Two oil tankers have been targeted near Gulf of Oman, USA is blaming Iran on this incident however Iran is denying from this subversion activity in the Gulf of Oman, USA Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan have said that " USA central command General McKenzie is monitoring all activity in the Persian Gulf". Furthermore Russia & China have advised USA that restrain policy may be adopted in the Persian Gulf. The current scenario of Middle East is alarming for whole region it can affect Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia & East Asia according to news reports Iran have shot-down drone of USA near Strait of Hurmoz. Recently Prime Minister of Japan have visited Iran to calm down the current deteriorate situation of Middle East.

The current situation of Middle East is becoming dangerous for the whole region if oil supply is cut down by any party it would affect the whole region. Furthermore, USA is also involved in Hong Kong Protest, according to reports all protesters are teenagers they don't know what they are doing at all. USA is putting pressure on China through Hong Kong and on Pakistan through Persian Gulf and through India in Jammu & Kashmir on Line of the Control (LOC) ,to disrupt the CPEC Project , however it's the responsibility of Pakistan to protect CPEC Project through vigilance intelligence monitoring in the Pakistan.

The News

Pakistan sees Prospects of Exporting Precious Stones to China

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani traders believe that the export of precious stones and jewelry from gem-rich Pakistan to China will help the country in revenue generation.

Addressing the Export Promotion Committee of Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI), the chamber's President Zarak Khan said that China is the world's largest

consumer of gems and jewelry and Pakistan being the fifth largest country of gemstones reservoirs in the world can tap the potential of the Chinese market.

Apart from having an abundance of gemstones, Pakistan also have some unique stones in the world including Pink Topaz and Kashmir Ruby which are famous for their unique color and beauty in the international market. Pink Topaz is also considered one of the highest valued minerals in the world.

The country has potential to exploit and export 800,000 carats of Ruby, 87,000 carats of Emerald and 5 million carats of Peridot, but the yield is much lower, due to lack of skills, technology, and knowledge for processing of the mining materials, reports Gwadar Pro media network quoting the chamber official.

The country also could not carry out value-added services to the processed stones due to lack of appropriate cutting and polishing facilities, and PCJCCI officials believed that collaboration with China to learn the latest techniques for cutting and polishing of the gemstones may be greatly beneficial for Pakistan to uplift the sector.

They suggested that Chinese professionals in this sector should be invited to train Pakistani labor force and mining engineers for cutting, manufacturing and designing state of the art jewelry.

October 23, 2019

Dunya News

CPEC is reality, not dream: Murad Saeed

ISLAMABAD (Dunya News) - Minister for Communications and Postal Services Murad Saeed said today (Oct. 23) that western route for the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is not a dream but a reality.

Speaking at the motorway police headquarters, Murad Saeed expressed that CPEC has become a reality and companies who were running in deficit are making profit now.

Talking about CPEC, Communications Minister expressed work on the project was progressing rapidly. “In the second phase, 1275 km of roads will be constructed”, he added.

The PTI leader asserted that the difficult phase has passed, while exports are increasing now. “We will curb corruption from institutions and make Pakistan a developing country”, he added

Pakistan Observer

China gifts goods to Gwadar fishermen

China will continue to help arranging fishing nets, electrical machines, life-saving drugs and other living and production materials for the local fishermen in Gwadar.

This will be a gift for the local fishermen, reports Gwadar pro-media network.

At a donation giving ceremony, held recently at the office of Karachi Consulate General, it was noted that because of poor infrastructure and remote distance from the economic center, residents in Gwadar have limited means to make a living and thus live a tough life.

Local fishermen do not have proper fishing tools and are doing their fishing job in a very difficult situation.

The Consulate General of the China has innovated the foreign aid mechanism by entrusting the Balochistan Business Forum Association to directly donate a batch of fishing goods.

The ceremony was attended by the local fishermen's Association, representatives of fishermen, representatives of the Gwadar Harbor Authority and representatives of the Gwadar Development Authority.

Sardar Shoukat, President of the Balochistan Business Forum Association was the chief guest on the occasion. At the ceremony, the participants discussed various proposals to deepen the friendly relationship between China-invested enterprises and the people of Gwadar.

It was noted that the donation embodies the care and assistance of the Consulate General for fishermen in Gwadar. The President of the Gwadar Fishermen's Association thanked the Consulate General for his support. The local fishermen, he said are highly obliged for the care and love of the Chinese government and Chinese people for fishermen in Gwadar. He was confident that the East Bay Expressway will highly promote the further development of Gwadar Port.

Other fishermen' representatives also spoke on the occasion and noted that this kind of direct assistance from the Chinese side has achieved very good results. It is hoped that more similar assistance will be offered especially in the field of fishermen medical treatment, education and employment. Zhang Baozhong, the Chairman of China Overseas Ports Holding Company Limited (COPHC) also addressed the ceremony.

Meeting of Joint Working Group on CPEC Industrial Cooperation held

The meeting of Joint Working Groups of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Industrial Cooperation via video conference was held here on Tuesday.

The meeting was co-chaired by Qasim Raza Khan, Executive Director General II, Board of Investment and Gao Jian, Deputy Director General, National Development and Reform Commission of China, said a statement issued by BOI here.

Officials from line ministries, provincial governments and embassies attended the meeting.

Both sides agreed to jointly accelerate the efforts to enhance the level of industrial cooperation by ensuring concentrated efforts with early provision of utilities and allocation of land.

Pakistan and China have agreed to enhance business to business linkages; to facilitate increased level of investment from Chinese enterprises, to enhance industrial competitiveness of business in Pakistan; through technology transfer, world class managerial and industrial practices and

skills transfer. Progress on prioritized CPEC SEZs including Rashakai, Dhabiji, Alama Iqbal Industrial City (M3) was reviewed.

It was agreed that the groundbreaking of Rashakai SEZs may be done next month whereby the development agreement is in the final stage. The Chinese side expressed keen interest to participate in the bidding process for Dhabheji SEZ. In the process of industrial diagnosis of key industries, the Chinese experts informed that the report of the textile industry diagnosis is ready and will be shared by Chinese side soon.

Both sides also discussed the possibility of up-gradation of Pakistan Steel

Chinese investment in the social sector of Pakistan

The scale and unprecedented level of development that China has demonstrated over the past few decades since it opened up to the world has undoubtedly left many awestruck. China's success story is a model for other developing countries to emulate. With regards to China-Pakistan relations, both the countries have supported each other and remained 'all-weather friends'. As part of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), China has invested heavily in multiple sectors across Pakistan.

Recently, China has pledged investment to the tune of \$1 billion in the social sector of Pakistan in order to relieve some of the burden on the economically haggard state.

During the Joint Coordination Committee meeting in Beijing last year on CPEC, a joint working group on socio economic development was established. In February 2019, a 13 member group headed by Du Zhenli visited Pakistan to finalize projects and sectors which required investment.

For the first phase, six key areas were identified: education, agriculture, poverty reduction, skill development, healthcare, water supply and vocational training projects with a focus on lesser developed areas such as Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan, southern Punjab and Sindh. In healthcare alone, China has decided upon opening of six burn centres across Pakistan at locations such as Hyderabad, Sukkur, Bahawalpur, D. I. Khan, Swat and Quetta. This is in addition to the planned Pak-China Friendship Hospital in Gwadar costing \$100 million, an emergency hospital under construction by the Chinese Red Cross Foundation in Quetta and collaboration between Chinese and Pakistani medical institutions on medical facilities, training, and scientific research. In education sector, besides 25,000 Pakistani students studying in China on grants and scholarships, five Confucius centres for learning Chinese, and establishment of the Pakistan Academy of Social Sciences in partnership with Chinese Academy for Social Sciences, the Chinese government has established schools such as the China-Pakistan Faqeer Primary school which helps educate the poor of the region where no primary school existed before. There is also the CPEC Consortium of business schools, an academic collaboration between universities from both states that jointly work on tasks as part of assisting the governments on CPEC projects. China has also invested \$87 million in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's education sector to help digitize its curriculum, a project to be implemented across three phases and entirely funded by China.

Most importantly, Huawei, the Chinese technological giant, with the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, has set up the Pakistan Education & Research Network, IT Research & Development Centres, Huawei's Technical Support Centre and started a smart school project, equipped with latest technology.

Pakistan, as a chiefly agrarian economy with half the population dependent one way or another on the agriculture sector, unfortunately, has an antiquated system still dependent upon traditional methods of farming, irrigating and even storing, resulting in over one third of annual postharvest loss. As China moves to outsource its food supplies in countries along the BRI, Pakistan stands to gain a lot from food exports to China. Higher yield crops, mechanized farming and proper storage facilities to that end are needed and China has thoroughly helped.

The Yuan Ping High Tech Agriculture Co. Ltd., a major Chinese hybrid seed production company, researched areas in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa to develop heat resistant rice, a crop that can grow in all ecological zones of Pakistan. The Company has also provided training to the Pakistan Agriculture Research Council on hybrid seed breeding and field management skills. Besides this, it is developing warehouses and storage facilities in Pakistan for post-harvest storage. The Chinese are also assisting in dairy and meat industries, with the friendly Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Initiative aimed at exploiting the untapped dairy market of Pakistan for export to the Middle East. In the meat industry, the Kashi Mufeng Biological Technology Co has built cold storage centres which are transporting sea imports from Gwadar port all the way to mainland China. These investments could not have been timelier for Pakistan's economy. Besides financial backing, the technological and technical know-how that the Chinese are bringing to all areas of Pakistan is crucial. Not only will this speed up the process, but will help enormously the poorer segments of society that would have otherwise never had access to such facilities.

In contrast to the assistance we have traditionally received from western countries – mostly monetary aid – support from China not only covers more ground, but it's also detailed, intricate and touches each segment of our society, down to remote villages in Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan. While we have witnessed the Chinese economic miracle, we are more than hopeful it will be a success in Pakistan as well.

Capitalizing Balochistan's potential under CPEC

BALUCHISTAN, the largest province of Pakistan, (area-wise) and the smallest province (population-wise) has unique characteristics by virtue of its geo-strategic location, natural resources, Gwadar port, being the gateway to Central Asia and the Middle East. Its natural resources and Gwadar port would enhance further its significance for the global and regional players. Gwadar port, thus, would be the convergent point of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Belt & Road Initiative (BRI).

A simple query to be answered: Has Balochistan benefited from its important geo-strategic location, natural resources and Gwadar port? Ironically, the answer is unconvincing so far; its geostrategic location and natural resources have not mitigated grievances of its masses.

Balochistan, today is regarded the most backward province of Pakistan, lagging far behind as far as indicators of development are concerned. However, the people of Balochistan are optimistic about CPEC, believing it as a game changer and a beacon of hope that would remove their deprivations. CPEC has an immense potential to pave the way for progress and development of Balochistan. Construction of western route of Balochistan will live up to the expectations of the indigenous people and will realize them that they are the genuine share-holders of CPEC. Currently, Balochistan's GDP per capita is the lowest as compared to other provinces. Economic zones on western route are likely to improve GDP per capita of the province.

Enhancing Balochistan's share from merely one percent out of 64 billion of CPEC projects would probably set the path to prosperity and development. Undoubtedly, Balochistan is bestowed upon with natural resources, extracting its natural resources under CPEC will usher progress in the province. Currently, 51 metallic and non-metallic minerals have been discovered in Balochistan, out of which 29 have to be exploited including gold, copper, chromites, iron, zinc and lead while non-metallic minerals are fluorite, magnetite, barite, coal and gabbro basalt. If proper and systematic utilization of the natural resources under CPEC is harnessed, Balochistan will probably become one of the richest regions of the world.

Balochistan is called "the fruit basket of Pakistan" sharing 90 percent national production of cherry, grapes and almonds and 60 percent of pomegranate, peach and apricot. Balochistan, on the other hand, also produces 34 percent apple and 70 percent dates of the country. Resolving power shortages, water scarcity and constructing crop specific zone under CPEC will expedite its production and aforementioned fruits under CPEC can easily be exported to the international market. Meanwhile, Balochistan's blue economy has not been exploited accordingly. Coastal areas of Balochistan are rich in production of shrimp, lobster and cuttlefish. Surprisingly, merely 10 percent fish of the sea are caught and 90 percent fish are still uncaught and go back into the ocean. Improving blue economy of Balochistan under CPEC will cement fisheries sector in Balochistan too.

Pakistan, on account of Balochistan's coastal areas has world's sixth largest mangroves areas contributing annually US\$ 4 billion to its export earnings. If down to earth approach is CPEC, mangroves production will benefit Pakistan in general and Balochistan in particular. Livestock, under CPEC is another important sector that needs to be improved on a priority basis. Climate of Balochistan is suitable for the livestock and can become a hub of the Halal Meat Industry. Interestingly, Halal meat is fast emerging business across the world attracting 2 billion people Muslims as well as non-Muslims.

Coastal areas of Balochistan have scintillating sceneries. Construction of Public Sector Development Programmes (PSDP) adjacent to Makran Coastal Highway under CPEC would be fruitful for economic opportunities. Sea beaches of Hammerhead in Gwadar, Ormara beaches and Astola Island situated in Pasni, are other untapped areas that need special attention to bolster blue economy of Balochistan. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council WWTC's report, "Travel & Tourism sectors contributed US\$8.3 trillion to the global economy and

supported 313 million jobs in 2017. This was equal to 10.4% of the world's GDP, and approximately 1 in 10 of all jobs". Balochistan's scenic beauty and historical sites have the potential to attract foreign and domestic travellers.

Mehrgarh an archaeological site of Balochistan, located near Bolan River is the oldest civilization of Pakistan. Sadly, Mehrgarh has been overlooked; its potential needs a great deal of consideration. Promoting tourism in Mehrgarh Balochistan under CPEC is the need of the hour. Hence, Pakistan would probably become a marvelous destiny for the foreign tourists. CPEC as a means to regional connectivity connects Balochistan with Afghanistan and Central Asia. Connectivity with Afghanistan will improve GDP per capita of Balochistan and can also improve Pakistan's trade with Afghanistan and Central Asian States.

The Youth of Balochistan expects immensely from CPEC, providing ample Chinese scholarships to them will enable them to adapt themselves according to 21st century. Currently, China has become the best country for 22,000 Pakistani students, seeking overseas studies. Sadly, Balochistan has a meager share in Chinese scholarships; enhancing Chinese scholarship to the students of Balochistan will give them a great pride to serve their province and Pakistan. Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa terms the youth of Balochistan as precious asset of Pakistan and admits the value of Balochistan and says that "Pakistan is incomplete without Balochistan". To conclude, it is not an exaggeration to say that Balochistan is the nervous system of Pakistan; a weak and fragile nervous system would be detrimental to the country. The more Balochistan progresses, the more it will guarantee Pakistan's prosperity. Giving enough shares, Chinese scholarships, creating Special Economic Zones, universities under CPEC would most probably eliminate the sense of deprivation of Balochistan

The Express Tribune

Pakistan seeks financing for CPEC's western route

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has once again sought Chinese financing for the western route of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), requesting Beijing to sign a bilateral framework agreement for implementing the scheme that largely remains on papers due to funding constraints. The request was made during a meeting of the CPEC Joint Working Group on Transport Infrastructure last week, according to minutes of the meeting. The Chinese delegation was led by Wang Zhiqing, Chief Planner of the Ministry of Transport.

The request to sign the framework agreement for the upgrade of the Dera Ismail Khan-Zhob section of N-50 was made under an agreed policy of undertaking a new mega road project after completion of an ongoing one. Space has been created due to the completion of Rs298 billion Multan-Sukkur motorway of CPEC. However, despite its completion, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government has not been able to make the road operational. The delay was also discussed in the JWG meeting.

Meetings of joint working groups of various sectors are taking place ahead of the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting of CPEC, which will begin in Islamabad on November 6. A report of the JWG on transport will be presented to the JCC for decision.

The N-50 highway has two road components. The Dera Ismail Khan-Zhob project will cost Rs76.8 billion and the Kuchlak-Zhob section will cost Rs63 billion. These are known as hinterland areas due to backwardness, under-development, and extreme poverty.

Pakistan briefed the Chinese delegation about the status of three short-term projects, which included the upgrade of the Dera Ismail Khan-Zhob section, N-50 phase-I project having a length of 210 km. The government apprised Chinese authorities that the N-50 project was a top priority as it was the first big project on the western corridor and would also connect backward areas of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

According to the policy of “mature one, advance one”, the N-50 project is in a position to be taken up after the completion of Sukkur-Multan motorway, according to minutes of the JWG meeting. The Pakistani side requested the Chinese side to consider signing a framework agreement for the project and the Chinese side stressed the need for having internal consultation and expressed its willingness to keep in touch with the Pakistani side.

The PTI government had certain reservations about the model of framework agreements that the previous Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government signed for the construction of Multan-Sukkur road and Thakot-Havelian project of CPEC. It was not clear whether these reservations had been addressed before the government made a formal request for signing the framework agreement.

Federal Minister for Planning and Development Makhdoom Khusró Bakhtiar was not available for comment. The framework agreement provides the legal base for completion of a project under the engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) model and ensures tax exemption for the contractors. The PTI government has referred the Multan-Sukkur and Thakot-Havelian projects to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) for investigation on suspicion of corruption.

The money allocated in the development budget for the completion of the Dera Ismail Khan-Zhob scheme does not reflect that the N-50's project is the priority of the government. Against the cost of Rs76.8 billion, the government has allocated only Rs1 billion this year, according to the Ministry of Planning.

The Dera Ismail Khan-Yarik-Zhob section of N-50 was approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council two and a half years ago. Despite a significant delay, major work on the project could not be started due to the unavailability of funds from both the Chinese and Pakistani sides.

China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC) briefed the meeting about the progress on the Multan-Sukkur motorway project and asked the National Highway Authority to

take over the project, according to minutes of the meeting. The Chinese also urged Pakistani authorities to hold the inauguration ceremony of the Multan-Sukkur motorway at the earliest.

The total cost of the project was Rs298 billion and as of June, this year Rs264 billion had been spent. For this fiscal year, the government has allocated Rs19 billion and so far only Rs400 million has been released, according to the Ministry of Planning.

In March this year, the government also approved the doubling of the track on the Kuchlak-Zhob section of N-50 highway. The Kuchlak-Zhob section had been cleared amid uncertainty over the fate of the Dera Ismail Khan-Zhob section due to lack of funding. For the Kuchlak-Zhob section, the government has allocated Rs6 billion in the development budget against the total cost of Rs63 billion. Of this, Rs2.4 billion has already been sanctioned for release, according to the planning ministry. For land acquisition for the Kuchlak-Zhob project, Rs3.2 billion worth of project was included in the PSDP and Rs3 billion has already been authorised for release to the executing agencies, according to the planning ministry.

An internal document of the planning ministry showed that the transport section of the ministry was of the view that without dualisation of the Dera Ismail Khan-Zhob section first, there was no rationale for the dualisation of Kuchlak-Zhob section. The previous PML-N government had preferred the eastern route of CPEC over the western alignment.

The Nation

China, Pakistan on one page

BEIJING - China yesterday said Islamabad and Beijing are on one page on international issues. Speaking to a group of Pakistani journalists here, Yao Wen, Deputy Director General for Policy Planning of Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that the two countries were working as key partners for the prosperity of the region. Yao Wen said that the new government in Pakistan led by Prime Minister Imran Khan, had ensured continuity of the policy towards China.

“The PM’s recent visit was very positive. We discussed all issues and agreed on all issues. We will always remain the iron brothers,” he said.

The senior Chinese official said Pakistan and China were engaged in top-level contacts to implement all bilateral contracts. He said that China and Pakistan had a shared future, with their all-weather relationship based upon principles and interests. Pak envoy says PM has come closer to Beijing. He mentioned China’s great support to Pakistan in the sectors of security, trade and infrastructure development.

Yao Wen said that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor was the largest comprehensive project with any country. He said that CPEC was a fusion of multiple development projects, aimed at the prosperity and well-being of citizens of the country and the region at large. The official said CPEC had huge economic benefits for the people of Pakistan and the region. Separately, Pakistan’s ambassador to China Naghmana Hashmi said that Pakistan and China were close friends, partners and brotherly countries.

“This relationship had developed with the continuous efforts of successive generations of leaders and diplomats from both countries,” she said at a luncheon in honour of the visiting Pakistani journalists yesterday. The ambassador said that she was committed to work closely with counterparts in China to further develop this deep-rooted friendship.

Naghmana said that the bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and China had now touched \$19.08 billion and both countries aimed at raising it further. “The bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and China is rising,” she said.

“Pakistan and China are historically connected through the cultural and knowledge corridor,” she maintained.

Ambassador Hashmi said that people to people contact and cultural exchanges have increased. “Hence, despite different political systems, social orientations, cultural roots and heritage, Pakistan and China are a unique example of civilizational harmony and peaceful coexistence,” the envoy said. She said the CPEC was inspired by President Xi’ Jinping’s vision of regional connectivity and a people-centric development model. The envoy said PM Imran Khan had a successful visit to China recently and the friendship had even strengthened more. “Imran Khan has come closer to China. The new (Pakistan) government has shown commitment to work with China,” she remarked

Ground-breaking of CPEC SEZ at Rashakai likely to be held on Nov 29

ISLAMABAD- The ground-breaking of CPEC Special Economic Zone at Rashakai is likely to be held on November 29 and the government is considering special incentives for the export oriented industries in the proposed zones. The government is also likely to provide Rs 2.8 billion for the provision of electricity to five CPEC SEZs, official source said here.

Prime Minister Imran Khan will chair an important meeting today (Wednesday) on CPEC Special Economic Zones, where he will issue special directive regarding the provision of utilities to the economic zones during current fiscal, the official informed. The government is also considering special incentives for the export oriented or import substituting industries in the proposed SEZs, he said. The incentives will not be uniform rather it will be based on the volume of exports or import substitution, he said.

The official said that the development agreement for the Rashakai SEZ will be signed prior to the next meeting of the CPEC Joint Cooperation Committee which is scheduled on November 6. The ground breaking of the SEZ will be held on November 29, said the official. Total nine SEZs will be established under CPEC but three of them are in advanced stage. The second SEZ is Dhabiji, where the Sindh government has invited international tenders for the development of the zone. Similarly, land acquisition for Allama Iqbal Industrial City (M3) has been completed, said the official. “We have asked Chinese to provide us 30 to 40 firms in different field where we can discuss with them the possibility of starting business individually or in joint ventures with Pakistani companies in the SEZs,” said the official.

The official said that Chinese industry in pharmaceuticals, agriculture, chemical, steel and Textile will be relocating to Pakistan. No work had been done on the provision of utilities to the SEZs but now the work has been accelerated on the provision of electricity and gas to the SEZs, the official claimed.

The Prime Minister is likely to direct the Planning Ministry to release around Rs 2.8 billion during the remaining eight months of current fiscal for the provision of electricity to five SEZs, said the official. Meanwhile, a press release issued here stated that the meeting of Joint Working Groups of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Industrial Cooperation via video conference was held here on Tuesday.

The meeting was co-chaired by Qasim Raza Khan, Executive Director General II, Board of Investment and Gao Jian, Deputy Director General, National Development and Reform Commission of China. Officials from line ministries, provincial governments and embassies attended the meeting.

Both sides agreed to jointly accelerate the efforts to enhance the level of industrial cooperation by ensuring concentrated efforts with early provision of utilities and allocation of land. Pakistan and China have agreed to enhance business to business linkages; to facilitate increased level of investment from Chinese enterprises, to enhance industrial competitiveness of business in Pakistan; through technology transfer, world class managerial and industrial practices and skills transfer.

Progress on prioritized CPEC SEZs including Rashakai, Dhabiji, Alama Iqbal Industrial City (M3) was reviewed. It was agreed that the ground-breaking of Rashakai SEZs may be done next month whereby the development agreement is in the final stage. Chinese side expressed keen interest to participate in the bidding process for Dhabheji SEZ. In the process of industrial diagnosis of key industries, the Chinese experts informed that the report of the textile industry diagnosis is ready and will be shared by Chinese side soon. Both sides also discussed the possibility of up gradation of Pakistan Steel Mills.

October 24, 2019

Business Recorder

CPEC enters into 2nd phase: Poverty, agriculture, B2B initiatives prime focus: Khusro

Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Reform Makhdoom Khusro Bakhtyar Wednesday said the CPEC has now entered into its second phase with focus on poverty alleviation, agriculture and B2B industrial cooperation.

"The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government's economic reform measures will strengthen the country's economy as the investors' confidence is rebounding due to corrective measures," the minister expressed these views while talking to Australian High Commissioner Dr Geoffrey

Shaw who called on him on Wednesday. Secretary Planning Zafar Hasan was also present in the meeting.

While discussing bilateral relations and foreign investment in various sectors in Pakistan especially in Gwadar, the minister said that ongoing phase of CPEC will bring about socioeconomic benefits for the welfare of the people. He said that CPEC offers enormous potential to boost national economy and reduce poverty.

The minister informed the Australian high commissioner about the steps taken by the federal government for welfare of the people. He said that the government is focusing on promotion of ICT, artificial intelligence, tourism and agriculture. He also said, "Less developed areas are top priority of the government and, therefore, it has put in more resources for the marginalized areas of Balochistan, KPK, southern Punjab and interior Sindh."

Dr Geoffrey Shaw expressed pleasure at the government's emphasis on socioeconomic welfare of the people and making interventions for achieving sustained economic growth and development. He said that Pakistan and Australia can expand the scope of bilateral relations by cooperating in various sectors.

NAB signs MoU to oversee CPEC projects: chairman

KARACHI: Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) former Justice Javed Iqbal, said that his organization has signed a MoU with China to oversee China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

Presiding over a meeting to review performance of NAB Karachi, the Chairman NAB said that NAB was committed for absolutely conclusion of mega corruption cases for a corruption free Pakistan by adopting "Accountability for All" policy with an iron hand. He said that NAB has devised an effective anticorruption strategy for eradication of corruption which has started yielding "excellent" dividends. He said that the NAB has signed MoU with China to oversee CPEC projects being implemented in Pakistan.

He said that NAB has perfected its procedures and has rejuvenated after taking new initiatives. In order to rationalize the workload, time lines have been prescribed for efficient, effective and expeditious disposal of cases putting a maximum limit of 10 months from complaint verification to inquiry to investigation and finally to a reference in the Accountability Court.

In order to ensure uniformity and standardization, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) for investigation officers (IOs) in vogue were reviewed and revised after a gap of 10 years in order to benefit from the experience and collective wisdom of senior supervisory officers, a system of CIT comprising Director, Additional Director, Investigation Officer and a Senior Legal Counsel has been put in place.

He said that NAB has devised a comprehensive Quantified Grading System in order to further improve the performance of NAB Headquarter and all Regional Bureaus. Under Quantified Grading System, NAB Headquarter and Regional Bureau's are being evaluated on annual and

mid-term basis at a given criteria which has proved very successful and the performance of NAB's Regional Bureaus is being enhanced day by day due to regular monitoring and inspection.

Earlier, DG NAB Karachi Brig Farooq Naser Awan (retd) during a meeting said that NAB, Karachi recovered Rs 3.423 billion in 2018-2019 through plea bargain after approval of accountability courts, Karachi.

He said that NAB Karachi filed corruption references against Dr. Asim, Sherjeel Inam Memon, Agha Siraj Durrani and Kamran Micheal which were under trial in accountability courts as per law.

He said that 9887 complaints were received in 2018-19 and bureau disposed of 346 complaint verifications during this period; adding that NAB Karachi completed 208 inquiries till Oct 2019 and authorized 93 cases for investigation.

He said that NAB Karachi filed 65 corruption references whereas 28 corruption references were ready for filing of references after approval of the EBM/Chairman NAB.

He said that 159 accused persons were arrested by NAB Karachi during 2019 and added that Bureau helped in the arrest of 32 accused persons of other regional bureaus of NAB as per law.

The overall conviction ratio of NAB Karachi in accountability courts Karachi is about 84 percent, he maintained.

The Express Tribune

PM Imran seeks to expedite setting up of SEZs

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday said that all initiatives for setting up Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would be spearheaded by the federal government, while taking the provinces fully onboard.

Chairing a meeting to review progress on the establishment of SEZs across the country, the prime minister directed to ensure that no effort was spared for their colonization on war footing. He also called for addressing concerns relating to the availability of land, creation of jobs and wealth to help turn the wheels of economy.

“We should continue to remain competitive by providing incentives for transfer of technology and relocation of industries from China on the lines as of other regional countries,” he stressed.

The premier said that the current government had brought about significant improvement in the ease of doing business in the country.

‘There is a need to devise an effective awareness strategy to inform the people about the on ground progress and emerging socio-economic opportunities that will be available after the operationalization of SEZs and would enable them to reap the benefits to the fullest,’ he said.

The meeting was briefed on the provision of utilities, revision in existing legislative framework for incentivisation, facilitation of foreign and local investors and effective coordination between the Centre and federating units for smooth and effective implementation of the strategy. The participants of the session were told that funds to the tune of Rs2.8 billion would be provided for provision of electricity to Bin Qasim, Dhabeji, Rashakai and Hattar SEZs during the financial year 2019-20, while four PC-I had already been submitted for facilitating the provision of electricity.

Meanwhile, additional arrangements were being made for provision of 110 million cubic feet per day (MMCFD) gas at the cost of Rs3.75 billion to different SEZs out of the total 689MMCFD requirements till 2023.

The meeting was also apprised about the revisiting of efforts in the existing legislative framework for uniform treatment to all local and foreign investors to ensure 100% foreign ownership and repatriation of profit and dividends.

The new legislative framework is being devised to encourage exports, substitution of import and local manufacturing that would check unemployment, current account deficit and facilitate transfer of technology. The meeting was further informed that work visa and visa-on-arrival facility had already been extended to 67 countries. It was also recommended to ensure plug-and-play infrastructure in all SEZs for attracting large foreign manufacturing companies to relocate their facilities to Pakistan.

Minister for Planning Makhdoom Khusro Bakhtiar, Minister for Power Omar Ayub Khan, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Trade and Investment Abdul Razzak Dawood, Special Assistant on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan, Special Assistant Nadeem Babar, Board of Investment Chairman Syed Zubair Haider Gillani and senior officials were present in the meeting.

The Nation

China to multiply defence, trade ties with Pakistan

BEIJING - China aims to multiply defence and trade ties with Pakistan in the coming years, senior officials said here yesterday. Top Chinese officials told The Nation that Beijing was determined to fulfill Islamabad's needs for regional stability.

“China wants a strong Pakistan. We already have good economic and defence ties with Pakistan. We want to multiply the engagement to achieve new levels of friendship,” said one official.

Another official said top level contacts and meetings in the recent months had further strengthened the relationship between the ‘iron brothers.

Recently, Pakistan and China have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for enhancement of defence cooperation and capacity building of the Pakistan Army. The MoU was signed during the visit of Central Military Commission Vice Chairman General Xu Qiliang with a high-level

Chinese delegation to the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. General Xu Qiliang had a one-to-one meeting with Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa followed by delegation level talks. Later, Prime Minister Imran Khan and General Bajwa visited China to sign various MoUs.

Pakistan is one of the first groups of countries that have recognized China. On May 21, 1951, the two countries officially established their diplomatic relations. Since then, Pakistan and China have witnessed smooth development of friendly and neighborly relations as well as mutually beneficial cooperation. The period between 1957 and 1969 saw a very important phase in the history of the Sino-Pakistan relations. During this period, historical changes took place in the bilateral relations.

Since the 1990s, great changes have taken place in the international situation. Instead of being affected by the changing situation, the time-tested friendship and cooperation between China and Pakistan has further developed.

Since the early 1950s, China and Pakistan have established trade relations and started trade transactions. In January 1963, they signed their first trade agreement. In October 1982, the China-Pakistan Joint Committee of Economy, Trade and Technology was set up. With the joint efforts from both sides, Sino-Pakistani economic and trade cooperation has seen good progress. Especially since the 1990s, their bilateral trade volume has witnessed relatively fast growth.

Being always friendly to each other, China and Pakistan have also kept close contacts in the cultural field. Since the establishment of Sino-Pakistani diplomatic relations, the two countries have sent cultural delegations and groups and held exhibitions in the other for mutual cooperation. In March 1965, the representatives from the Chinese and Pakistani governments signed the cultural agreement in Rawalpindi and for the first time inked the plan of annual cultural exchanges for implementation. There have been 9 such plans signed between the two countries.

Chinese officials said the visits of top leaders had set the stage for an 'unbreakable partnership' aimed at stabilizing the region.

"The two countries also agree that the Kashmir issue should be resolved through a dialogue process. Peace is vital for the region," said an official.

The News

CPEC Benefits

Even though CPEC has opened up many job opportunities, it needs to benefit local people. If development is really for the common people then, before CPEC, the authorities should try and improve things in Gwadar. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a collective vision between Pakistan and China to improve relations and promote development. It is clear that CPEC has proved successful for China.

Most areas in Gwadar have practically no clean drinking water. Even though Gwadar is a vital part of CPEC, people there are deprived of basic necessities. Development in Pakistan facilitates only the rich.

Defence Exhibition at Pak-China Friendship Centre Today

Islamabad: The three-day fifth edition of 'Defence Port Turkey' exhibition is being co-organized by Defence Export Promotion Organization (DEPO), Ministry of Defence Production, Pakistan and Presidency of Defence Industries, Republic of Turkey from today (Thursday) here at Pak-China Friendship Centre. The exhibition will be open for public on October 26 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Defence Port Turkey series of exhibition are being organized by Turkey since 2014 at national and international level and for this year Pakistan has been selected to host the event for the first time. Defence Port Turkey will be the niche and target oriented showcase of Turkish state of the art defence technologies.

The exhibition is considered beginning of new era in defence manufacturing, trade and collaboration between the defence sectors of both the countries, a press release issued by the organizers said.

The prominent defence manufacturers/OEMs/ organizations from public and private sector are exhibiting their advanced defence technologies in land, sea, air and security systems under one roof. In addition, the event will also provide an opportunity for enhanced B2B and B2G interactions with visiting high-level civil military delegations.

There exists tremendous potential for cooperation in the fields of security, defence production and human resource development between Turkey and Pakistan. While appreciating the indigenous technological prowess of Turkey and great industrial potential of Pakistan, the exhibition will be another iconic rendezvous for international defence market.

The capital exhibition, Turkey and Badar expo solutions, Pakistan are managing the event at exhibition center.

Express News

چین کی یونیورسٹی میں ڈاکٹر عطا الرحمان کے نام سے ریسرچ سینٹر قائم

پاکستان کے نامور سائنس دان، سابق وفاقی وزیر برائے سائنس و ٹیکنالوجی اور ہائی ٹیکنالوجی ہاؤس کے چیئرمین، پروفیسر ڈاکٹر عطا الرحمان (ایف آر ایس) کے نام سے چین کی یونیورسٹی میں ریسرچ سینٹر قائم کر دیا گیا۔ ایکسپریس نیوز کے مطابق چین میں پاکستان کے معروف سائنس دان پروفیسر ڈاکٹر عطا الرحمان کے نام سے ریسرچ سینٹر کا باقاعدہ افتتاح کر دیا گیا ہے۔ ہنان یونیورسٹی آف میڈیسن میں بنائے گئے اس تحقیقی ادارے کا پورا نام ”پروفیسر عطا الرحمان ون بیلٹ ون روڈ ٹی سی ایم ریسرچ سینٹر“ رکھا گیا ہے۔ اس حوالے سے ایک تقریب بھی منعقد کی گئی جس میں وفاقی وزیر سائنس و ٹیکنالوجی فواد چوہدری اور خود ڈاکٹر عطا الرحمان بھی شریک تھے۔ اس موقع پر ہنان یونیورسٹی آف چائنیز میڈیسن کے ممتاز پروفیسر وی ویگ نے کہا کہ پروفیسر عطا الرحمان کے نام سے چینی تحقیقی ادارے کا قیام دراصل معروف پاکستانی سائنس دان کی روایتی ادویات کے شعبے میں

گراں قدر خدمات اور دو ملکوں کے درمیان سائنسی تعاون کے قیام میں ان کی قائدانہ معاونت کا اعتراف ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا ہنان یونیورسٹی چین کی چند بڑی سرکاری جامعات میں سے ایک ہے جہاں غیر ملکی طالب علموں کی بڑی تعداد میں پاکستان سے 500 اسکالرشپ بھی شامل ہیں۔

واضح رہے کہ ڈاکٹر عطا الرحمان کے نام سے ملائیشیا میں بھی ایک سائنسی مرکز قائم کیا جا چکا ہے۔ ملائیشیا کی سب سے بڑی جامعہ، یونیورسٹی ٹیکنالوجی مارا میں 'عطا الرحمان انسٹی ٹیوٹ آف نیچرل پروڈکٹ ڈسکوری' کے نام سے یہ ادارہ بنایا گیا ہے۔

پروفیسر ڈاکٹر عطا الرحمان آج کل وزیر اعظم پاکستان کی قائم کردہ ٹاسک فورس برائے سائنس و ٹیکنالوجی کے چیئرمین، سائنس اور ٹیکنالوجی پر مبنی معیشت کے قیام کے لیے ٹاسک فورس کے وائس چیئرمین اور ٹاسک فورس برائے انفارمیشن ٹیکنالوجی کے شریک سربراہ کے عہدوں پر فائز ہیں۔

پروفیسر عطا الرحمان نے نیچرل پروڈکٹ کیمسٹری کے شعبے میں گراں قدر خدمات انجام دی ہیں۔ اس ضمن میں ان کی 1142 سے زیادہ بین الاقوامی اشاعتیں، نامیاتی و غیر نامیاتی کیمیا، این ایم آر اسپیکٹرو اسکوپنی اور نیچرل پروڈکٹ کیمسٹری کے موضوعات پر امریکا، یورپ اور جاپان میں طبع شدہ 254 کتب اور بین الاقوامی سائنسی جرائد میں 775 سے زیادہ تحقیقی اشاعتیں قابل ذکر ہیں جبکہ 43 سٹینٹس بھی ان کے نام ہیں۔

ڈاکٹر عطا الرحمان کی نگرانی میں اب تک 82 طالب علم پی ایچ ڈی کر چکے ہیں، پروفیسر عطا الرحمان 8 یورپی ریسرچ جرنلز کے مدیر اعلیٰ ہیں جب کہ متعلقہ شعبے میں دنیا کے نمایاں انسائیکلو پیڈیا کے مدیر بھی ہیں۔ پروفیسر ڈاکٹر عطا الرحمان کو کئی قومی اور بین الاقوامی اعزازات سے بھی نوازا جا چکا ہے

October 25, 2019

Business Recorder

Stalled Afghan peace process

ISLAMABAD: Senior officials of Pakistan, China, Afghanistan and Russia will meet in Moscow today (Friday) under quadrilateral peace mechanism to discuss the stalled Afghan peace process.

According to Foreign Office spokesperson Dr Mohammad Faisal, Pakistan will participate in the talks and Safdar Hayat, Additional Secretary, Afghanistan and West Asia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will represent Pakistan in the talks.

He said that Pakistan has been a part of all efforts and processes to discuss and facilitate peace and reconciliation efforts in Afghanistan, adding that Pakistan's role is particularly noteworthy in crystallizing international convergence for a peaceful solution in Afghanistan.

Pakistan had participated in the first round of four party talks in Beijing in July this year, he said, adding that the next round is being held in Moscow at an opportune moment, as it would provide an important opportunity to review the currently stalled peace process.

"Pakistan will continue its effort, through wholehearted support as its part of shared responsibility, for making the international peace effort successful in Afghanistan", the spokesperson added.

The Moscow meeting will be followed by another round of intra-Afghan dialogue in Beijing being hosted by China on October 28 and 29. A 25 member Afghan government delegation led by the country's vice president Sarwar Danish will participate in the dialogue in which Taliban delegation led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar will also participate.

According to Suhail Shaheen, the spokesperson for Taliban's political office in Doha, the Chinese government has extended an invitation to Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar to attend the conference being hosted by the Chinese government.

"The conference is part of a series of conferences held in Moscow and Qatar. All participants will take part in their individual capacities and express their personal views with regard to resolution of Afghan conflict", Suhail Shaheen said in a tweet in Pashto language.

Last month, US President Donald Trump declared talks between the US and the Taliban dead after he canceled a secret meeting at Camp David with Taliban leaders and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani following the death of an American soldier in a car bomb attack in Kabul. Since then, the peace process is stalled.

A delegation of the Taliban Political Commission (TPC) in Doha led by Mullah Baradar visited Pakistan on October 2, 2019 and held talks with civil and military leadership on revival of the peace process. During the talks, the two sides agreed on the need for the earliest resumption of the peace process.

ML-1's PC-1 worth \$9.23bn sent for approval: Rashid

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways submitted the PC-1 of Main Line (ML-1) Railways project, worth around \$9.23 billion, under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework to the Planning Ministry for approval. This was announced by Railways Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed in a video message on Thursday.

Rashid said that a meeting was held on Thursday with Prime Minister Imran Khan and he apprised the Prime Minister of the achievement regarding the submission of PC-1 to the Planning Ministry. He said that the Prime Minister has directed to complete the track as soon as possible.

The minister said that it is a huge achievement in Pakistan's history that PC-1 of 1,800 kilometers long track at a cost of \$9.2 billion has been submitted for approval.

Rashid has already invited the Prime Minister and transport minister of China to witness the historic project initiation of ML-1 under which 1,800 kilometers track would be upgraded. After getting approval from the ECNEC, tender of the project would be issued and work on the project is expected to be initiated in March 2020.

The project for up-gradation of ML-1 has been declared a strategic commercial project with loan on favorable terms as it presents a perfect business plan covering 75 percent traffic/population and 65 percent industrial areas.

With the up-gradation of ML-1, train speed will increase from the current 65-105 km to 120-160 km, line capacity from 34 to 171 trains each way per day, freight volumes from 6 million tons to 35 million tons per annum by 2025, and railway share of freight transport volume would increase from less than 4 percent to 20 percent. The project would create around 0.1 million jobs for the young people.

Chinese companies locating business in Pakistan: Razak Dawood

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce, Investment, Industries and Textile, Abdul Razak Dawood on Thursday said that Chinese companies have started locating business centers in different parts of the country.

The Chinese companies had started construction work in Lahore and Faisalabad to explore business in textile sectors, he stated while talking to a private news channel program.

A policy for textile was being formulated and it was in the refining stage, he added. In reply to a question, he said Pakistan textile sector has registered an increase of 37 percent, particularly in the garment sector.

The Advisor further stated that a meeting with the minister of China would be held in the next week and for this, all necessary discussion to enhance business volume would be made.

He said that Pakistan had displayed the products in China Expo, adding that we had signed free trade agreement with China and that would be affective by the end of December this year.

Daily Times

K-Electric awards \$650 million 900mw Power Project to Chinese, German firms

K-Electric (KE) has signed a contract with a joint venture of Chinese and German firms to build a 900 megawatts dual-fired power plant with an investment of \$650 million. The contract was signed in Chinese city Harbin by KE CEO Moonis Alvi, Siemens Executive Vice President Dr. Keramat Fakhari and Harbin Electric Chairman Guo Yu. KE said although the project timeline has been affected due to delay in finalization of KE's multi-year tariff, the power utility is determined to execute it on a fast track and additional power to be made available by summer 2021.

The project, BQPS-III of 900 MW will be built at KE's Bin Qasim Power Complex and includes upgrades to associated transmission infrastructure. It will be dual fired with re-gasified liquid natural gas as the primary fuel and represents one of the largest private sector investments of its kind in the country's power sector.

In addition to this, K-Electric is also in talks with the government to increase the supply from national grid and in this regard discussions for supply of 500MW from KANUPP-2 and KANUPP-3 are in advanced stage. Speaking at the occasion, Moonis Alvi said, "The 900 MW BQPS-III is essential in meeting Karachi's future energy demands. An investment of the size and

magnitude of BQPS-III is a testament to KE's commitment to improving the reliability of power supply for its customers.”

Notably, Harbin Electric Chairman Guo Yu said Harbin Electric International has accumulated rich project execution experience since it entered the Pakistani power market in 1983, and has completed more than 10 projects in the fields of hydropower, thermal power and combined cycle power stations.

“We're proud to be supporting the energy needs of Karachi with efficient, environmentally friendly technology for power generation, such as the SGT5-4000F gas turbines renowned for high performance and low cost power generation” said Helmut von Struve, Managing Director and CEO of Siemens in Pakistan.

Pakistan Observer

CPEC: Back on track

PM Imran Khan visited Beijing earlier this month. It was his third visit since he took power more than a year ago. But the significance of the latest trip was that it happened against the backdrop of certain key developments. There was little or no progress on projects under CEPEC since the new government took charge in August last year. The government of Pakistan deliberately slowed down CPEC as it suspected corruption in projects signed by previous governments.

That approach caused a lot of concern in China. The Pakistani government also said that many CPEC projects were not mutually beneficial for the country. The US has also been closely following the BRI & CPEC. Washington raised questions whether such projects meet international standards or not? The real reason for its opposition stems from the fear that China is trying to impose a new economic order.

Also, the unilateral move of India regarding Kashmir pushed Pakistan to have a major cooperation with China. The government of Pakistan has realized that CPEC was a transformational project and will boost the growth of Pakistan's economy. A stable economic state guarantees a strong 'Foreign Policy'. The Pakistani government is now making serious efforts to repair the damage caused to CPEC during its tenure.

Chinese varsity eulogizes Prof Atta-ur-Rahman

The Hunan University of Chinese Medicine (HUCM) has established “Academician Professor Atta-ur-Rahman One Belt and One Road TCM Research Center” at its main campus in Changsha, capital of Hunan province, Peoples Republic of China.

The grand opening ceremony of the proposed center was held on Wednesday (24 October 2019), in HUCM, along with the 5th Annual Bio-TCM International Conference.

A senior official of the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi (UoK) said on Wednesday that the Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Hussain Chaudhry, along with Chinese Government officials, Mayor of

Huanhua, and Prof. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary, Director of ICCBS – University of Karachi were present in the ceremony.

“This center is indeed a humble recognition of Prof. Atta-ur-Rahman tremendous scientific contributions in the field of traditional medicine, and his leadership of developing scientific collaboration between the two countries,” Wei Wang, Furong Distinguished Professor at Hunan University of Chinese Medicine, said. “It is also a celebration of the induction of Prof. Rahman in the highest honor of fellowship of Chinese Academy of Sciences,” Wang pointed out.

Afghanistan, China, Pakistan start joint training for young diplomats

A 10-day capacity building workshop for Afghan, Chinese and Pakistani young diplomats was started here on Monday in accordance with a decision made by the three countries to promote the peace process in Afghanistan.

Eight Chinese, six Afghan and 23 Pakistani young diplomats are participating in the workshop.

The participants are expected to be taken to different China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects, North Waziristan in northwest Pakistan and also to Pak-Afghan border crossing point at Torkham.—INP

The Nation

300MW Gwadar plant’s inauguration in first week of November

ISLAMABAD - Vice chairman of National Development and Reforms Commission (NDRC) China will inaugurate 300MW coal power plant at Gwadar during first week of November.

The meeting of Joint Cooperation Committee of CPEC is scheduled during first week of November and the vice chairman of National Development and Reforms Commission (NDRC) China will be arriving to Pakistan one day ahead of the meeting, said Zafar Hassan secretary Planning Development and Reforms.

Talking exclusively to The Nation, the secretary said that there were rumors and misconception that the present government has abandoned CPEC which was not true. “We have cleared the plate of the pending projects and resolved the issues related to corridor projects.”

The CPEC has entered into a new phase. He said that four new Joint Working Groups under CPEC, which include JWG on industrial cooperation, CPEC International Cooperation Coordination Working Group, Agriculture JWG and JWG on socio-economic development, were formed.

Regarding the 9th JCC, scheduled to be held during first week of November, the secretary informed that one day before the JCC there will be senior officers meeting (SOM) where they will discuss the decisions of the various Joint Working Groups of the CPEC and make recommendations regarding the deliverables to the JCC. The JCC meeting, which is jointly chaired by federal minister for Planning from Pakistan and vice chairman of National

Development and Reforms Commission (NDRC), will be attended by provincial chief ministers and federal ministries and divisions. Zafar Hassan said that ML-I, SEZs, Karachi Circular Railways, Kohala Hydro project and Azad Pattan Hydro project will be discussed in the upcoming JCC meeting.

He said the government has already established a financing committee on ML-I. In JCC meeting, the financing structure, loans, interest on loans and tenure of return will be discussed. On SEZs, secretary planning informed that the Rashakai Economic Zones is ready for inauguration and the JCC will decide about the date of the inauguration.

On Kohala hydro project, he said that the tripartite agreement of the project will be finalized during the upcoming JCC. The secretary however said that no new power project will be added to the CPEC portfolio in the upcoming JCC. Under the existing CPEC portfolio, China is supposed to develop 17500 MW power projects and out of which 5500 MW projects have already been completed. But the power projects also need a proper evacuation system which is currently lacking.

He said that they will take Vice Chairman NDRC to Gwadar where he will perform the ground breaking of 300 MW coal based power plant. The establishment of power plant is crucial to make Gwadar self-sufficient in electricity, as it is currently relying on the 100 MW imported electricity from Iran. Zafar Hassan said that the plan for connecting Gwadar and Makran regions with the national grid is already underway. Work on Southern Grid has already been started which is PSDP funded project with an allocation of Rs 17.5 billion during current fiscal. Regarding pace of work on the Southern Grid, he said that under the release pattern 20 percent each of PSDP being released during first two quarters and 30 percent during last two quarters; however, for the speedy implementation of Gwadar Grid 50 percent amount of the allocation has already been released.

Secretary Planning further said that Vice Chairman NDRC will also visit Gwadar Airport, which is the biggest airport of the country, and we hope it will help in further acceleration of work on the airport.

The News

Work on 13 Energy Projects under CPEC in Full Swing

ISLAMABAD: Work on 13 energy projects having capacity to generate 8,995 MW electricity under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), throughout the country is in full swing.

According to a report published by Gwadar Pro media network, with the completion of these projects, Pakistan will be no more in deficit meeting its electricity needs.

Under CPEC, Pakistan's first joint venture CPHGC's Hub coal-fired power plant producing 1320MW was a big breakthrough that has begun helping Pakistan overcome its electricity crisis in true letter and spirit.

According to the report, energy Independent Pakistan is no more just a dream rather is becoming a tangible reality soon.

Pakistan remained an energy deficit country over the last two decades, suffering acute power deficiency. This severe acute shortfall offsets economic growth and cut GDP growth. According to Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) 2014 report, Pakistan underwent an unprecedented energy crisis. CPEC energy projects made a turnaround healing electricity deficit. According to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2018-19, the installed electricity generation capacity went to 34,282 megawatts in Jul-Mar 2018-19 compared to 33,433MW in the corresponding period of previous year, registering a rise of a 2.5 percent growth.

This much needed relief has been possible solely CPEC power initiatives, especially coal-fired power plants. It is pertinent to mention that share of coal in power generation had remained in single digit over the past two decades. However, in the current fiscal year, it reached to the height of 12.7 percent.

Story of feat to power up Pakistan commenced when at least 18 to 19 projects out of 39 Earlier Harvest Projects (EHP) worth around US \$34 billion, equivalent to 70 percent of the CPEC funding basket, were earmarked for energy projects.

The targeted emphasis signifies resilient commitment of Imran Khan led government to fix energy crisis. Most of the energy projects in the CPEC portfolio are coal based.

Out of the 19 energy projects, 10 projects are based on coal. Approximately 4666MW to 5000 MW electricity has been pumped into national grid so far.

Under CPEC, completed energy projects are Hubco Coal Power Plant, Port Qasim Coal-fired Power Plant, Sahiwal Coal-Fired Power Plant, Engro Thar Coal-fired Power Plant and Surface Mine in Block II of Thar Coal Field, Dawood Wind Farm, Quaid-i-Azam Solar, UEP Wind Farm, Sachal Wind Farm, Port Qasim Power plant and three gorges second and third wind farms.

CPHGC completes 1,320MW Power Plant

KARACHI: China Power Hub Generation Company (CPHGC) and General Electric (GE) on Thursday announced the successful completion of a power plant with 1,320 megawatts of production capacity in Balochistan.

“We are proud to deliver this project with agile execution and completed this work in cooperation with GE on schedule and on budget,” Zhao Yonggang, chief executive officer of CPHGC said in a statement.

“We are excited that this landmark project will play a significant role in helping Pakistan to deliver on its energy mix ambitions and help to tackle the electricity shortfall that is hindering Pakistan’s progress.”

Under an agreement signed in 2016, GE supplied the project’s engineering, procurement and construction contractors Northwest Electric Power Design Institute Co. Ltd. and Tianjin Electric

Power Construction Company with two units. Each unit of 660 MW has super critical steam turbine, generator and boiler. The project is expected to lighten up to four million Pakistani homes.

The project includes construction of the CPHGC power plant and a dedicated jetty at Hub began in March 2017 in the Lasbella district of Balochistan.

The CPHGC power plant, under a joint venture of China Power International Holding Limited with Hub Power Company is now commercially operational.

It is one of the infrastructure ventures supported under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, a large development mega project that aims to connect Gwadar port in southern Pakistan to Xinjiang, China's northwestern autonomous region, through transportation and energy networks.

The project would help Pakistan diversify its energy mix, allowing a significant reduction in the cost of electricity generation in Pakistan, providing electricity to four million households in Pakistan. "The successful completion of CPHGC power plant underlines the strong collaboration among GE and its partners," Massimo Gallizioli, chief executive officer of GE Steam Power in the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey said.

"Together we brought the world's best to power Pakistan - local project management with Chinese engineering expertise and GE power generation technologies that were developed by advanced research and development teams based in Europe and China."

GE has been a leader in efficient steam power technology, driving the industry from super critical to ultra-super critical technologies for more than 100 years.

GE has supported the development of energy infrastructure for more than 50 years in Pakistan and GE-built technologies could generate the equivalent power needed to supply up to 30 percent of the country's electricity.

October 26, 2019

Pakistan Observer

High level PFC delegation off to China to explore furniture markets

A high level delegation of Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Friday left for China on a 5-day visit to explore new markets and strengthening existing bilateral trade relations with their counterparts in furniture industry during business to business contacts.

Prior to leave at airport, PFC Chief Executive Mian Kashif Ashfaq while talking to media persons said the delegation will have one on one direct interaction with foreign business leaders, researchers and investors in China, he said adding the tour would enable investors to identify potential organizations to partner and developing successful regional economic strategies and support regionally vital businesses.

He was of the view that economic and trade relations between Pakistan and China possess great potential and there was dire need for Pakistani business community to focus on improving their competitiveness in the global markets.

Mian Kashif said it is important that Pakistan should develop those products that are in demand in China along with increasing the export base. Leather is Pakistan's major export item, but the export volume to China was only \$38.6 million in 2018. Products including furniture, seafood, fruits, cereals, meat and dairy products also possess potential of export to China.

He said Chinese furniture manufacturers have agreed to provide modern technology to improve the furniture sector of Pakistan, which will not only help in boosting economy besides generating jobs at local level. He further said they would also invite Chinese furniture companies to participate in 3-day mega 11th Interior Pakistan exhibition commencing from November 22 at Expo Center Lahore.

The Nation

Businessmen for simplifying visa process to boost Pak-China trade

PESHAWAR - Business community here on Friday urged the Chinese government to simplify visa issuance process to give further boost to bilateral trade between Pakistan and China.

The demand was made during a meeting between President of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Engr Maqsood Anwar Pervaiz and Shen Zicheng, Counsellor Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan, which was held at the Chamber House here. Shahid Hussain, senior vice president, Abdul Jalil Jan, vice president of the SCCI, members of executive committee, Ghulam Bilal Javed, Sadiq Amin, Ihsanullah, Nisarullah, Shamsul Rahim, Altaf Baig, a representative of Chinese Embassy in Islamabad, Mr Zhou, Visa officer Furrugh Farid, NH Kazmi, Hidayat Mohammad, Aurangzeb, Sher Afsar and others were present in the meeting.

Zicheng on the occasion assured the business community that the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad will take measures to bring easiness in visas process and will issue visas to members of business community on recommendation of the chamber. Engr Maqsood Anwar, while speaking on the occasion, said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor – CPEC is a game changer, which will make the Pakistan as centre of economic activities. He said the CPEC will ensure brighter future of Pakistan. He said the mutual trade between Pakistan and China can be further enhanced by launching of joint venture, exchange of business delegations and jointly organizing trade exhibitions.

“KP has the capacity to generate 50,000 megawatts hydel power generation”, SCCI chief said. He invited the Chinese investors to make investment in hydel power generation, oil and gas, tourism, gems and jewelry, marble, mine and mineral, honey, pharmaceutical and medical and other potential sectors in K-P and to take full benefits from investment opportunities in the province.

The Chinese diplomat agreed with recommendations of the SCCI president regarding further improving bilateral trade between Pakistan and China and said Chinese investors are keen to make investment in the KP potential sectors.

For this purpose, he said they will collaborate with Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry to further strengthen trade and economic relations between the two countries.

In the meeting, a documentary was run, highlighting potentials sectors of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Former president, Faiz Mohamamd Faizi and members of business community gave various suggestions about simplifying visas process to further enhance mutual trade and economic relations between Pakistan and China.

Jang News

چینی کمپنی کی K 4 فیئر 1 اور 2 پر کام کیلئے پیشکش، لاگت زیادہ ہونے پر منصوبہ سی پیک میں شامل کیا جاسکتا ہے

کراچی (اسٹاف رپورٹر) وزیر اعلیٰ سندھ سید مراد علی شاہ سے چائنا کی سرکاری کمپنی انر جی چائنا کے آٹھ رکنی وفد جسکی قیادت اسکے صدر لیو بکس ژیان کر رہے تھے نے وزیر اعلیٰ ہاؤس میں ملاقات کی جس میں سندھ حکومت کے ساتھ پانی کے شعبے اور کراچی میں پانی کی تقسیم کے سلسلے میں ملکر کام کرنے کے حوالے سے تبادلہ خیال کیا گیا، چائینیز فرم کو بتایا گیا کہ صوبائی حکومت کے فور فیئر 1، پرائیو ڈیلو او کے ساتھ کام کر رہی ہے لہذا چائینیز فرم نے فور کے فیئر 2 اور فیئر 3 میں کام کرنے کی دلچسپی ظاہر کی اور تجویز پیش کی کہ اگر منصوبے کی لاگت بہت زیادہ ہو جاتی ہے تو اسے سی پیک کے منصوبوں میں شامل کیا جاسکتا ہے، وزیر اعلیٰ سندھ نے واضح کیا کہ کراچی 17 ملین آبادی پر مشتمل شہر ہے اور اسکی پانی کی ضروریات کا تخمینہ 1200 گیلن روزانہ ہے مگر صرف 500 ایم جی ڈی روزانہ مل رہا ہے۔ انھوں نے کہا کہ ہم شہر کو بلک پانی کی فراہمی میں اضافے کے مختلف طریقوں پر کام کر رہے ہیں تاکہ اسکی گھریلو اور صنعتی ضروریات کو پورا کیا جاسکے، جب ریور سورس کنونینس سسٹم میں بہت زیادہ نقص و غلطیاں ہیں لہذا لائین لاسز توقع سے بہت زیادہ ہیں، چائینیز کمپنی نے جب سے کراچی کو پانی کے فراہمی کے نظام میں بہتری لانے کے حوالے سے بھی دلچسپی ظاہر کیا، اس کے علاوہ وزیر اعلیٰ سندھ کی درخواست پر کہا کہ وہ کراچی میں 100 ایم جی ڈی سیلیمنیشن پلانٹ لگانے کے لیے تخمینہ لاگت کے ساتھ دیگر تفصیلات پر بھی کام کریں گے جبکہ سندھ حکومت کے لیے ویسٹ واٹر کے ٹریٹمنٹ کے لیے پلانٹ لگانے کے لیے بھی کام کریں گے، مراد علی شاہ نے محکمہ منصوبہ بندی و ترقیات کو ہدایت کی کہ وہ چائینیز فرم کے ساتھ ایک اور اجلاس منعقد کریں اور پانی کے شعبے میں مل کر کام کرنے کے حوالے سے سفارشات مرتب کریں، دریں اثنا نیدر لینڈ کے سفیر ولیم واؤٹر پلپ نے بھی وزیر اعلیٰ سندھ سے ملاقات کی اور پیشکش کی کہ اسکے پاس فوڈ پراسیسنگ کے انڈسٹریل ماہرین موجود ہیں جنھیں دینا جانتی ہے اور وہ سندھ میں کام کرنے اور سرمایہ کاری کے خواہاں ہیں۔ انھوں نے زراعت، مویشیوں کی نشوونما اور ہاہیر ڈسٹریکٹ پیداوار میں سرمایہ کاری کے حوالے سے بھی تبادلہ خیال کیا۔

October 27, 2019

Business Recorder

Xi conveyed Pakistan's concerns to Modi: Chinese official

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping conveyed Pakistan's concerns to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the forceful annexation of Indian occupied Kashmir (IOK) during the recent Sino-Indian summit at Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu, said a Chinese foreign ministry official.

Speaking to a select group of journalists from Pakistan, the official said that China will keep playing its role to defuse tensions between the two South Asian neighbors and said that President Xi was working to restart dialogue between Pakistan and India.

“We want both Pakistan and India to re-engage in talks. We would not be acting as mediators but would like to facilitate talks,” said the Chinese official.

“We understand that Pakistan is concerned about the situation in IOK. Pakistan is expressing restraint and so is India in many respects, but the issues both countries are dealing with are very complex in nature and these complexities pose a big challenge,” the official said.

The official added that China wants India to play a constructive role in regional peace and development. “We also have border disputes with India but we have not held our relationship hostage to those disputes,” he said, adding, “We have a strong and trustful partnership with Pakistan and we will stand by Pakistan through thick and thin,” the official said. The official said that Beijing believes the upcoming meeting of the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of the China, Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) set to be held in November will mark the ushering of the economic corridor into the next stage.

“The (upcoming) JCC would add new impetus to the CPEC’s second phase. ML-I project can be secured at the JCC. China is determined to help Pakistan overcome its economic challenges and we are carefully discussing issues with Pakistan,” the official said. The official said that China doesn’t want to burden Pakistan with debts. He said China welcomes the formation of the CPEC authority and hopes that CPEC would make strong progress. The official said that Islamabad and Beijing are on one page on international issues. He said that the two countries were working as key partners for the prosperity of the region.

“The PM’s recent visit was very positive. We discussed all issues and agreed on most of them. We will always remain iron brothers and would stand together on international and regional issues. Pakistan and China are engaged in top-level communication to implement all bilateral contracts,” he said and added that China and Pakistan will work together for a shared future.

He mentioned China’s great support to Pakistan in sectors of security, trade and infrastructure development. He said that CPEC is the largest comprehensive project China has invested in any country.

He said that CPEC was a fusion of multiple development projects, aimed at the prosperity and well-being of citizens of the country and the region at large.

The official said CPEC had huge economic benefits for the people of Pakistan and the region. He said China wants to see Pakistan as a strong economic power and that both countries already have good economic and defence ties.

Pakistan Observer

Jing stresses for private sector linkages to improve Pak-China bilateral trade

Yao Jing, Ambassador of China said that through private sector engagements the trade between Pakistan and China can be further enhanced. He stressed that Pakistan should focus on manufacturing and value addition of products for enhancing its exports. He said that Chinese companies were interested to invest in Pakistan and for JVs more supportive policies were required. He said this while talking to Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry during his visit to Chinese Embassy. Muhammad Nasir Khan, former President ICCI and others were also present at the occasion.

Jao Jing said that Pakistan can enhance its share of exports by ensuring quality and competitive price. He said that China International Import Export Expo 2019 offers good opportunities to exporters to enter in the Chinese market and emphasized that Pakistani companies should take part in such exhibitions. He said that China will encourage more delegations from Pakistan to explore new areas of cooperation and informed that Chinese delegation from agriculture sector shall visit Pakistan at the end of October. He said that China Commercial Section would provide support for more cooperation between the two countries by holding cultural events and arranging training and capacity building programs.

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry emphasized that Chinese investors should help Pakistani companies in technology transfer through JVs cooperation particularly in SEZs. He said that IT and services sectors were other potential areas of cooperation between the two countries. He stressed to identify top-10 imports of China that will help Pakistan to export those products. ICCI President said that visit of Pakistani investors to high tech companies in China was important to explore new avenues of mutual cooperation and desired Chinese embassy's cooperation to arrange such visits.

The Express Tribune

Punjab secured only two major CPEC projects

LAHORE: Punjab has been in the spotlight for getting the lion's share of investment under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), but an official of the planning and development department has opposite views.

"The province has secured only two major CPEC projects," said Punjab Planning and Development Chief Economist Dr M Amanullah.

"The province faced much criticism from across the country for allegedly securing more projects and infrastructure development loans under CPEC. However, the truth is that Punjab has managed to secure investments only in the Orange Line Train and Allama Iqbal Industrial City (AIIC)," Amanullah said while talking to The Express Tribune.

He said all other projects including highways, motorways and energy schemes fell under the federal government purview. “Even in the energy projects implemented under the CPEC programme during the previous government’s tenure, Punjab had zero equity.”

Speaking about funding for the provincial projects, he said, “Technically, we receive funds from Chinese financial institutions for the Orange Line project only, while the upcoming AIIC, which falls under the Special Economic Zone (SEZ), will get Chinese investment when the project materializes.”

He, however, said a couple of Chinese ceramic companies were also expected to start construction work on their plants in November 2019 with estimated investment of \$150 million.

The provincial government is expected to organize the groundbreaking ceremony of the AIIC in December this year as it expects the land acquisition process to be completed by October 30.

The province hopes the project, spread over approximately 3,217 acres, will attract a total investment of Rs357 billion or \$2.3 billion and create around 242,000 jobs.

Some officials believe the national financial crunch in general, and the one in Punjab in particular, is the true cause of delay in such important projects. They question how the province can fund such projects when it is already facing spending cuts in its development budget.

In the previous government, the allocations were revised downwards from Rs635 billion to Rs411 billion and now they have been slashed further to Rs141 billion from the previously announced Rs238 billion.

Amanullah said the province had already sanctioned Rs6.9 billion for the AIIC project from its Annual Development Plan (ADP) as a loan. This will later be repaid by the executing company – the Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC).

The Nation

PFC delegation off to China to explore furniture markets

LAHORE - A high level delegation of Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) has left for China on a 5-day visit to explore new markets and strengthening existing bilateral trade relations with their counterparts in furniture industry during business to business contacts. PFC Chief Executive Mian Kashif Ashfaq while talking to media persons said the delegation will have one on one direct interaction with foreign business leaders, researchers and investors in China, adding the tour would enable investors to identify potential organizations to partner and developing successful regional economic strategies and support regionally vital businesses. He was of the view that economic and trade relations between Pakistan and China possess great potential and there was dire need for Pakistani business community to focus on improving their competitiveness in the global markets. Mian Kashif said it is important that Pakistan should develop those products that are in demand in China along with increasing the export base. Leather is Pakistan’s major export item, but the export volume to China was only \$38.6 million

in 2018. Products including furniture, seafood, fruits, cereals, meat and dairy products also possess potential of export to China. He said Chinese furniture manufacturers have agreed to provide modern technology to improve the furniture sector of Pakistan, which will not only help in boosting economy besides generating jobs at local level.

October 28, 2019

Business Recorder

China disapproves FATF's politicization, takes exception to anti-Pakistan designs

BEIJING: Reiterating its support to Pakistan at the FATF platform, China has categorically announced that they did not want the forum to be politicized as some countries were pursuing their political agenda in a bid to blacklist Pakistan.

"China does not want the FATF to be politicized by any single country. There are some countries, which want to include Pakistan in the blacklist.

We consider they have political designs. That is something China is against. China stands for justice," Deputy Director General for Policy Planning of Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of Asian Affairs Yao Wen said.

Speaking to a group of visiting Pakistani journalists here, Yao Wen said China stood with Pakistan and blocked any attempt to include Pakistan in the blacklist.

"We made it clear to the United States and India that we cannot do it. It goes beyond the purpose of FATF," he added.

He said the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) was not meant to put any country in the blacklist, rather to support it to take action against terror financing. Pakistan was effectively pursuing its National Action Plan, and China encouraged it to act against terrorists and strengthen its system.

"China will help (Pakistan) technically and politically to improve its system," he added. China would also help Pakistan build the capacity to handle issues related to terror financing.

He said instead of pressuring it, the FATF member countries should assist Pakistan to improve its system and China would also continue its support in that regard.

Besides China, a traditional ally of Pakistan, Turkey and Malaysia also supported the country in the FATF meeting held in October.

According to the 36-member FATF's Charter, the support of at least three countries is required to keep any state from being blacklisted. The FATF in its October meeting expressed satisfaction over the initiatives taken by Pakistan and its progress in various areas.

As regards Pak-China ties, the Chinese official said it was high time in their bilateral relationship since Prime Minister Imran Khan visited Beijing thrice in a year and had meetings with Chinese President Xi Jinping four times.

He said the recent visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to China was a productive one, wherein he also had interaction with many heads of state.

He said China and Pakistan were all-weather strategic partners, with close cooperation in multiple fields. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), he said, was moving in right direction. "We are working closely on CPEC, and the issues of Kashmir and FATF."

He welcomed establishing of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority (CPECA) by Pakistan that would help expedite work on CPEC projects. About the recent visit of Chinese President to India, he said the relations between China and Pakistan were mature enough and they had nothing to do with India.

"China and Pakistan have cooperation in all the sectors. Our mutual trust stands very high while we have deficit of trust with India as we have so many problems and differences (with them)," he added

He said the Chinese president conveyed Pakistan's concerns to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi over current development in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. India was told that Pakistan did not want war with it and desired to resolve the Kashmir issue through peaceful means, he added.

To a question, the official said China had serious concerns over Indian action of August 5, which had even challenged the Chinese sovereignty and interests. China, he said, had expressed its strong position on the action. Yao Wen said China had a clear position that the Indian Occupied Jammu Kashmir was a disputed territory. The dispute between Pakistan and India had to be resolved in accordance with the United Nations Charter and its Security Council resolutions.

China did not back the unilateral action taken by India, he added. China was willing to play a constructive role for the peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue, he said.

The official said during the last five years, lots of achievements had been gained as about 20 road infrastructure projects and powers generation plants had been completed under CPEC.

"Now we are working with the Government of Pakistan on new projects," he added.

He said in the next phase of CPEC, establishment of special industrial zones would be focused, which would create job opportunities for local people, besides increasing exports, uplifting of social economic and eliminating poverty, he added.

He said China and Pakistan had also strong cooperation in the defence sector.

Jang News

سی پیک کے دوسرے مرحلے میں لوگوں کی سماجی حالت بہتر بنائیں گے، چینی سفیر

اسلام آباد (طاہر خلیل) پشاور یونیورسٹی کے نیشنل سینٹر آف ایکیسی لینسی آف جیالوجی کے رشید طاہر خلیلی آڈیٹوریم میں منعقدہ تقریب میں ” فرینڈ آف سلک روڈ“ کا افتتاح کر دیا گیا، پشاور یونیورسٹی کے ذہین طلبہ کیلئے چین کی طرف سے 20 لاکھ روپے کا چیک دیا گیا، گورنر خیبر پختونخوا شاہ فرمان مہمان خصوصی تھے، شاہراہ ریشم کے دیرینہ دوست سی پیک اور خیبر پختونخوا کے موضوع پر قومی سیمینار سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے سینیٹر مشاہد حسین سید اور دیگر مقررین نے کہا کہ سی پیک پاکستان کے محفوظ اور خوشحال مستقبل کی ضمانت ہے، چینی سفیر یاو جنگ نے اپنے خطاب میں کہا کہ سی پیک کے دوسرے مرحلے میں لوگوں کی سماجی حالت کو بہتر بنانے پر توجہ دی جائے گی اور اس مقصد کیلئے صحت، تعلیم، کھیل اور دیگر سماجی شعبوں میں 200 سے زائد منصوبے مکمل کئے جائیں گے چین کی حکومت سی پیک کے ذریعے ہسپتالوں، سکولز اور پیشہ وارانہ ووکیشنل سینٹر ز کھولنے پر توجہ دے گی۔

October 29, 2019

Business Recorder

Pak-China trade relations: Karachi mayor, Qingdao vice mayor sign MoU

Vice Mayor of the Chinese city, Qingdao, Xue Qingguo met the Sindh Governor Imran Ismail at the Governor House and discussed matters pertaining to trade, investment and others. On the occasion, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Karachi Mayor Waseem Akhtar and Qingdao Vice Mayor Xue Qingguo to work on enhancing cooperation in trade, science and technology, cultural, ports, tourism and other fields.

Chairman Board of Investment Zubair Gilani, Leader of the Opposition in Sindh Assembly Firdous Shamim Naqvi, PTI Parliamentary Leader Haleem Adil Sheikh and others attended the ceremony. Talking to the media after the meeting, the governor said signing of the MoU between Qingdao and Karachi was welcomed. Through this MoU, not only the city of Karachi but the entire province and country would benefit.

He said Chinese companies were turning to other countries in the region due to rising production costs in China. Pakistan was taking advantage of this opportunity to invite Chinese companies to invest in the country. Imran Ismail said Qingdao had a special status in China's economy. Cooperation with the city would greatly benefit Pakistan's economic hub Karachi.

Responding to a question, he said the solution to Karachi's problems was transfer of powers to the mayor. To another question about taxes, the governor made it clear that the present government did not impose any new tax however the government was only ensuring proper collection of already imposed taxes. Expanding the tax net was the most urgent need of the hour.

The Express Tribune

Sindh invites bids for SEZ development

KARACHI: The government of Sindh has formally launched the Dhabeji Special Economic Zone located in Thatta district near Port Qasim.

In this connection, the Sindh Economic Zones Management Company (SEZMC) has invited proposals for the development and operation of Dhabeji project through an advertisement in leading newspapers, according to a statement issued on Monday.

“The authority has invited bids from potential developers of the SEZ,” said SEZMC Chief Executive Officer Abdul Azeem Uqaili while talking to The Express Tribune. “The initial process of development will take around eight months and final bidder will be given 18 months to make the SEZ operational.”

This would be the first phase, he said and added that the developer would be tasked to complete at least 70% of development work within the given timeframe after which he would be granted approval for the second phase.

He added that the management company would prefer a developer who could also attract different industries besides project construction so that the SEZ could become functional immediately. Elaborating, he said the government would provide required land and act as a facilitator while the developer would make all the investment.

“The developer will also run the SEZ while the government will only act as a facilitator,” he said. “The selected bidder will be liable to provide utilities including electricity and gas and monitor the zone.”

The CEO pointed out that the federal government had set aside a budget of Rs4 billion for a dedicated grid station.

“The contract will be given to the developer who gets a higher technical score as per the structural model of the company and quotes the lowest cost,” he said. “He will then be able to sell plots to other companies to earn revenue.”

The government would not charge anything from the developer, Uqaili said. The SEZ will be spread over 1,530 acres of land.

He pointed out that the government was not aiming to earn from the SEZ rather it focused on facilitating the private sector, which could generate jobs. “Our aim is to establish a dedicated site in Sindh, which can attract industries,” he said.

SEZMC had fixed the cost of land at one-fourth of the market price starting from a minimum of Rs10 million per acre, he said.

The land cost at the Bin Qasim Industrial Park starts from Rs30 million per acre and at the Korangi Creek Industrial Park from Rs160 million. These two zones fall under the federal government's control.

On the other hand, the SEZ at Faisalabad (Allama Iqbal Industrial City) offers plots at Rs6-7 million, which makes Sindh uncompetitive in attracting the industry.

In 2012, the government introduced the SEZ law and approved the construction of 12 SEZs, of which four were in Sindh. However, no economic zone has been made fully functional as yet.

Dhabeji was one of the last three SEZs which the federal government decided to include in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and hence it was tasked with development on a fast track.

The other two SEZs were Rashakai Economic Zone in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) and Allama Iqbal Industrial City in Faisalabad.

The Nation

SCCI, Smeda agree to set up CPEC, Investment Facilitation Centre

PESHAWAR - The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and Small & Medium Enterprises Development Authority (Smeda) have agreed to setup a CPEC and Investment Facilitation Centre to resolve business community issues with joint coordination of the relevant government departments and to give boost to industrialization in the province.

The agreement came in a meeting between SCCI President Maqsood Anwar and Smeda General Manager Outreach, Javed Iqbal at the chamber house here on Monday. Senior vice president of the Chamber, Shahid Hussain, executive member, Sherbaz Bilour, former vice president Haris Mufti, Smeda provincial chief, Rashid Aman and others were present in the meeting. Mr Maqsood while speaking on the occasion said that the proposed investment facilitation centre would play pivotal role in resolution of business community issues and also give boost to industrialisation in the province. He said a committee comprising of high officials of the departments concerned and stakeholders from private sectors will be constituted to make the proposed initiative successful.

He furthermore elaborated that a web portal would be launched, which aimed at to direct contact or link with relevant government departments in order to readdress the business community issue amicably and priority basis.

SCCI chief said that all the government lines departments were agreed with the chamber proposed idea of one-window operation facility to accelerate industrialization and resolve the traders' issues with joint coordination. However, he said the focal persons from relevant government departments should be designated along with formation of a committee of high officials to discuss business community issues mutually and to take prompt measures for their

resolution. Mr Iqbal on the occasion agreed with proposals of SCCI president Maqsood and urged the chamber to play its central role to make the proposed initiative successful.

He suggested that MoUs should be signed between all government departments concerned and appointing of focal person. He informed the Smeda in coordination with SCCI will devise a framework to make the proposed initiative successful and will take all relevant government departments on board about this important step.

He said the idea to establish CPEC and Investment Facilitation Centre is good initiative at SCCI level under which issues of business community will be resolved timely and urgent basis.

The News

PPL seeks JV with China for exploration along CPEC routes

KARACHI: State-owned Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) has stepped up efforts to strike joint-venture deals with Chinese firms to capitalize on exploration and production opportunities along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) routes, the company's top official said on Monday.

PPL Managing Director Moin Raza Khan said PPL is seeking joint ventures with Chinese exploration and production companies on blocks along the CPEC routes, which would expedite exploration activities and enable technology transfer.

“We had a meeting in Islamabad 10 days ago, where we proposed joint ventures with Chinese exploration companies,” Khan said at the company's 68th annual general meeting. “If materialized, this would add more value to the company as well as enable technology transfer.”

Currently, PPL is facing liquidity crunch-like situation due to significant rise in its trade debts. The company is, however, designing a work program that would be least affected by the circular debt. Joint ventures with Chinese companies on existing and new blocks are likely to relieve some stress on PPL's liquidity burden.

PPL's trade debts have reached to a historically high level of Rs227 billion in the last fiscal year of 2018/19 compared with Rs143 billion by the end of the previous fiscal year. Low recoveries from customers coupled with higher statutory payments arising from increase in revenues resulted in additional stress on the liquid balances of the company.

“The situation calls for imminent steps to be taken by the government to ease out the situation particularly for public sector exploration and production companies,” Khan said. “The nature of E&P (exploration and production) life cycle requires heavy upfront investment with a longer gestation period. As such liquidity constraints due to circular debt might delay the ongoing exploration and development activities.”

Trade debts include Rs197.65 billion in receivables from oil refineries, power producers and gas distribution companies. The recoverability of the sum is dependent on the decision of the government, including availability of funds.

The board approved final cash dividend of 20 percent on ordinary shares and convertible shares along with 20 percent bonus shares to ordinary shareholders and 10 percent to convertible preference shareholders.

Khan, highlighting PPL's progress and achievements during 2018/19, said the most significant was the highest-ever net profit of Rs61.6 billion along with a record number of 11 discoveries in a year by the company and partner-operated assets.

PPL drilled the first-ever international exploratory well Madain-1 in Iraq. "We have reached near the reservoirs and we will have the good news soon," Khan said.

Khan, who is also the chief executive officer of PPL, emphasised continuing fast-paced exploration, especially in high rewarding frontier basins expanding PPL's portfolio with reputable exploration and production companies along with pilot projects for exploring tight and shale gas potential.

Express News

سی پیک کے تحت کوئٹہ ماس ٹرانزٹ پراجیکٹ روک دیا گیا، پاکستان نے چین کو آگاہ کر دیا

اسلام آباد: سی پیک کا کوئٹہ ماس ٹرانزٹ پراجیکٹ روک دیا گیا ہے جس کے بعد چاروں صوبائی دارالحکومتوں میں یہ منصوبے شدید تاخیر کا شکار ہو گئے ہیں۔

حکومتی ذرائع کے مطابق پاکستان نے رواں ماہ مشترکہ ورکنگ گروپ کے اجلاس میں چین کو اس فیصلے سے آگاہ کر دیا ہے۔ صوبائی حکومت نے یہ منصوبہ روکنے کا فیصلہ اس پری فریڈیلیٹی رپورٹ پر کیا کہ یہ مالی طور پر ناقابل عمل ہے۔ اجلاس کے ریکارڈ کے مطابق بلوچستان حکومت ماس ٹرانزٹ آپشنز پر نظر ثانی کر رہی ہے اور ریل اور بس دونوں آپشنز پر غور کیا جا رہا ہے۔ سیکریٹری مواصلات اور پاکستانی وفد کے سربراہ جو ادر فیتق نے تجویز دی کہ منصوبہ روک دیا جائے اور فریڈیلیٹی سٹڈی، ڈیزائن اور پی سی ون کی تکمیل کے بعد اس پر غور کیا جائے۔

نومبر 2017ء میں پاکستان اور چین نے کوئٹہ، پشاور اور کراچی میں بھی ماس ٹرانزٹ پراجیکٹ منصوبے شروع کرنے پر اتفاق کیا تھا کیونکہ صوبائی حکومتوں نے صرف لاہور میں اورنج لائن میٹرو پراجیکٹ شروع کرنے پر اعتراض کیا تھا۔ پی ٹی آئی حکومت کے برسر اقتدار آنے کے بعد اورنج لائن پراجیکٹ منصوبہ تاخیر کا شکار ہے۔

ذرائع کے مطابق چینی کنٹریکٹرز نے مسائل حل نہ ہونے کی شکایت کی ہے، جس سے منصوبے کی فعالیت متاثر ہو رہی ہے۔ انھوں نے مسائل کی نشاندہی بھی کی تھی، جن میں منصوبے کا سول ورک، بلدیاتی اتصال، آپریشنل فراہمی، دیکھ بھال اور حفاظتی انتظامات شامل ہیں۔ سی پیک کے تحت جاری تمام منصوبوں پر مشترکہ تعاون کمیٹی 5-6 نومبر کو اسلام آباد میں ہونے والے اجلاس میں غور کرے گی۔

اگرچہ کمیٹی نے 2017ء میں صوبائی ماس ٹرانزٹ منصوبے سی پیک کے دائرہ کار میں لانے کا فیصلہ کیا تھا تاہم محدود مالی اور انسانی وسائل کے باعث ان منصوبوں کی راہ میں مشکلات کا سامنا ہے۔ ذرائع کے مطابق ان رکاوٹوں کے باعث دونوں اطراف نے فیصلہ کیا تھا کہ اورنج لائن منصوبہ مکمل کرنے کے بعد دوسرا کوئی منصوبہ شروع کیا جائیگا۔

October 30, 2019

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan can benefit from ‘straw biomass utilization’: Chinese scientist

Beijing: Pakistan, as an agricultural country can manufacture and utilize biochar based fertilizer by using the straw biomass as a raw material to further enhance its agriculture production and protect environment, a Chinese soil scientist said.

Biochar based fertilizer is currently being manufactured in China, where straw is carbonized and then mixed with fertilizers, Dr. Genxing Pan, Nanjing Agricultural University told a delegation of Chinese and foreign media outlets who recently visited a straw biomass utilization project in Ulanhot, a city of China’s Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and gained a general understanding of biochar fertilizer manufacturing process and experienced the magic of how straws of corn and other crops were turned into fertilizer and other by-products.

Explaining the mechanism of biochar and biochar based fertilizer, he said, in this way, straw is returned to the field and recycled, which effectively avoids air pollution caused by straw burning in open fields, and helps improve air quality in the project areas.

Dr. Genxing Pan, a soil scientist, and director at Institute of Resources, Environment and Ecosystem of the University said that biochar-based fertilizers have attracted increased attention because biochar can improve the soil fertility, promote plant growth and crop yield.

The regional countries especially Pakistan, which is also an agricultural country can benefit from the straw biomass utilization to further improve its agricultural produce especially rice.

He opined that the use of biochar based fertilizers can also alleviate problems of soil hardening and reduce the damage caused by chemical fertilizers and thus increase the yield of farmland.

“Biochar based fertilizer enhances nutrition and it has a huge potential to boost global food production and save land and environment besides feeding the increasing population,” he said.

He said that raw materials to produce biochar, including plant residues, wood chips, organic wastes, and poultry manure are widely available.

Dr. Genxing Pan shared that he has visited Pakistan and delivered a lecture in Faisalabad on the use of straw biomass utilization and its positive impact on the soil and environment.

According to Karen Lane, Principal Communications Specialist, ADB, Department of Communication based in Manila who also accompanied the media delegation during the visit informed that the two such projects, financed by Asian Development Bank (ADB) are under construction and scheduled to be in operation in the early part of next year.—APP

Mian Aslam meets with Chinese investors delegation CPEC game-changer, playing key role in progress of Pakistan: Minister

Provincial Industries, Trade, Information and Culture Minister Mian Aslam Iqbal met with a 15 member Chinese investors delegation under the leadership of Director General Mou Jundian from Qingdao Municipal Foreign Affairs Officer at CM office, here on Tuesday.

The delegation leader said that they are ready to extend every possible cooperation in order to bring economic and trade stability between Pakistan and China. He further said that there exists a conducive environment for investment and we want to enhance investment in Punjab.

Provincial Industries and Trade Minister Mian Aslam Iqbal while talking with a delegation said that Pakistan and China enjoy cordial and deep relations since years and economic relations between the two countries have entered into a new era. He said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a game-changer and it is playing an important role in the progress of Pakistan. Punjab government is setting up Special Economic Zones on thousands of acres of land across the province and Chinese companies should make investments over there and we will extend every possible facilitation and cooperation in this regard, he added.

New technical universities are also being established in Punjab and PTI government wants to benefit from the experiences of China in skilled sector, he stated. PTI government has undertaken exemplary steps by providing ease for doing business in the country under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. Owing to this, there is a significant improvement in Pakistani rating, he maintained.

He further said that we have to bring Pakistan at 50th number with regard to providing ease for doing business in the next five years. Obstacles have been removed relating to investment and investors are being provided all facilities under one roof, he added. Mian Aslam Iqbal while talking with media representatives said that the people of Pakistan have got themselves rid of corrupt mafia during elections on 25th July, 2018 and people are standing with Prime Minister Imran Khan under the slogan for change.

Economic indicators have improved due to concrete policies being adopted under the able leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan and it has also been acknowledged by international organizations, he complimented. The financial position of corrupt mafia has worsened after PTI government came into power and they are protesting on the roads for retrieving their financial distresses.

PTI government clinched votes in the name of change and Prime Minister Imran Khan talked in detail about Islamophobia while those who got votes in the name of Islam are doing nothing, he stressed. If such people come for protest along with weapons and sticks and try to cause damage to anything then law will immediately come into action.

CPEC is not dead

During recent months several critics of CPEC, both within and outside Pakistan, have come to claim that the Project is dead and that Pakistan has realized that it was a raw deal for it and therefore, now, wants to extricate itself from the initiative. These critics base their conclusions on the following points:

1. That the Pakistani leadership is not visibly involved in CPEC-related activities and has thus taken a quiet but firm decision to gradually withdraw itself and the country from the project.
2. That China wants to take over Pakistan's natural resources, ports etc. thus leaving both, Pakistan's sovereignty and economy in a severely compromised state.
3. That if CPEC is such a big bonanza why have the numbers pertaining to Pakistan's BoP (Balance of Payments)/FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) not reflected the phenomenon on a grander scale.
4. That the financing and lending arrangements of CPEC are exploitative in their terms and would cripple Pakistan's economy at the time of repayments.
5. That US's aid methodology is less focused on benefiting US economy, in the process, than China's.

This article aims to shed light and examine, dispassionately, these conclusions and the rationale behind them.

First of all, has the Pakistani leadership distanced itself from CPEC and activities related to it? The answer is a resounding no. Though there can be hiccups and India plus Kashmir but the focus on CPEC is being maintained along with other issues. Only on September 13, 2019, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Mukhdum Khusro Bakhtyar chaired the 58th Progress Review Meeting of CPEC projects in Islamabad. Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing, DCPC Dr. Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, Secretary Planning Zafar Hasan, representatives from Chinese enterprises and senior officials from relevant ministries also attended the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing said that CPEC is heading in the right direction adding that CPEC is quite different from other Belt and Road initiatives as this flagship project manifests the longstanding friendship between the two friendly countries and will bring prosperity and progress for Pakistan. During the meeting, various projects of CPEC were discussed in detail one by one.

It was informed that the Gwadar Development Authority, headed by Chief Minister Balochistan, has approved the Gwadar city master plan with some minor modifications. Secretary Communications informed that Multan-Sukkur Motorway will be opened soon for general traffic as the work was almost complete. Planning Minister and the Chinese Ambassador appreciated the pace of work on the East Bay Expressway project. Orange Line Train project and ongoing projects in Gwadar were also deliberated upon in detail.

On August 29, 2019, Joint Working Group (JWG) on Gwadar met in Islamabad. China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) Deputy Director General Mr. Gao jian, PD CPEC Hassan Daud, officials from line ministries, representatives from provincial government of Baluchistan were also present in the meeting.

Secretary Planning Zafar Hasan said that the work on 300 MW coal based power plant will be expedited so that electricity can be provided which is crucial for development of Gwadar. It was also decided that the Joint Cooperation Committee meeting will be held this year in Islamabad in November.

Both sides appreciated the approval of Gwadar Free Zone concessional agreement and it was decided that work on Phase-11 will be expedited. It was informed that five Chinese enterprises have shown interest for investing in Gwadar Free Zone.

It was decided that on the recommendation of government of Baluchistan, the Gwadar Friendship Hospital, Nurses Training Centre and Teaching Hospital will be built. Chinese side stated that in the first phase the hospital will be built and in the second phase the Nursing School and training centre. It was decided that in order to electrify Gwadar Port special provision of solar household projects will be undertaken on priority under socio-economic development plan. Fisherman Training Centre will be incorporated in the vocational training centre. The meeting noted that preparatory work on Gwadar Airport has commenced and work on the project will begin by November this year.

On August 26, 2019, Cabinet Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) met in Islamabad to review progress of various projects under CPEC framework. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Railways Sheikh Rasheed, Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Zaidi, Advisor to PM on Commerce, Textile & Industry Abdul Razzak Dawood, DCPC Dr. Jahanzeb Khan, Secretary Planning Zafar Hasan, Secretaries from different ministries, members Planning Commission and senior officials from provincial governments also attended the meeting.

Secretary Planning gave a detailed presentation to the participants on various projects under CPEC framework. The Committee decided that financing discussion on ML-1 project should be commenced to finalize the mode and PC-1 of the project. The Minister reiterated that it is a very important project under CPEC portfolio and the incumbent Government is committed to fast track it.

And so the list of fervent CPEC related activity involving the Pakistani leadership goes on. There is practically no day when there is no such activity taking place. So the impression being conveyed and mentioned above, that Pakistani leadership is getting itself disengaged from CPEC, is entirely without foundation and is completely baseless.

Similarly the list of CPEC related projects that have already been completed is also worth noting. 2×660MW coal-fired power plants at Port Qasim Karachi; Sahiwal 2×660MW coal-fired power plant, Punjab; Engro Thar Block II 2×330MW coal fired power plant ,TEL 1×330MW Mine

Mouth Lignite Fired Power Project at Thar Block-II, Sindh; Thal Nova 1×330MW Mine Mouth Lignite Fired Power Project at Thar Block-II, Sindh; Hydro China Dawood Wind Farm Gharo, Thatta, Sindh; UEP Wind Farm Jhimpir, Thatta, Sindh; Sachal Wind Farm Jhimpir, Thatta ; Three Gorges Second Wind Power Project and Three Gorges Third Wind Power Project, Thatta; CPHGC 1,320MW Coal-fired Power Plant, Hub, Balochistan; Cross Border Optical Fibre Cable (length 820 km) and several other projects are already complete and operational. And about three dozen other projects are at various stages of progress and/or construction.

China's rise as an economic super power, starting from the early 90s, entailed following a multipronged and multi-dimensional strategy on several policy fronts. The strategy has had brilliant results, known to all, lifting hundreds of millions of its citizens out of poverty as a result. Increasing the global competitiveness of its economy was one of the cornerstones of the policy that made all of this possible. China's exports rose from \$122bn in 1995 to \$2.6trn in 2018, as a result. But before the exports could rise, the development of energy and infrastructure had to take place first. The process eventually led to millions being pulled out of poverty; CPEC has a similar, common sense, natural design that is evident in the pattern of the completion of projects.

Now coming to the point of impact of investment on Pakistan's FDI/BOP and foreign exchange levels the following point needs to be noted and understood.

CPEC's implementation is spread over four phases time wise and a similar number of categories, namely, (i) Early Harvest pertaining roughly to 2015-2020. Most of the projects in Early Harvest relate to the energy sector and almost 70% of these have already been completed. The rest are to be completed by the end of the next year. This has contributed enormously towards eliminating load shedding that had an extremely adverse effect on industrial growth.(ii) Short Term Projects, to be completed up to 2022. These include mainly roads, Gwadar's development, Optic fibre – a substantial part of which has already been completed. Hydel and coal mining projects are also included in this category. (iii) Medium Term Projects are to be concluded up to 2025. These include railways and Industrial zones. (iv) Long Term Projects include Industrial Zones, Agricultural and Tourism sectors' development and will be concluded till 2030.

The \$45bn figure widely quoted in the press is to be spent in the categories mentioned above till 2030. That translates into an annual outlay of \$3bn which expressed in percentage terms is less than 1 percent of \$375bn economy of Pakistan and hence the less than palpable effect in the national accounting figures. This also underscores the importance of not being too euphoric or expecting immediate results from CPEC. CPEC surely is a game changer but its results will take their own sweet time to exhibit and trickle down.

Another objection regarding CPEC is surrender of territory, read Gwadar, at terms that tantamount to surrender of territory or sovereignty. The truth is that Gwadar has been offered to China on the same terms as were offered to Port of Singapore Authority (PSA) in 2007 i.e. for a 40 year lease on BOT basis. PSA could not deliver and in 2013 the lease agreement for 40 years was signed with China Overseas Ports Holding Company Limited.

The fourth major objection about CPEC relates to repayment of Chinese debt and the supposedly crippling effect of it. One needs to note that the maximum effect of repayments, repatriation of profits and CPEC related imports, in any single year, would be around \$5bn and would be felt around 2024/2025 after which it would gradually wane. Our exports around that time are estimated to be at \$45bn at least, given the positive impact of completed CPEC projects by then. It, therefore, would be nothing catastrophic and would easily be absorbed.

The last objection is about Chinese money, grants and loans, being spent to buy machinery from China to complete CPEC projects. Do the analysts really mean this as a serious objection? Does Pakistan manufacture that machinery? Or is it expected that China should buy the machinery from the US, with which it has a trade surplus which in the first half of 2019 was \$140bn! Moreover, USAid's methods of aid usage are exactly the same – every conceivable service or good that can be acquired from the US is acquired from there thereby using up a large portion of aid within the donor country.

To be fair to all, it needs to be said that CPEC genuinely makes the US and India nervous. For US a former ally – Pakistan – that it used to deal with in a very transactional manner is going to spin out of its orbit. On the other hand India, a former USSR ally, that feels encircled by China has become quite close to the US. While Russia and China have been steadily coming close since 1991 and cooperate with each other in almost all critical areas. So to say the least the global alignments have completely changed since the end of the cold war. A new economic super power in the form of China has risen and is shaping the environment in its surroundings as well as globally – the objections to CPEC, whether well founded or not, are but natural and should be taken in stride!

The Nation

Belt and Road Initiative game changer for Pakistan: Shaukat Aziz

BEIJING - Former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has said that Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by Chinese President Xi Jinping has brought tangible benefits to participating countries and it is a game changer for countries like Pakistan. Addressing at a parallel forum of the fourth Understanding China Conference opened in southern Chinese city of Guangzhou, he said, "BRI is a game-changer for countries like Pakistan." "Thanks to the BRI, we have a new port and domestic trains have also been improved.

The initiative comes with development in areas including infrastructure, financing and after-sales service," he said, adding that hundreds of people have found jobs because of the BRI and more ships have started to come to our country. So far, China has signed cooperation documents with more than 160 countries and international organizations on the initiative. With the fast growth of the BRI, China has boosted market-oriented cooperation with relevant countries to upgrade their industrial structure.

From 2013 to 2018, the trade volume between China and other countries along the Belt and Road surpassed 6 trillion US dollars and China's investment in those countries exceeded 90 billion dollars. "Though proposed by China, the opportunities and achievements brought by the BRI are shared by the world," said Zhao Ai, executive vice president of the China Society of Economic Reform. "The cooperation among BRI countries has opened up new space for world economic growth, built a new platform for international trade and investment and contributed to the improvement of the global governance system," he said.

The News

JCC of CPEC meeting on November 6

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to make fresh request to China for getting lucrative package of over \$8.5 billion for construction of much-awaited railways Mainline (ML-1) from Peshawar to Karachi.

In the upcoming Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) meeting under much-trumpeted China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) scheduled to be held here in Islamabad on November 6, 2019, Pakistan will ask China to provide phased wise financing for ML-1 for period of 10 to 15 years with spread over period of 30 years and with minimum interest rate.

So Islamabad could only move ahead for construction of ML-1 with lenient conditions despite having remained under the IMF arrangement. Without soft conditions for financing from China, the ML-1 financing will become difficult when Pakistan is currently under the IMF programme.

Pakistan would take up different projects including moving towards initiation of financing modalities for ML-1, financing of Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) after completion on pattern of Orange Line project for Lahore, mutual cooperation in agriculture sector with the purpose to promote research, announcing date of groundbreaking of Rashakai near Nowshera (KP) and then second SEZ at Dahbiji in Sindh. China has also decided to provide 20,000 scholarships for Pakistani students for studying into Chinese universities each year over next three years.

In an exclusive talk with The News here at office, Secretary Ministry of Planning Zafar Hasan shared details about upcoming JCC under CPEC mechanism and said that Chinese delegation led by Chairman NDRC along with delegation would reach Pakistan on November 3 and then Chinese delegation would visit Gwadar to inaugurate 300 megawatt coal power plant. He said that Pakistan would request China to provide financing for ML-1 that could also become feasible under the IMF programme. He said the PC-1 for the construction of ML-1 was not yet approved but now the Planning Commission and Ministry of Railways decided to accelerate the process of approving this project in phased manner. The PC-1 for ML-1, he said, would be submitted again for getting approval from different forums.

Earlier, the Ministry of Railways had submitted PC-1 for ML-1 before the CDWP but it did not get approval because of certain observations made over the PC-1 for first phase with estimated cost of around \$2.6 billion.

The government, he said, was going to request China to extend loan for extended period with spread over of 30 years and with minimum interest rates. He said that Pakistan also decided to seek financing for construction of KCR as the Orange Line Project was completed in Lahore so Sindh project should also be financed through this pattern. He said that Gwadar projects including construction of hospital, vocational training center and additional financing for Eastbay Expressways as China would provide loan on zero interest rate.

The Secretary Planning said that Pakistan and China would sign agreement for promoting cooperation in areas of agriculture research as National Agriculture Research Council (NARC) Pakistan and Chinese side would establish institutional cooperation to promote agriculture sector.

October 31, 2019

Business Recorder

Survey for Peshawar-DIK expressway to complete by January 2020: CM

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mahmood Khan Wednesday said the survey for Peshawar-DIK Expressway would be completed by January next year.

Presiding over a high level review meeting about key projects for the province, the chief minister said consultant for the mega project has been activated and hopefully survey of the said expressway would be completed by January 2020.

He said trade and business activities would be accelerated with construction of the mega project.

He also directed identification of land for Swat Economic Zone and completion of Mohmand Marble City soon.

Dawn News

Pakistan among 54 nations praising China's human rights records

China's treatment of ethnic Uighurs in Xinjiang province came under debate at the United Nations on Tuesday, with 54 nations praising Beijing's "remarkable achievements in the field of human rights" but 23 states assailing its record.

It all began when the 23 nations mostly western backed a British statement condemning Beijing's track record.

However, China's allies countered the move with a statement of their own that won even broader support, with 54 states supporting a Belarus text that heaped effusive praise on Beijing. They included Pakistan, Russia, Egypt, Bolivia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Serbia.

The duelling statements at the UN General Assembly are non-binding, but highlight the divide on China's human rights record particularly as Beijing moves to flex its diplomatic and economic clout abroad.

Rights groups claim more than one million Uighurs and other mostly Muslim ethnic minorities have been rounded up in internment camps in Xinjiang. After initially denying their existence, Beijing now defends the camps as “vocational education centres” that are necessary to counter religious extremism and terrorism.

Britain’s UN statement expressed concerns “regarding credible reports of mass detention; efforts to restrict cultural and religious practices; mass surveillance disproportionately targeting ethnic Uighurs; and other human rights violations and abuses”.

“The Chinese government should urgently (refrain) from the arbitrary detention of Uighurs and members of other Muslim communities,” it said. Countries backing it included the United States, Germany, France, Canada, Japan and New Zealand.

In contrast, the statement from Belarus praised Beijing’s human rights record that won support from over 50 nations. “We commend China’s remarkable achievements in the field of human rights by adhering to the people-centered development philosophy and protecting and promoting human rights through development,” the statement said.

“We also appreciate China’s contributions to the international human rights cause,” it added.

Two Chinese Firms of sanitation warned

The city administration on Wednesday warned that action would be taken against two Chinese companies tasked with disposal of solid waste in districts West and Malir as per law if they failed to fulfill their responsibilities.

Officials said that the warning to the firms was issued in a meeting held to review the state of cleanliness in the city with Karachi Commissioner Iftikhar Shallwani in the chair.

They said that the meeting participants also discussed the performance of the Chinese companies in the cleanliness campaign carried out by the provincial government.

The sources said that managing director of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) Asif Ikram, all deputy commissioners and all municipal commissioners of the district municipal committees and representatives of the both the Chinese firms were present in the meeting.

They said that the SSWMB MD and DCs of South, East and Malir briefed the commissioner about the non-implementation of the contract saying that the companies were not fulfilling responsibilities regarding garbage lifting and disposal in the districts.

The sources said that the commissioner asked the representatives of the Chinese companies to follow the contract agreement and make the three districts clean to the satisfaction of citizens with close coordination of the district administration and the SSWMB officials.

Speaking to Dawn, the commissioner said that the chief minister had issued the directives to the city administration to ensure the implementation of the contract made with the Chinese companies.

“The CM wants the city clean and the system of cleanliness in the city to be improved.”

He said that the meeting also showed dissatisfaction over the reply of the Chinese companies pointing out that they failed to perform their responsibilities of keeping the roads, streets, neighborhoods and pavements clean.

Nawaiwaqt

5 اگست کے اقدام کے بعد چین نے پاکستان کے موقف کا ساتھ دیا، فخر امام

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار + نیوز رپورٹر) چیئر مین کشمیر کمیٹی سید فخر امام نے کہا کہ چین اور پاکستان کے تعلقات جدید دنیا کیلئے ایک ماڈل ہیں، پاک۔ چین تعلقات طویل المدتی پائیدار تعلقات کا بہترین نمونہ ہیں، پاکستان اور چین متعدد دہائیوں کی شجعوں میں تعلقات کو مزید بڑھا سکتے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ 5 اگست کے اقدام کے بعد چین نے عالمی سطح پر ہمیشہ کی طرح پاکستان کے موقف کا ساتھ دیا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ چین ہر مشکل گھڑی میں پاکستان کے ساتھ کھڑا ہے، پاکستان اور پاکستانی عوام کی طرف سے چین کی حکومت اور عوام کا شکریہ ادا کرتے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ وزیر اعظم عمران خان زرعی معیشت کی ترقی پر خصوصی توجہ دے رہے ہیں، ہمارے جی ڈی پی کا 40 فیصد براہ راست زرعی معیشت سے جڑا ہے، چین کی سائنس و ٹیکنالوجی میں ترقی کو استعمال کر کے پاکستان اپنی زرعی پیداوار کو کئی گنا بڑھا سکتا ہے۔ وفاقی وزیر برائے قومی غذائی تحفظ و زرعی تحقیق صاحبزادہ محمد محبوب سلطان نے کہا کہ چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری منصوبہ (سی پیک) دونوں ملکوں کے مابین تعاون کی روشن مثال ہے، موجودہ حکومت زراعت کے شعبہ کو ترقی دے کر عوام کا معیار زندگی بلند کرنا چاہتی ہے، زرعی شعبہ کی ترقی و بہتری کیلئے متعدد اقدامات اٹھائے گئے ہیں جن کے مثبت نتائج سامنے آرہے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ پاکستان اور چین زرعی شعبہ میں تعاون کو فروغ دے رہے ہیں، زرعی شعبہ میں جدید ٹیکنالوجی کو فروغ دے کر نہ صرف پیداوار میں اضافہ کیا جاسکتا ہے بلکہ غربت میں بھی کمی لائی جاسکتی ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ چین اور پاکستان زراعت کے شعبہ میں تعاون کو نئی بلندیوں تک لے جائیں گے، پاکستان اور چین کے درمیان ہونے والا ایم او یو دونوں ملکوں کے درمیان زراعت میں ادارہ جاتی سطح پر تعاون کی راہ کا تعین کرتا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری سے خطہ میں ترقی کے نئے دور کا آغاز ہوا ہے، سی پیک دونوں ملکوں کے تعاون دے کر عوام کا معیار زندگی بلند کرنا چاہتی ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری سے خطہ میں ترقی کے نئے دور کا آغاز ہوا ہے، سی پیک دونوں ملکوں کے تعاون کی روشن مثال ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ پاکستان اور چین کا نجی شعبہ جو اسٹو پیڈ وینچر قائم کر سکتا ہے، حکومت اس سلسلہ میں ہر طرح کا تعاون کرے گی۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ زرعی تعاون فورم سے ایک دوسرے کے تجربات سے استفادہ کرنے اور مختلف شعبوں میں تعاون بڑھانے کا ایک موقع ہے۔ اس موقع پر سیکرٹری قومی غذائی تحفظ و تحقیق ڈاکٹر محمد ہاشم پوپلزی نے کہا کہ یہ فورم دونوں ملکوں کے درمیان زراعت کے شعبہ میں تعاون کے مواقع کی نشاندہی کرے گا۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ پاکستان قدرتی وسائل سے مالا مال ہے جبکہ چین سرمایہ اور تکنیکی تجربے سے مالا مال ہے، دونوں ملک ایک دوسرے کے تجربات اور صلاحیت سے فائدہ اٹھا سکتے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ فورم میں چینی انجینئرنگ کارپوریشن کا خیر مقدم کرتے ہیں جس سے زرعی شعبہ میں تعاون کے نئے دور کا آغاز ہوگا، فورم کا انعقاد دونوں ممالک کی قیادتوں کے وٹن کا عکاس ہے۔