



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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December 16, 2019

Business Recorder

Thar block VI included in CPEC: minister

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Energy Imtiaz Ahmed Shaikh has said that block VI of Thar coal has huge potential to produce gas, urea/fertilizer and liquid fuel (diesel).

The minister said that owing to this reason Thar block VI had been included in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

He said this while talking to Naheed Memon, Chief Executive Officer of UK-based Company Oracle, who called on him to discuss the energy related issues specifically about Thar block VI. Shaikh said that the Sindh government had intended to initiate Thar Coal Block-VI as a national strategic project under the CPEC to develop coal mine, set up a 1,320 MW coal-fired power project, produce gas, urea and diesel.

Block-VI of Thar Coal had estimated total coal reserves of 1.4 billion tones. Shaikh said that recently with the efforts of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, Thar Block VI had been included as a potential block for coal to gas to urea/fertilizer production in 9th joint coordination committee (JCC) meeting on CPEC held on 5th Nov 2019.

During the meeting, both sides appreciated the concept to include Thar Block VI for coal gasification to fertilizer projects under CPEC and desired to undertake a feasibility study for evaluation.

Speaking on the occasion, CEO Oracle Naheed Memon said that Oracle Power was a company incorporated in the United Kingdom and quoted on London Stock Exchange. She said that with active support of the Government of Sindh our consortium under the joint development agreement (JDA) intended to develop Thar block VI as a National strategic asset for Pakistan beyond power generation. She said that with the adequate expansion of coal mine the production of urea could be pioneered through cheaper surface gasification and liquids including diesel at almost one third of the existing price.

Imtiaz Ahmed Shaikh hoped that this endeavor of the Sindh government would lessen the forex pressure on National exchequer. Block VI is located in the centre of the coalfield and covers an area of 66.1 square kilometers. The site has been extensively drilled and coal samples recovered and tested to international standards.

Chinese expert terms metro train a boon for Pakistan's economy

BEIJING: The first ever mass rapid transit train in Lahore will help Pakistan to better address its growing demand for public transportation, a Chinese expert said.

The Orange Line Metro Train was put through its first test run last week after the completion of the physical infrastructure stage of the project. The move is considered to be a major step forward under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Zhou Rong, a senior research fellow at the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Renmin University of China told Global Times that the addition of a first-rate, modern public transit service will be a major boon to Pakistan economy and people.

In Punjab, there are over 100 million people and Lahore has over 10 million residents, so public transportation has become a rising issue.

Addressing increasingly serious traffic congestion at an affordable cost will be a key, Zhou said. The test run was made across Lahore via a 25-kilometer route. There are 26 stations including 24 elevated stops and two underground stations. It is expected to cut travel time by more than 70 percent. The expert described the project as a token of China-Pakistan friendship and a project that provides a high-class transportation service of international standards.

Zhou said the system will bring benefits to commuters and office workers in the city while the roomier train compartment provides ready access to an area exclusively for women.

Zhou predicted the tickets for such a service will be priced at an affordable level to allow the maximum number of citizens to use it. Now into its sixth year, the focus of CPEC has shifted from addressing Pakistan's energy shortage woes to public transportation.

"The rolling out of an electrified subway system showed that Pakistan's energy issues are being effectively addressed," Zhou added.

The system will have a total of 27 sets of energy-saving electric trains, with airconditioned cabins and an operating speed of 80km per hour.

It is expected to transport 250,000 passengers daily when it is fully operational in the first half of 2020. The CPEC and is built by a joint venture of China Railway Corporation and China North Industries Corporation.

Dawn News

Successful clinical trial of Chinese medicine lauded

Pakistani and Chinese experts have described the successful clinical trial of the first traditional Chinese medicine in Pakistan as a revolutionary step in the country's healthcare system, hoping that the herb-based medicine will be an alternative to antibiotics for chronic bronchitis patients.

The trial was conducted by the Centre for Bioequivalence Studies and Clinical Research, part of Dr Panjwani Centre for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research at Karachi University.

At a press conference held on Saturday, Prof Raza Shah said that the efficacy of Yinhuang Qingfei capsules was tested on 212 patients with acute chronic bronchitis.

According to Chinese officials, the efficacy and safety of the medicine had been evaluated by pharmacodynamics, toxicology, phase II and III clinical studies and approved to be listed in China in 2002.

The medicine has been widely used in clinical practice, and its curative effect is significant. According to experts, current treatments such as bronchodilators, steroids and leukotriene receptor antagonists can relieve some of the main symptoms of chronic bronchitis; the treatments based on these drugs often cause a series of adverse reactions.

East, West and CPEC

ISLAMABAD claims to be on the same page with Beijing as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) enters its second phase. It dismisses the perception that the ongoing arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is being used by the West to pressure Pakistan into backtracking from sealed deals with the superpower of the East under a grand bilateral partnership framework.

Early last week, a media report hinted at simmering discontent in China over Pakistan's demands for transparency in CPEC contracts and a quiet campaign to malign Beijing.

It was reported that China's displeasure with Pakistan has mounted to a level where it has threatened to scrap all contracts and leave the country if the government fails at course correction. The report has not been contested by either side, ie China or Pakistan, to date.

Executives of overseas companies declined to comment on the issue. On the other hand, local business leaders blamed a "lethargic and inexperienced" economic team for the bitterness surrounding CPEC. "Prime Minister Imran Khan is looking forward to the second phase of CPEC to kick start the growth through Chinese support for the social sector, industry and agriculture. The intent is there but the problem is in translating it to an actionable strategy," commented a Karachi-based businessman who spends a better part of his week in Islamabad these days.

CPEC watchers in Pakistan have persistently been highlighting the challenges of policy balancing in the post-IMF deal period because of tensions between the United States and China, spilling over into a trade war.

The United States and other Western nations did not hide their discomfort with CPEC. Around \$50 billion contracts were announced under CPEC during the previous government. Out of this, projects worth \$28bn have matured.

'The West may frown to its heart's content on our deep ties with China, but it is clear that these ties are not up for bargain'

Ignoring economic compulsions, the West detests Pakistan drifting closer to China. The sentiments were shared at multiple forums in their engagements with the government and other stakeholders in the country.

The issue came to the fore when Pakistan was negotiating a bailout package with the IMF. The lenders raised concerns on the possibility of money loaned directed to settle credit liabilities of China under CPEC. They stopped short of making IMF support conditional on scaling down Chinese involvement in Pakistan's economy.

In July, the IMF's executive board approved a 39-month Extended Fund Facility for Pakistan for an amount of around \$6 billion. There was already some discussion over the transparency of CPEC in the country and the real dividends it would bring to the economy. The position was also taken by some leaders of the PTI government. However, it is hard to say if the objections were primarily politically motivated or the country's economic interest was at the heart of the opposition.

It did not, however, take the PTI government long time to grasp the value of massive Chinese investment in power and infrastructure projects. It realized the support that China has already garnered in business circles on the strength of completed projects worth \$28bn. Besides, political dimensions of ties with China in the wake of a provocative stance taken by India explains why the PTI leadership reacted the way it did to comments by Alice Wells, the principal deputy assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asia at the US Department of State.

In a speech last month, the top US diplomat for South Asia warned that the multibillion-dollar CPEC project would push Pakistan deeper into an already stifling debt burden, foster corruption and repatriate jobs and profits to China.

However, Planning Minister Asad Umar defended not just ties with China but also CPEC, and rejected the notion that the mega project has increased debt burden of the country in dramatic proportions. He stated that the loan component of the massive investment is barely \$4.9bn, which is a tiny portion of the \$74bn total public debt that Pakistan owes to global lenders.

Attempts were made to secure comments from leaders of the government's economic team on the reported threat by China, but they did not wish to come on record. In private, they did accept that China is not happy with the pace of progress on CPEC under the current government, but in their opinion the convergence of interests of two nations is too strong for a major setback on the CPEC front.

"The United States and other Western nations may frown to their heart's content on our deep ties with China, but it is clear that these ties are not up for bargain," a senior member of the government's economic team said. "For us, China has proven times and again to be the most dependable ally and we will not trade this relationship of trust for anything."

Retired Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa, recently appointed the head of CPEC Authority, was approached but he was not inclined to share his thoughts on the threat of rollback at this point.

Dr Liaqat Ali Shah, CPEC's Project Director in the Planning Commission, termed the news item (mentioned earlier in this article) baseless without stating reasons for not contesting it publicly. "There are no second thoughts on CPEC in Islamabad or Beijing. We are on the same page. The

negotiations are in progress with China on an incentive package for investors in special economic zones and Gwadar. We are hoping for groundbreaking at multiple locations of special economic zones over the next few weeks and months,” he asserted.

“The second phase of CPEC is focused on a business-to-business engagement under a broad umbrella against government-to-government deals that were the hallmark of the first phase of CPEC, except for the Main Line-1 (Karachi-Lahore-Peshawar) Railway Line project. The fact is that China has not ruled out the possibility of deferring the loan repayment schedule beyond 2022 if Pakistan’s fiscal issues persist,” he told Dawn by phone.

Mushahid Hussain, a politician and an active advocate of CPEC, was in China but promised to share his views. His response did not reach *Dawn* until the filing of this report.

Shazia Syed, CEO of Unilever and the president of the Overseas Chamber of Commerce and Industry, declined comment, stating: “It’s too early to take a position.”

Ehsan Malik, CEO of Pakistan Business Council, an advocacy platform of the big business, said the council “has been advocating an exchange of information (EOI) with not just China but all major trading partners. In the absence of EOI, under-invoicing and misdeclaration are rampant. We understand that China agreed to it earlier. The government should pursue it, notwithstanding any threats on CPEC, which we believe are exaggerated.”

President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Daru Khan Achakzai was all supportive of CPEC, but he prayed for the de-politicization of the project, which in his view benefits Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and ignores Sindh and Balochistan. “I don’t think Pakistan can afford to annoy China in this regionally hostile environment,” he said.

He was pinning his hopes on former finance minister Asad Umar, who has recently assumed the charge of planning minister to remove bottlenecks and make CPEC more broad-based, with benefits of the megaproject equitably shared between all provinces.

Pak-China FTA: the same old story

Just because we live in Naya Pakistan doesn’t mean that the bumbling way of negotiating trade agreements is a thing of the past. Phase II of the Pak-China Free Trade Agreement is a testament to that.

There seemed to be a general consensus that trade agreements have not done any favour to Pakistan’s current account deficit the \$2.4 billion trade deficit with China the year before the implementation of the agreement has increased more than threefold to over \$12bn.

The second phase kicks off with China “immediately eliminating tariffs on 313 priority tariff lines of Pakistan’s export interest,” states the Ministry of Commerce website. However, a closer look at the tariff lines shows that there will most probably be a small, if any, impact on Pakistan’s exports since we do not have any exports for nearly half of the goods.

These include products like parts of motor vehicles, refrigerators and air conditioners that make up 151 of the 313 tariff lines that Pakistan does not have domestic production for export.

Textiles

Among the products that we do export and are now exempted from tariffs imposed by China, textiles top the list unsurprisingly. But it is unlikely to boost local value-added production in the sector.

In 2018, for example, Pakistan exported \$1.5bn worth of male cotton ensembles, according to data from the International Trade Centre. However, China's corresponding imports from the world were about \$500 million, leaving little room for Pakistan to export.

There had been some noise about Beijing offering unilateral concessions against the background of the CPEC. However, those hopes did not materialize.

“We don't believe we will be successful in exporting as they have a surplus in every category. They already export ready-made apparel and are unlikely to import from us,” said a source in the know. “Our raw material exports will increase, which will benefit us in the short run, but not in the long term. In fact, exporting yarn will impact the domestic value-added sector.”

Meat and poultry

Lack of formal and consistent supply chains makes exports of meat and poultry in the short to medium term unlikely. While the removal of tariffs acts as an incentive to increase exports, there are significant challenges along the production process that make it difficult for stakeholders to benefit from it.

The wheat price determines the price of corn which, in turn, makes poultry's feed more expensive. The cost of feed is 80 per cent of the cost of raising a chicken. In the last six months, feed prices have increased four times whereas poultry prices have come down because of overproduction. Hence, the sector is making a loss. Currently, chicken is cheaper than tomatoes.

The second phase of the trade pact will have no substantial impact on our exports to China

The excess capacity cannot be used to export since the required continuous surplus is lacking. Rather the sector is stuck in a cycle of overproduction followed by a decline in the number of fowl available. While there is potential in meat exports, there is neither capacity nor a quality standard to ensure international demand. Without beef genetic intervention in the country, the possibility of meat exports is bleak.

“Till there are import tariffs on the raw materials required by the poultry sector and its value-added products, exports will not be possible,” said a source in the poultry association. “We import vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and vaccines, all of which have heavy duties that make us internationally uncompetitive.”

Sesame seeds

Kudos is due to policymakers for taking notice of the nascent edible oilseed sector. A study titled “Prospects of Oilseeds in Pakistan” by the Ayub Agricultural Research Institute identifies sesame seeds as one of the oilseeds that have good export potential. In 2018-19, exports grew to Rs9.6bn from Rs3.6bn the year before. And China is one of its export destinations, along with Korea, Japan and the Middle East.

While the trend is encouraging, stakeholders within the sector are skeptical whether it will result in a significant increase in exports. “Pakistan is not the only country that has been extended zero-rated tariffs the decrease will not have much of an impact on its exports,” said a source from the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council.

Another source pointed out the volatility of the sector within Pakistan. “The yield of the current crop of sesame seeds has declined drastically to about 25pc of what it had been previously. The exporters who compromised on prices and continued operations ended up incurring losses,” said a sesame seed oil extractor.

Similar to these sectors, others on the zero-rated list of tariffs have little or no potential for an increase in exports. Previously, there had been some noise of China offering unilateral concessions against the background of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. However, those hopes did not materialize and Pakistan will be lowering its tariffs over time that poses the possibility, if not the probability, of a further deteriorating trade balance.

It appears that despite the rhetoric of the current policymakers moving in a better direction, mistakes of the past will continue to be repeated.

Pakistan Observer

Ample trade opportunities for Chinese businessmen in Pakistan: PIAF

Chairman Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) Mian Nauman Kabir on Sunday observed that Pakistan offers ample trade opportunities for Chinese businessmen in almost all the sectors or sub-sectors of economy to become closest trading partner of China. While talking to Consul General of China in Lahore Long Dingbin along with the PIAF delegation here at Chinese Consulate, Mian Nuaman Kabir said that in the context of ongoing project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the importance of private to private contacts had mounted, and in this scenario, role of trade and industrial associations has widened. He mentioned that Lahore has a special significance being the hub of business activities in Punjab. Both public and private sector organizations were striving hard to fully exploit trade and investment potential of Punjab in collaboration with foreign investors, he said and added that China was first choice for Pakistani businessmen to join hands for joint ventures. The Chairman PIAF appreciated the Chinese Consulate for opening up the first visa application service center in Lahore recently to facilitate applicants wishing to visit the country. He called it a landmark step, as earlier residents of Lahore had to travel to Islamabad to apply for a visa to China. This

new place will provide enormous relief to businessmen and visitors. Lahore is an important city and the new hub of economic activity in Punjab, he added. Mian Nauman Kabir said that Pakistan is looking Chinese businessmen for making joint efforts aimed at boosting bilateral trade and economic relations.

PIAF chairman, who is also former LCCI senior vice chairman, hoped the state-level cooperation between two countries would bring greater fortune to both. He said that status of two-way trade was bound to improve in a decade or so because once the CPEC project became fully functional, a win-win situation would take place for Pakistan and China. In the meantime, we need to interact on regular basis for exploring avenues for trade expansion and opportunities for investments, he added. He said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor promises greater fortunes for Pakistan and it would certainly prove to be a game-changer. Mian Nauman Kabir said that Pakistan and China, being geo-political partners, had very cordial relations.

The News

China rolls out guideline for foreign investment

ISLAMABAD: China has rolled out a guideline for foreign investment that focuses on safeguarding national treatment of foreign-funded enterprises and addresses specific issues of concern. China has banned the use of administrative measures to force foreign investors or enterprises to transfer technology.

In a major economic guideline initiative, China will continue to cut the negative list for foreign investment access in national and pilot free trade zones as a start and eliminate restrictions that are not on the negative list.

According to sources, China will accelerate opening-up of the financial sector and optimize foreign investment policies for automobiles. Second, China will optimize scientific and technological innovation services for foreign-invested enterprises; improve construction of pilot free trade zones. Third, China will lower the cost of cross-border capital use, make it easier for foreigners to work in China, and optimize the approval process for land use in foreign-funded projects. Fourth, to protect the legitimate rights and interests of foreign investors, China will fully implement the foreign investment law, establish and improve institutions for accepting complaints. The guideline called for respect for the market value of the IPR and intensified efforts to crack down on malicious and repetitive IPR infringements.

China has been working to set up a punitive compensation system and an IPR credit system substantially raising the cost of IPR infringements. One dishonest behavior in the field of IPR will result in restrictions at every turn. China bans the use of administrative measures to force foreign investors or enterprises to transfer technology. Administrative organs and their staff should strictly keep any business secrets of foreign investors. The guideline urges local governments to ensure equality for both domestic and foreign companies to participate in

standardization work, encouraging foreign enterprises to contribute to setting standards in medical equipment, food, medicine and information products, to increase industrial standards.

To create a fair government procurement system, the guideline requires all local governments and departments to not discriminate against foreign-funded enterprises. They should not restrict ownership, organization, equity structure or investor country, or service brands of suppliers, in government procurement.

If foreign-funded enterprises are not treated equally, they can raise complaints with the procurer, and if the procurer fails to give a reply within the time limit, or if the supplier is dissatisfied with the reply, they can file a complaint with the financial department at the same level. Foreign-funded enterprises that do not participate in government procurement can also report to the Ministry of Finance if they find unfair practices.

December 17, 2019

Business Recorder

Pak-China FTA: Jury's out!

The second-phase of the Pakistan-China FTA is due to be implemented in t minus 14 days and the official word from Prime Minister's Advisor for Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood is that the FTA would generate an additional \$500 million in export dollars in the first year. The agreement is a full 10 year deal with both countries eliminating tariffs to zero by 2030 across 6000-8000 tariff lines (at 8-digit HS code) and China eliminating tariffs on Pakistani exports across some 313 priority tariff lines from day-1. Pause for applause? Let's reserve judgment.

Based on comparable trade numbers from International Trade Center's data portal, the 313 tariff lines across which Pakistan enjoys zero duty access in China immediately does not seem to be a carefully curated list. In fact, it contains items which Pakistan has never exported to the world ever before. Such items are 48 percent that makes up the entire 313 item list. If Pakistan has never exported nearly half the items anywhere in the world, these items are unexplored. Will the sudden concession make them competitive? Does Pakistan even have the capability to produce and export these items? Did the industry contribute to creating this list, because after all, it is the industry that will be making these "exportable" products?

In addition, 73 percent of this priority list contains items which Pakistan has never exported to China. Let's assume that the new concessions would make these 230 products more attractive in the Chinese market. But the curious thing is: of the \$867 million total Pakistani exports to China across 313 tariff lines (in 2018), nearly 70 percent of that amount comes from exporting just one product in that offer list (HS 52051200: uncombed cotton yarn). Another curious observation: the top 24 items in the list (by dollar value) consist of only cotton and value-added textile products (aside from one item: cement). Of total exports to the world across these 313 items,

these 24 items took up 81 percent of the share. In short: Pakistan is barely exporting these products (read more: “313 grains of salt: Pakistan-China FTA” May 24, 2019)

A last quick observation is that the big ticket items in the list where China is actively and heavily importing from the world are products Pakistan has little to no experience exporting to the world aside from the aforementioned cotton yarn product. Sure, it is definitely possible that due to these concessions Pakistan will be able to export many of these items which include automotive parts, home appliances and electronic items including fans and air conditioners. The deal with China was to give Pakistan concessions along the lines of ASEAN countries so that Pakistan will be at par with them. But, even if we ignore that Pakistan has never exported so many of these products where China has given Pakistan full market accesses will Pakistan gain parity with just that?

Recall in the first phase of the agreement, Pakistan had zero-rated duty across nearly 3000 products, of which 95 percent were items where Pakistan never exported in throughout the five years the agreement remained operational. That’s a big share to swallow. It’s true that not all products are exportable in any given FTA around the world. But consider the other side of the picture. In the same agreement, Pakistan offered China zero-rates concessions on about 2500 products. China was able to utilize 55 percent of this deal i.e. it exported across 1332 products. Many of these products were those that China had never exported to Pakistan, so the possibility of Pakistani exports growing in products it has never exported in exist, though China and Pakistan are two dramatically different countries with different knowledge base and production possibilities.

One could hope that this time, the Ministry of Commerce negotiated a better deal by having those products included which Pakistan has domestic capabilities in, or there is some optimism that it would spur new investment inflows into local production. The experience from Phase-I reveals that competitiveness cannot be developed overnight with just market access. For starters, it will take into account competitors’ cost efficiency, compared to Pakistan’s input costs. Even at zero-rate, price parity may not be possible for Pakistani manufacturers at their current level of efficiencies. In addition, if the concessions spur new production avenues, let’s not forget economies of scale come with volumes. Unless Chinese companies and importers take out large contracts, Pakistani manufacturers cannot compete with established manufacturers in other Asian countries. That will take time. But if the deal lasts a decade, it seems time is something we can spare.

China’s role in power sector highlighted

LAHORE: Deputy Counsel General of China Peng Zhengwu has said that China is extending full support to Pakistan and power plants based on technology being used in Beijing have been installed here for resolving energy crisis.

He was addressing a seminar organized by Punjab University Pakistan Study Centre here on Monday. Deputy Consul General of China Peng Zhengwu, Pro Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, Vice President, Sichuan University China Yan Shijing, Director

Pakistan Study Centre, Sichuan University China Prof Dr Song Zhihui, Director Pakistan Study Centre Fudan University China Prof Du Youkang, Director Centre for Public Policy and Governance FCCU Prof Dr Saeed Shafqat, Dean Faculty of Arts and Humanities Prof Dr Iqbal Chawla, Assistant Professor Dr Amjad Abbas Magsi, Chinese students and MPhil /PhD scholars were present on the occasion.

Addressing the seminar, Peng Zhengwu said that Sahiwal coal-fired power plant was clean and efficient energy project. He said that Free Trade Agreement would come into effect from Jan 01, 2020 which would reduce the tariff and Pakistan would have an opportunity to strengthen its economy. He said that China was strategic partner of Pakistan and China issued visa to around 150,000 Pakistanis every year. He said that Orange Line would be available for commercial use from next month and people would get better transportation facilities. He said that another Confucius Institute would be opened in Sargodha. Sichuan University's Vice President Yan Shijing said that Sichuan University and Punjab University were making efforts to promote higher education. He said that Pakistani students were studying in medical, economics, civil engineering, computer science and other academic disciplines being offered at Sichuan University, which was the second largest university in China. He said that around 20 books about Pakistan had been published in their university. He said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor would improve quality of life of Pakistanis. He said that campus landscapes, departments and facilities to students at PU were very impressive.

In his address, Prof Dr Saleem Mazhar lauded the services of Pakistan Study Centre for connecting academic institutions and experts of both the countries. He said that people to people contact would help understand culture of each other. He stressed the need to jointly organize seminar and conferences and launch joint research projects on various topics of mutual interest.

Prof Dr Iqbal Chawla said that CPEC would contribute in development of the region and our future was associated with this mega project. He said that CPEC was really a golden opportunity for Pakistan and we must prepare ourselves to cope with the challenges we were facing. He said that he was surprised over the people who negatively think about CPEC. He said that we must share knowledge to remove confusions regarding CPEC.

Earlier, the participants inaugurated Institute of The Belt And Road at Pakistan Study Centre and visited PU Library. While Punjab University and Sichuan University, China signed a memorandum of understanding to develop partnership in various spheres in order to promote academic exchange and scientific research cooperation.

The MoU signing ceremony was held at Vice Chancellor's office in which PU VC Prof Niaz Ahmad, Sichuan University's Vice President Yan Shijing, Pro VC Prof Dr Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, Dean Faculty of Arts and Humanities Prof Dr Iqbal Chawla and others were present. Both the universities agreed to exchange teachers and researchers in teaching and scientific research. The universities would provide all possible opportunities available on their respective campuses for students of both institutions to enroll in undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD

programs. Both would organize seminars and conferences for students and faculty. PU and Sichuan University also agreed to train administrative staff regarding international offices.

Pakistan Observer

China a role model for people around the world Salahuddin Haider

China, in true sense of the word, with its technological advancement has become a role model for others, especially for developing, poorer, and not so rich countries, It has shown to the world, what hard work, initiative, drive and unbreakable faith in human intelligence, mountains will move too. Nothing is unachievable, provided the will to surmount the odds is there. Under the visionary leadership of President XI Ji Ping, and the Communist of the country, this huge landmass and mass of its human resource, has become a world leader, registering record growth rate, climbing new heights, of progress and development, turning the entire face of the country to a level where lot more countries, States of the People should learn from to be in the line of progress and advancement.

I am not new to China, my fourth visit to this great neighbor of ours, coming first here in 1974 with late Mr Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, had the privilege of being photographed with Chairman Mao De Zung, and Premier Chou En-Lai, again in 1987 for an international congress, organized by a well-known Pakistani banker Agha Hasan Abedi, and then as guest of the Chinese government 2014 with my wife and daughter. But every time I was here, I found a new China, a country, preserving its fundamental principles, and yet opting for modernization, which was bound to pay handsome dividends, which it has. China is different from what it was in 70s. Today it a powerful country, an economic giant, challenging the most powerful America, Its industrial expansion, communication facilities, innovations, and search for new avenues, lent it strength for tit-for-tat reply to duty imposition by Donald Trump on Chinese exports to USA. But China was not be daunted. It protected its rights, knew well how to counter such ridiculous threats. For Pakistan, China is all weather friends. Late premier Chou En-Lai;s frequent visits to Pakistan, and open support to Pakistan in the midst of the 965 war with India by the then Chinese defence minister Marshal Chen-yi to take its hands off Pakistan, are still fresh in my memory. Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, cities that I visited, and many more are just great, the biggest lesson to remember is that China developed its own system, result being all-embracing benefits for this great country, and its people, 700 million of who had been lifted to above the poverty line. No joke, tremendous input must have been there. Realizing the importance communication, Chinese Peoples” daily organizing its 10 successive media workshop here with 3 new members, including Japan, and Korea as its new members. It was a monumental success. Nearly 100 invitees from Asian countries heard the Deputy editor in chief of the People’s daily, taking pride in his newspapers initiative, and some very senior editorial and staff members from the newspapers, and Xhinua new agency, emphasizing the need for media to work for welfare of the people, and for removing conflicts, tensions and discomforts, inflicting our times of today. At the round table conference, most participants’ views were recorded. A three-member Pakistani delegation from

Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad was in attendance too at the posh Shangrila hotel. Just a day before the conference started, a kick-off session of journalists was held in which Pakistan Observer was bestowed the honour to speak about the impressions of Asia Media Workshop. This scribe sent by the newspaper paid eloquent tributes to China's tremendous growth in almost every segment of life, be it defence, international affairs, technological growth, economic progress, and support to poorer, and not so fortunate countries of Asia and Africa. I as representative of Pakistan's prestige newspaper paid eloquent tributes to the communist party, and its leader President Xi Jin Ping, and to People's Daily for undertaking such massive exercise, and allowing the media from different points of the world, from Japan, Korea, Maldives, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and you name the Vietnam, and you name the country, it was there. The programme for such gigantic effort was well thought out conference, dinner, sightseeing, and allowing time to media from all over Asia to know each other, and work together for world peace, for making most out of the current century being Asian century. Not mentioning the Chinese hospitality would be unkind. Despite language barrier, every Chinese, be it she or he, from an ordinary worker to the top level officials will smilingly help you, and even leave his eat to provide you help. This was something great. Chinese in real meaning are a great nation. My hats off to them.

The Nation

Pakistan signs IA with Chinese company for 1320MW coal-based project

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan has signed implementation agreement (IA) with Chinese company for 1320MW Thar coal-based power generation CPEC umbrella project.

Managing Director PPIB, Shah Jahan Mirza signed the documents on behalf of the Government of Pakistan (GoP) while Meng Donghai, Chief Executive Officer of M/s Thar Coal Block-I Power Generation Company Limited (TCB-I), represented the Chinese company at the signing ceremony. The power purchase agreement (PPA) of the project has already been executed.

The implementation agreement (IA) of Pakistan's largest Thar coal-based power generation project of 1,320 MW power generation capacity has been signed at Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) for materializing the financing of 1,912.2 million US\$ as the cumulative project cost. The project is based on Super Critical Technology.

The 1,320 MW Shanghai Electric Thar Block-1 Coal Project is being developed under the umbrella of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through Project Company i.e. TCB-I while M/s Shanghai Electric Group Company is the main sponsor of this project. The project will utilize Thar Coal supplied by Sino Sindh Resources Limited which is executing coal mining operations for coal extraction in the Thar coalfield Block-I.

Letter of Support has already been issued to the project by PPIB while financial closing is expected to be achieved very soon.

It is anticipated that Shanghai Electric Thar Block-1 Coal Project will start generating electricity in March 2021. Latest advancements by this project will pave the way for timely commissioning of the Project. The project will be connected with the 660 +kV Matiari-Lahore HVDC Transmission Line Project for power transmission. This transmission line project is also being implemented by PPIB under CPEC which is currently under construction and targeted to be operational by March 2021.

Being fully compliant with the World Bank/IFC standards, the addition of 1,320 MW of indigenous, affordable and reliable electricity will not only energize the national grid, it will also result in savings of foreign exchange of around Rs 75 billion annually on account of fuel cost, generate economic activities and employment opportunities for the people of Thar in particular and will also entail improvement of the basic infrastructure in the vicinity of these projects. Further, this will boost the confidence of the investors who are interested in Thar coal mining and power generation.

Speaking at the occasion, Managing Director PPIB Shah Jahan Mirza said that PPIB is acting as the lead organization of the GoP in developing indigenous resources like Thar coal and hydro for power generation and has so far achieved considerable success which include commissioning of Pakistan's first Thar coal based 660 MW Engro Powergen and two hydro IPPs namely 84 MW New Bong and 147 MW Patrind. PPIB has been quite successful in implementing another six Thar coal based power projects of 4,290 MW which are at different stages of development, he added.

The News

Chinese artwork exhibited

FAISALABAD: The Confucius Institute University of Agriculture Faisalabad arranged a one-day 'Ni Hao China Cultural Corridor'. Students exhibited Chinese artwork, including Chinese paintings, calligraphy and paper cuttings.

CPEC – A vision beyond economic security

Sikandar Noorani: It is hard to deny that geographical location of Pakistan is now determining its role at regional and global canvas. It denotes critically how beneficial or non-beneficial this country is to others in terms of the social, economic and political aspects. Strategically, Pakistan is located at such a significant geo-strategic point which happens to be the juncture of energy proficient and energy deficient countries. The geo-strategic importance of Pakistan gets further reinforced from the fact that it is bordered by emerging economic giants of the world i.e. India and China. Besides, a neighborhood like Afghanistan and Iran, rich in natural resources mutually, contributes to the overall geo-economic outlook of entire region. Historically, it is evident that the very concept of a corridor has always been a source of development in many parts of the world. Economic corridors have emerged in recent years as an important tool of regional cooperation, integration and development in a globalized world with undeniable spirit of

reciprocity. Vibrant projects like CPEC and OBOR under Chinese initiative have provided a valid reason to open the windows of cooperation among the regional players.

Defusing regional tensions by enhancing economic and cultural ties has remained a strong suggestion from few intellectual quarters. The idea must not be compromised by giving an undue advantage to the world's so called self-styled largest democracy who is deeply involved in massive human rights violations in Occupied Kashmir, cross border terrorism and patronization of proxies in neighboring countries. Definitely, economic ties can help in reducing the probabilities of military clashes, which potentially might prove deadlier than our imaginations due to nuclear capability on either sides, but it is also a bitter reality that purposeful ties can never be built unilaterally.

Realistically viewing the ground factors, Pakistan very rightly moved forward to strengthen economic ties with China through CPEC. Despite having multi-dimensional irritants, like American deep interests as well as physical presence in the region, Pakistan courageously applied the wisdom to become part of a potentially dynamic regional economic project. Definitely, we need not to put all our eggs in the Chinese basket and must pursue the minutest possible details of the project with sharp precision. Indo-US offensive intentions towards CPEC are driven by serious concerns which can be understood by viewing CPEC through geo-strategic lens as the corridor provides an alternative route to link the important Central Asian Republics (CARs) Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, which are otherwise closely located to China. It provides equally good connectivity options to Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Interestingly, and to the horror of New Delhi and Washington, CPEC has emerged as an antidote idea to the old myth that all roads from Pakistan into Central Asia go through Kabul or Wakhan.

CPEC provides immense opportunities to CARs to expand trade with Pakistan and also go through China for further trade expansion. It is not a vague idea conceived by ignorant and off-sighted brains in absolute isolation from ground realities. On the one hand, CPEC is progressing rapidly in Pakistan and on the other hand a positive approach has taken roots in CARs about the project.

Reportedly, CARs are all set to be part of CPEC in later stages. Abundance of natural resources in CARs like oil, gas, gold and precious metals multiply the investment potentials of all projects and industrial zones linked with CPEC. Obviously, the recent warmth in bilateral relations with Russia would further reinforce better prospects of wider regional connectivity through multilateral economy oriented projects. Pakistan has rightly emerged as a regional player standing tall against the storm of terrorism and simultaneously contributing heavily to build a durable economic connectivity all across the region. Unfortunately, India has proved herself otherwise by pursuing coercive policies against Pakistan and ultra-manipulative maneuvering against smaller countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

Modi regime went all out to incapacitate the forum of Saarc which caused additional tensions in the region. Vigorous pursuance of proxies in Afghanistan to destabilize Pakistan has so farfetched nothing good rather fuelled the fire in already war-ridden Afghan society. Pakistan is

striving hard to fight out all the odds generated by India and standing as a flag-bearer of peace. Though, India has been persistently criticizing upon CPEC by beating the dead horse with rotten argument that the corridor passes through the disputed territory of Kashmir, but her indirect involvement in any other regional connectivity project might help in reducing the probabilities of armed clash. The Modi regime should realize that by sponsoring terrorism and proxies against Pakistan or any other neighbor, India would practically spoil the regional peace. Likewise, standing along foreign forces like USA in Afghanistan, who are contributing to worsen the crisis against regional stakeholders, India can never explore a way forward to fetch peace back at home front.

By coercing Pakistan, Modi can temporarily satisfy the extremist hawks but cannot overcome the day by day worsening inner fissures spread all over the India including Kashmir, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Mizoram and Nagaland. Undoubtedly, economic ties can serve as an effective sweetener against the bitter recipe of conventional or non-conventional war probabilities in South Asia. CPEC, being a game changer idea, would safeguard common interests and mutual benefits, by epitomizing a model of cooperation, coordination and strategic communication not only between China and Pakistan rather it would inter-link Central Asia, North Africa, South Asia and Gulf states in subsequent phases under the banner of One Belt One Road projects. Undoubtedly, idea of binding regional players through economic ties can effectively counter the prevalent probabilities of war and violent clashes.

December 18, 2019

Business Recorder

Pakistan formally invites China

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday formally invited China to invest in the country's digital businesses including manufacturing of mobile phone handsets and other digital equipments for promotion and growth of the sector. Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing called on Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Tuesday.

Talking exclusively to Business Recorder, Secretary Ministry of IT and Telecommunication Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui said that the meeting was held in a cordial environment where Pakistan tabled proposals for investment in IT sectors - the seventh pillar of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

“Yes we sought China's support in setting manufacturing plants for digital purposes including mobile handsets and would wait for their positive response,” he added.

According to an official statement of the IT Ministry, the federal minister for IT and telecommunication welcomed the Chinese ambassador in his office, and during the meeting matters of mutual interests and relating to information technology and e-commerce were

discussed. The federal minister said that Pakistan and China are enjoying deep friendly relations and these ties will further enhance in future.

He emphasized the need of boosting cooperation between Pakistan and China in IT and telecom sector. He said that Pakistan wants to get benefit from Chinese experience in IT sector. He also sought China's help in training Pakistan's youth in IT skills, besides starting youth exchange program between the two countries. He said that environment in Pakistan is conducive for Chinese companies to invest in IT and telecom sector in Pakistan as IT and telecom sector has great potential.

The Chinese ambassador lauded the role of Ministry of IT regarding the promotion of IT in the country and gave assurance for enhancing China's collaboration with Pakistan in the sector. Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui and senior officers of the Ministry were also present in the meeting.

Siddiqui said that Chinese cooperation in this sector would help in attracting investment, creation of job opportunities, automation and cost saving.

“The IT is the 7th pillar of long-term CPEC framework and the ministry is pleading for its formal activation. The proposed ICT sector development under the CPEC framework is comprised on artificial intelligence (AI), cloud computing, robotics, emerging technology, automation, e-governance and manufacturing plants as well as technology parks,” he said.

Pakistan is fast-growing telecom market with subscribers of mobile phones having crossed the 161 million mark compared with the country's population of around 210 million. Of total subscribers, around 70 million use 3G/4G. There are 71 million broadband subscribers. The country imports millions of dollars of mobile phones to meet the local requirements with manufacturing and assembling of handheld devices not present in the country.

The government has dropped the Telephone Industry of Pakistan (TIP) from the privatization list and is mulling to establish mobile phone handsets plant in collaboration with private sector for its revival. The government is engaged with different Chinese company for establishing mobile handset manufacturing plant in Haripur. The move would help in reducing the country's import bill, create jobs and save huge foreign exchange reserves.

The ministry envisages exploring new business models for future projects and joint ventures in the country. Further Chinese government can contribute to the e-governance initiative as well in centralizing data to improve efficiency and productivity. The investment in the IT and telecom sector would increase manifold with the inclusion of this sector into the CPEC framework.

China will keep supporting Pakistan

LAHORE: A British Columbia University professor said on Tuesday that China would continue supporting Pakistan in resolving energy crisis and would introduce technology-based power plants. He was addressing a seminar in the University of Punjab on Pak-China relations. He said China is a strategic partner of Pakistan. He said China issues visas to 150,000 Pakistanis annually.

According to him, the objective of setting up of a visa centre in the city is to facilitate citizens. He said trial run of the Orange Line Metro Train has been carried out and this facility would be another big feature for the citizens in future.

Pakistan Observer

President Dr. Arif Alvi, Beijing-based multilateral bank to finance Pakistan's socio-economic projects

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has decided to finance a number of development projects in Pakistan targeting socio-economic uplift, bank's President Jin Liqun said Tuesday. In a meeting with President Dr Arif Alvi here at Aiwan-e-Sadr, the head of the multilateral development bank headquartered in Beijing, China said "AIIB was fully committed to socio-economic development of Pakistan". With a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia, AIIB invest in sustainable infrastructure and other productive sectors. President AIIB said his visit to Pakistan would give an understanding about the country's socio-economic needs and the priorities of the government. President Dr. Arif Alvi said Pakistan's investment policy provided a comprehensive framework for conducive business environment to attract Foreign Direct Investment. He also appreciated the AIIB's funding of \$100 million for M-4 Gojra-Shorkot motorway and \$300 million for Tarbela-V hydropower project. Meanwhile, a delegation of the AIIB led by the President Jin Liqun met with the Federal Minister of Economic Affairs Division (EAD) Hammad Azhar to support projects in power generation and transmission, transport, water supply sectors, Information technology and other matter of mutual interest. Hammad Azhar emphasized that Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) further scale up its financing for development projects in Pakistan. Minister for Economic Affairs acknowledged AIIB's support for Pakistan in different infrastructural project. The Minister said that the commitments reflect the confidence that multilaterals hold in the government's reform agenda and the progress achieved towards economic stabilization, adding that AIIB is a valuable contributor in Pakistan's development path. The Minister reiterated that the government is fully committed to improve governance, bring economic reforms and achieve sustainable development. The government aims to put Pakistan's economy on the path of sustainable and balanced growth and increase per capita income. "Previous governments were more about building infrastructure." He said that instant results from constructing any infrastructure give you instant votes. However, this government is more focused on social sector development. The Minister said that Human Development Index was already slipping away from our hands. Any investment in social sector development yields results after ages, "We are hopeful to see positive results in future", says Azhar. President AIIB while appreciating the reforms initiatives of the current government, committed to extend support to Pakistan. Jin Liqun, President AIIB stated that AIIB is one of the leading development partners of Pakistan. AIIB fully supports the government's development vision and policies. He expressed that AIIB is providing its support for policy reforms and project financing in the key priority areas such as energy, road, social

sector, water and irrigation and urban services. He also reiterated AIIB's strong commitment to further strengthening and expanding its partnership with Pakistan.

BRI, CPEC reshaping economic landscape of region, ushering in prosperity: Firdous

Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Information and Broadcasting Firdous Ashiq Awan on Tuesday termed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as reshaping geo-economic landscape and ushering in prosperity, not only for Pakistan but also for the entire region, which is based on the idea of shared development. Condemning the hostile propaganda against the BRI by a section of the international media, she stressed the need for collaboration, coordination and cross regional media fusion among the media outlets of participating countries was utmost necessary. Addressing an international conference titled "Cross-regional media fusion on the Belt and Road partners" Firdous Ashiq commended the Pakistani media that played a pivotal role in nullifying the anti-CEPC propaganda and also contributed to the development of the concept of national ownership. She said similar effort was required by the media in the countries participating in the BRI. Appreciating the Centre for Global and Strategic and Studies (CGSS), for organizing the conference, she said the role and contribution of think-tanks in evaluating the regional and global issues and challenges and providing intellectual and pragmatic solutions to those challenges can hardly be over-emphasized. She said President Xi Jinping's vision of One Belt, One Road (OBOR) was not only bold but also innovative initiative that knitted the world in a community of shared interests. Dr Firdous said OBOR vision was harbinger of a new era of connectivity and integration of member countries, which would bridge the gap between the North and South. She said that sustained progress was being made in the implementation of the second phase of CPEC in Pakistan wherein the emphasis will be on industrial and agricultural cooperation, socio-economic development and technical training. With the highest level of transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness, the building blocks of CPEC were being installed, she said. Awan said Prime Minister Imran Khan during his Gwadar visit performed ground breaking of Rs65 billion Zhob-Kuchlak sections of Western route of CEPC, Rs 17 billion project of transmission line of Makran Coast, Rs 23 billion New Gwadar International Airport project, hospital as well as vocational institute. She said that Chinese government was also investing \$ 1 billion in socio-economic sector in two years. She said, China had offered 20,000 scholarships for Pakistani students besides financing to build over 1000 small schools in different parts of the country. The scope of CPEC has been broadened to benefit the people of Pakistan, she added. She said that recently 300 mw coal power plant had been inaugurated in Gwadar and Multan-Sukkur Motorway opened. She said that that OBOR was about shared prosperity and making peace and development the basis of interactions among the peoples, cultures and ideas. She said that OBOR through CEPC was Pakistan's passport to a new level of development and progress. She said that President Xi called Pakistan an iron brother and multi-billion CPEC was manifestation of China's special relationship with Pakistan. She said that in spite of the achievement of BRI and its component CPEC, some regional and global powers, pursuant to

their strategic global interests, were engaged in creating doubts and misgivings about this mega project supported by their media outlets. She said that media played a vital role in building positive and constructive perception about the issues as well as erasing false perceptions contrived through negative propaganda. She expressed the hope that through the collective wisdom of the conference, a workable strategy would be recommended for promotion of cross-regional media fusion among the BRI countries that would lead to the development of common outlook about BRI and the course to be pursued to negate anti-BRI and CPEC related propaganda.

CPEC changing Pakistan's industrial landscape

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has transformed Pakistan's economic and industrial landscape. The first phase of the corridor, a pivot of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, was completed in October 2019, which incidentally has been declared by both countries as the "Year of Industrial, Socioeconomic and Agriculture Cooperation". The 22 early harvest projects completed during the first phase will help Pakistan meet its energy and infrastructure requirements thanks to nationwide connectivity. Work is now in full swing on the corridor's second phase which focuses on industrialization, socio-economic and agricultural cooperation, and consolidation of development in diverse sectors. Important steps in this phase include the establishment of special economic zones across Pakistan. CPEC changing Pakistan's industrial landscape On Nov 9, the Pakistani government hosted a Joint Cooperation Committee in Islamabad to monitor and evaluate the progress of the corridor project. The committee was set up after Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan visited China in October to broaden interaction between the two countries' leaderships. A CPEC Authority was established on the eve of Prime Minister Khan's visit after Pakistani President Arif Alvi promulgated and approved the CPEC Authority Ordinance 2019. The establishment of this authority reflects Pakistan's commitment to fully implement the multibillion dollar strategic project. The authority is a single-window institution that will address all CPEC-related issues, remove the primary bottlenecks and speed up important business procedures and processes. This has already boosted Chinese investor confidence and expedited the project's pace.

The Joint Cooperation Committee also approved the Gwadar Master Plan, apart from signing two important memorandums of understanding. The Multan-Sukkur Motorway (M5) project, one of the largest and inaugurated recently, will soon become a lifeline for transporting goods and services. Last month, President Alvi chaired the Pakistan-China Agricultural Cooperation Forum, attended by a large number of agri-based traders, which showed that cooperation has extended to the grassroots level. Agriculture, which is at the center of Pakistan's economy, will get a boost through the Belt and Road Initiative, especially the access that new, improved road and rail networks will provide to farmers. All these milestones point to the fact that the change of government in Pakistan does not affect its rock solid ties with China, as they are based on mutual trust and historical affinity. Government-level cooperation apart, there is also people-to-people cooperation. Business and industries in the two countries are increasingly connected. Thriving

links also exist between education institutions, media houses, hospitals, students, faculties and more. Pakistan-China ties are a role model for the world. Though the two countries have little in common at the societal level, an iron bond links their hearts and souls. The Gwadar deep seaport is a jewel of the CPEC, which in turn is like a crown for the Belt and Road Initiative. In the words of Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi: “If BRI is like a symphony involving and benefiting every country, the construction of CPEC is a sweet melody of the symphony’s first movement”. Pakistan is a market of 220 million people, 70 percent of them young. It also has a huge skilled labor market. Such a hardworking population offers huge opportunities for the Chinese market and businesses. To genuinely reap the fruit of prosperity and enhance further cooperation, Pakistan is adjusting itself at various levels, marred as it is by corruption, nepotism and weak institutions, in order to build its economic and political infrastructure. Because of such drawbacks, Pakistan has been approaching the International Monetary Fund since 1958. But relief from the IMF comes with strings attached, is short-lived, and burdens the common man. In contrast, there are no strings attached to the help from China – on the corridor and the initiative – making it a win-win proposition for all. There is a concept of shared destiny. And the corridor will definitely help strengthen Pakistan’s economy and generate wealth. Although it took some time to complete the first phase of the corridor, as it involved a lot of planning and implementation, in the second phase, Pakistan will see a faster pace of technological and industrial development by Chinese companies. Nevertheless, there is a strong need to improve people-to-people ties through regular engagement. There is also a need to connect with the regional and local media outlets to highlight the development taking place on the ground. The CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative offer huge prospects for development, and China and Pakistan are linked through these initiatives at the right time given that the fourth industrial revolution has been changing the international landscape. The author is director of the Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies and secretary-general of the Pakistan Shanghai Cooperation Organization Friendship Forum. The author contributed this article to China Watch exclusively.

Stemming the Tide: The Halting of Brain Drain in Pakistan vis-à-vis CPEC

Since independence of Pakistan, the South Asian drive and appreciation of occupational niches and resultant prestige has continued to render a distinguished cadre of educated professionals within a variety of fields, whether it be medicine, engineering, legal affairs and the bureaucracy. However, as cracks began to appear in the country are methods relating to meritocracy in the workplace and in regards to educational attainment, lessened social mobility seemed to define the exigency of the mass migration of skilled and non-skilled Pakistanis abroad. Whether it be for higher education, increased remuneration, or the mere opportunity of participating in the workforce on a level playing field, more than eight million Pakistanis now find themselves as having a permanent presence in foreign nations in some manner, with an upwards of two-thirds of Pakistanis wishing to do the same as per Gallup polling. Amongst them are a plethora of extremely qualified personnel, many of whom were initially trained domestically within Pakistan itself. The loss of such a cadre has meant that Pakistan continues to lag behind internationally-

recognized standards and practices in various disciplines, coupled alongside a stagnation of the education system as the nation's brightest prefer refuge abroad to practice whatever it is they may have learned indigenously.

Human resource development within Pakistan simply cannot take place if the appropriate expertise and willingness is not present to begin with. The introduction of broad infrastructural and economic reforms as triggered by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) provides Pakistan with a clear-cut opportunity to halt the country's long-standing tradition of brain drain – and perhaps even reverse it should the long-term benefits of the Corridor begin to bear fruit in 2030. As Pakistan's manufacturing output capability begins to expand under CPEC, diasporic Pakistani engineers, scientists, and technicians may serve as the golden egg by which a complete transfer of technology can take place once Chinese upper-managerial roles begin to filter out as CPEC projects begin to be fully self-sustainable by local citizens. Diasporic Pakistani science and engineering personnel's understanding and experiences of what drives innovation in developed states enables them to function as the crux of indigenous control and operation of Pakistan's industrial units, whether they be through Chinese-built Special Economic Zones or induced manufacturing once the country's crippled state of energy provision is rectified.

Structural deterioration in Pakistan's economy is also linked to the phenomenon of brain drain, as the country maintains a default state of reliance in remittance inflows in the absence of any other noteworthy foreign exchange. Such remittance levels have already begun to sink amidst tighter regulations on foreign residency for Pakistanis earning incomes in the oil-rich states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, whose newly-rendered paths towards fiscal conservatism has meant a steady exodus of Pakistanis who previously sent financial resources back towards Pakistan and in turn spurred consumption in the latter. In addition, diasporic Pakistani professionals should also be the primary target of bridging the gap between educational and training standards abroad and those found within Pakistan. Far from being mere cultural liaisons, such individuals can operate within a Pakistani context with ease while disseminating international, established standards for the conducting of basic human resource development in Pakistan which is required for CPEC-oriented projects to flourish once they are fully staffed and administered by Pakistanis themselves. Such activity also allows for the Pakistani economy to rid itself of a severe, unhealthy inclination towards remittance collection as the individuals who once contributed to foreign exchange inflows would now be enabling the progression of Pakistan into a middle-income state via the contribution of their expertise. This effect will be compounded by the notion that blue-collar staff abroad solely for the sake of labour-oriented work will also return to Pakistan as the induced employment via CPEC funding corrects the very lack of opportunity that triggered their departure initially.

If Pakistan is to successfully transition into the middle-income, industrialized state it seeks under the supervision and supplementation of CPEC projects, it is critical that she adopt international standards relating to white-collar work ethic and industrial operations relating to efficiency, safety and management. The culture of a lack of productivity bred from a lack of punctuality, a

lack of meritocratic hiring and an indifferent attitude towards the most basic of tasks all need to be shed for the sake of achieving the sort of desired output Asian “tiger” economies such as South Korea have undergone in their progression. Diasporic Pakistani personnel already have prior-gained exposure to modern practices in the art of human resources, project planning and implementation and the base modus operandi required to serve as a productive employee in an office space, while their foreign credentials allow them to rise to upper-management and begin a wider cultural shift in how the average Pakistani firm, no matter how large or small, functions. This net can be widened to even blue-collar Pakistani laborers who, albeit their harsh conditions in states where their labour rights may be compromised, are given stringent fixed schedules and timeframes to follow.

CPEC projects in themselves also allow for a reassessment of what it means for young Pakistani men and women to study abroad. As of now, many individuals go abroad on their own accord or via the use of scholarships from the Higher Education Commission (HEC) in exchange of signed bonds committing them to working within Pakistan upon returning. If the cultural exchange component of CPEC is to be fully realized, China’s surge in academia-related reputation serves as the primary platform by which Pakistanis can refine their skills at foreign Chinese universities with the maintenance and management of CPEC projects serving as their exigency for returning home. Such a program would be similar in nature to how the monarchies of the Arabian Gulf send indigenous human resources abroad in order to cultivate a talented pool of professionals to run their local state-owned petroleum and gas industries. The economic and social depravity that has led to such colossal brain drain out of Pakistan may see itself diminishing with the advent of CPEC funding, however, appropriate policy measures must be taken in order to maximize the potential of Pakistani human resources abroad who currently contribute to states other than Pakistan itself.

The Nation

Govt to speed up all CPEC-related projects says Firdous

ISLAMABAD - Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Firdous Ashiq Awan said yesterday that the government is committed to fast track implementation of all China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) related projects.

Addressing a ceremony here, she said that CPEC is the flag ship project which will change fate of the entire region and usher a new era of prosperity. The Special Assistant also expressed government’s resolve to facilitate the investors in CPEC’s projects.

She said that the PM had recently visited Gwadar and announced mega projects worth billion of rupees. She said that the government is spending Rs 70 billion on the construction of Makran Coastal transmission line and the PM had also inaugurated Gwadar Airport worth Rs 23 billion.

She mentioned that China has awarded 20,000 scholarships to Pakistani students. She said that the people of both countries had rejected the negative propaganda against CPEC and this project will play in vital role in prosperity of the Pakistan.

Later, Firdous Ashiq Awan said Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's extremist mindset has engulfed the entire India. In a series of tweets here, she, however, warned that the Modi's extremist mindset poses a grave threat to regional peace. The Special Assistant said Indian controversial Citizenship Act has trampled the rights of minorities especially the Muslims.

Firdous Ashiq Awan regretted the use of barbaric violence against the students protesting against the bigoted and discriminatory citizenship act. The horrendous violence is humiliation of humanity and a slap on the so-called democratic face of India. Sharing a picture of an Indian female student standing firm against a policeman, Firdous Ashiq Awan said the courageous girl has become a symbol of resistance against oppression and fascism.

Nawaiwaqat

سی پیک منصوبہ، دہائیگی اکنامک زون سے 80 ہزار افراد کو روزگار ملے گا

اسلام آباد (اے پی پی) چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری کے تحت 1530 ایکڑ اراضی پر مشتمل دہائیگی سٹیٹل اکنامک زون میں مقامی آبادی کو 80 ہزار روزگار کے مواقع میسر آئیں گے۔ سی پیک اتھارٹی کے حکام نے ”اے پی پی“ کو بتایا کہ اس زون کے پورٹ قاسم کے قریب ہونے کی وجہ سے سامان میں نقل و حمل میں آسانی اور وقت اور لاگت میں بھی کمی آئے گی۔ یہ زون کراچی ایئرپورٹ سے 35 کلومیٹر کے فاصلے پر واقع ہے جس کی وجہ سے غیر ملکی وکروں کے ساتھ ساتھ برآمد کنندگان اور درآمد کنندگان کو بھی رسائی انتہائی آسانی میسر آئے گی۔ یہ زون قومی تجارتی راہداری ثابت ہو گا۔ ذرائع کے مطابق اس زون میں سرمایہ کاری کے لئے بہت سے مواقع موجود ہیں۔

December 19, 2019

Business Recorder

China-Pak Gwadar Faqeer Middle School's work in full swing

GWADAR: Construction work of China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School is in full swing and expected to be completed in a period of less than a year.

“We are promoting the extension project of Faqeer Middle School in accordance with the construction plan.” said Tan Jianyun, Project Manager of Operations Department of Faqeer Middle School. Presently, nearly half of the construction work of the school has been completed, and it is expected to be completed by September next, reports Gwadar Pro mobile news APP. It is said that the extension project of China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School is funded by China Foundation for Peace and Development and constructed by China Communications Construction Company Limited.

What's more, Gwadar Development Authority is responsible for monitoring the quality and procedure of the construction. The scale of the extension is the same as that of Phase I, including

nine classrooms and other supporting facilities such as electricity and lighting and places for outdoor activities. Principal Amjad Basham extended his gratitude to Chinese government for its promoting reforms of local education and providing education for younger generation in his talk with the reporter.

He said that children had to travel a long distance to school because of the local backward economy. Nowadays, children can receive qualified education near their home because of the strong support of Chinese government. It is known that people sent their children to Faqeer Middle School one after another because the school boasted high-end infrastructure, advanced teaching theories and diversified subjects and satisfies local educational need. When the school was constructed, it was planned to hold 150 students, but now it has over 600 students.

Many students couldn't study in classrooms due to the lack of classrooms. They had to study in the playground. Therefore, in accordance with request of local government and people, China Foundation for Peace and Development funded the extension project of Faqeer Middle School. "The extension of the middle school will be another milestone that marked the filling of the void of local education."

Amjad Basham said that the extension was a great project which relieved the local educational pressure and was bound to increase the proportion of educated people and pave the way for further local development. It is known that local parents and teachers looked forward to the extension of the school and they lent a hand to the construction of it one after another.

Limitless opportunities exist as result of CPEC execution: Chinese CG

LAHORE: Chinese Consul General Long Dingbin has said that limitless opportunities existed as a result of CPEC's execution and emphasized that Pakistan needed to bring about far-reaching reforms in various socio-economic sectors to get maximum advantage of the CPEC project. While talking to a delegation of Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) led by its Chairman Mian Nauman Kabir, the consul general also highlighted China's experience of miraculous reforms that changed the destiny of China.

The both sides emphasized that greater synergies may be created to deepen linkages between Western China and Pakistan. They were of the view that rising cost of labour in China as well as labour shortages was an opportunity for Pakistan to devise attractive policies which can help relocation of Chinese industries to Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, the PIAF chairman said that Pakistan offers ample opportunities of trade for Chinese businessmen in almost all the sectors or sub-sectors of economy to become closest trading partner of China. In the context of ongoing project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the importance of private to private contacts had mounted and in this scenario, trade and industrial associations' role has widened, he said.

Lahore has a special significance being the hub of business activities in Punjab. Both public and private sector organizations were striving hard to fully exploit trade and investment potential of

Punjab in collaboration with foreign investors, he said and added that China was first choice for Pakistani businessmen to join hands for joint ventures. He appreciated the Chinese Consulate for opening up the first visa application service center in Lahore recently to facilitate applicants wishing to visit the country.

He called it a landmark step, as earlier residents of Lahore had to travel to Islamabad to apply for a visa to China. This new place will provide enormous relief to businessmen and visitors. Lahore is an important city and the new hub of economic activity in Punjab, he added. Pakistan is looking Chinese businessmen for making joint efforts aimed at boosting bilateral trade and economic relations, he said and hoped that the state-level cooperation between two countries would bring greater fortune to both.

He said that status of two-way trade was bound to improve in a decade or so because once the CPEC project became fully functional, a win-win situation would take place for Pakistan and China. In the meantime, we need to interact on regular basis for exploring avenues for trade expansion and opportunities for investments, he added.

Daily Times

CPEC projects an investment, not loans to Pakistan: envoy

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing Wednesday said special economic zones will be built in Pakistan in the next phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Speaking at a seminar on ‘Role of Parliaments in Cementing Regional Integration’ here at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services, he said China will now invest in building vocational and training centers and in research in agriculture and livestock sectors. Most of the CPEC projects are investment of Chinese companies and not loans to the Pakistan government, he clarified.

The ambassador said the CPEC was launched because of the friendship between Pakistan and China, adding that China wants progress and development all across Pakistan. He said China will succeed in eradicating poverty among its people in the next year.

Speaking on the occasion, National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser said Pakistan is ready to facilitate neighboring countries so that they can benefit from CPEC projects. He said the economic, trade and cultural ties among the countries in the region are spread over centuries. Immense opportunities are available for promoting cooperation among countries of the region in trade and other sectors, he said, adding that Pakistan wants to increase effectiveness of CPEC as a means to further progress and prosperity of the region. The NA speaker said Pakistan has been going through a war-like situation in the last 30 years, adding that Pakistan’s economy suffered a lot due to Afghan war and the war against terrorism. He said the regional economy can be improved with the completion of CPEC. “I wish that Central Asian States should be included in the CPEC project,” he said, adding that CPEC is the guarantee of better future of the coming generations. The speaker assured all kinds of cooperation to regional countries for success of

CPEC and said the parliament can play a vital role in strengthening ties among the countries. Promotion of bilateral relations is important for protecting regional interests, he stressed. He said CPEC can play a vital role in bringing countries of the region together. He said economy of Pakistan is under stress and “we have to take steps to make it stable.”

The NA speaker said parliamentary diplomacy can play a critical role in enhancing regional cooperation and prosperity. Pakistan has an important geographical position and it was a connection between Asia and the countries in the Arab world and they could benefit from CPEC, he reminded.

Parliamentary Committee on CPEC Chairman Sher Ali Arbab said Pakistani population is huge and it is a challenge as well as an opportunity. “We have to take the lead for achieving prosperity for people of Pakistan and for the region,” he said, adding that Pakistan cannot develop without gender empowerment and equality.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said the next phase of CPEC is about relocation of Chinese industry to Pakistan. “China has offered one billion dollars for socioeconomic development in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and certain areas of Sindh,” he said.

A large number of parliamentarians, diplomats and members of civil society attended the event.

Dawn News

Briefing sought by China from UNMOGIP postponed

A briefing sought by China from the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) at the Security Council had to be postponed after UN officials said that they were not ready for it.

China on Tuesday, during a closed door meeting of the Security Council, drew the attention of the members towards a letter written by Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi expressing concern on the escalating situation at the Line of Control (LoC), and asked for a brief from the UN military observers.

There was lot of anticipation here about China taking up the matter because any briefing on the situation of LoC would have also touched upon the crisis in occupied Kashmir after its annexation by India. But that could not happen.

The Security Council had held an informal consultative session on Kashmir in August. That meeting had also been called by China after India’s Aug 5 action of abrogating Article 370, which gave the occupied region special status. On being told that UN peacekeeping mission was not ready for the briefing, Chinese envoy Zhang Jun did not press for it and, according to a diplomatic source, he told the Council that he would later make another request for a meeting when UNMOGIP was ready for it.

Some critics believe that the move did not progress because of inadequate preparation by the Pakistani mission at New York. “Pakistani diplomats were skeptical about the prospects of the

move,” a source said. FM Qureshi, in his letter to the Security Council, had pointed to over 3,000 ceasefire violations by India, partial removal of the fence on the LoC by Delhi in five sectors, deployment of the Brahmos missile, anti-tank guided missiles and Spike missiles, and conduct of numerous missile tests since August 2019.

Mr Qureshi had contended that these Indian actions constituted threat to peace and security.

IGP, Chinese diplomat discuss security of CPEC workers

Inspector General of Police Shoaib Dastagir and Counsel General of China Lang Dong Bin on Wednesday met to discuss security of the Chinese experts, investors and skilled persons working for the CPEC projects in Pakistan.

During the meeting, the IGP told the visitor that fully equipped and trained Special Protection Unit was protecting the Chinese experts, investors and skilled persons visiting Pakistan to complete the CPEC projects. He said the provision of security to the Chinese working on the CPEC projects and running business and other activities was among the top priorities of the Punjab police.

“For the purpose the Punjab policed have raised a new force, the SPU, which has been laced with modern professional training and weapons giving it responsibility to provide security to the Chinese experts and citizens,” said Mr Dastagir. He said the Provincial Foreigner Security Cell established at the Lahore Airport for security of the Chinese citizens was registering particulars of all arriving Chinese citizens.

A system had also been made available to address individual complaints of the Chinese citizens in any part of Punjab, he said, adding that the police officers of the districts concerned had been assigned duties to take prompt action.

The IG said besides the SPU, the district police officers (DPOs) were also paying visits to the working sites of the CPEC to examine security arrangements on a monthly basis. Under a comprehensive strategy, training workshops and programmes were going on to enhance efficiency of the police force so that officials may perform their duties in a better way keeping in view the parameters of modern policing, the IGP said. The Chinese counsel general acknowledged the efforts of the Punjab police while lauding the efforts of the SPU in providing special security to the Chinese citizens. The visiting official also paid homage to actions of the Punjab police against terrorism and the unprecedented sacrifices rendered by the personnel in the line of duty.

Both sides agreed on bilateral cooperation in order to enhance efficiency of officers and officials of the Punjab police.

Pakistan Observer

Pakistan to help neighbours benefit from CPEC: Speaker

National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser Wednesday said Pakistan was ready to facilitate neighbouring countries so that they could benefit from projects of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He was speaking as a chief guest at a seminar on “Role of Parliaments in cementing regional integration” here at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services. He said the economic, trade and cultural ties among the countries in the region were spread over centuries. Immense opportunities were available for promoting cooperation among countries of the region in trade and other sectors, he added. He said Pakistan wanted to increase effectiveness of CPEC as a means to further progress and prosperity of the region. The NA Speaker said Pakistan was going through a war like situation in the last 30 years, adding that Pakistan’s economy suffered a lot due to Afghan war and the war against terrorism. He said the regional economy could be improved with the completion of CPEC. “I wish that Central Asian States should be included in the CPEC project.” Asad said CPEC project was the guarantee for the future generations. He assured all kinds of cooperation to regional countries for success of CPEC and said Parliament could play a vital role in strengthening bilateral ties between the countries. Promotion of bilateral relations was important for protecting regional interests, he stressed. He said CPEC could play a vital role in bringing countries of the region together. He said economy of Pakistan was under stress and “we have to take steps to make it stable”. The NA Speaker said parliamentary diplomacy could play a critical role in enhancing regional cooperation and prosperity. Pakistan had an important geographical position and it was a connection between Asia and the countries in the Arab world and they could benefit from CPEC, he reminded. Asad said Pakistan was determined to increase its share in the international trade. The seaports of Pakistan were the shortest route to provide access to the Central Asian countries to the world markets, he added. The NA Speaker said parliamentary friendship groups were activated to boost regional cooperation and help the Pakistani state achieve its objectives. He said goal of Pakistan was to increase its exports.

Pakistani exports could make their mark in Africa which should be explored for different products, he added. China’s ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing said in the next phase of CPEC, special economic zones would be built in Pakistan. He said China would now invest in building vocational and training centres and in research in agriculture and livestock sectors. Most of the CPEC projects were investment of Chinese companies and not loans to the Pakistan government, he clarified.

Jing said CPEC was launched because of the friendship between Pakistan and China, adding that China wanted progress and development all across Pakistan. He said that China would succeed in eradicating poverty among its people in the next year. Chairman Parliamentary Committee on CPEC Sher Ali Arbab said Pakistani population was huge and it was a challenge as well as an opportunity. “We have to take the lead for achieving prosperity for people of Pakistan and for the region.”

Sher Ali said Pakistan could not develop without gender empowerment and equality. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said the next phase of CPEC was relocation of Chinese industry to Pakistan. “China has offered one billion dollars for socioeconomic development in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and certain areas of Sindh.” He said Pakistan was at the center of regional connectivity. A large number of parliamentarians, diplomats and members of civil society attended the event.

The Express Tribune

Nothing to hide on CPEC, says planning minister

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning Asad Umar has said there is nothing to hide in multibillion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project which is a manifestation of the friendship between Pakistan and China but is against no one.

“We have nothing to hide in connection with CPEC; however, we can’t do anything if someone refuses to believe this,” Umar said on Wednesday while addressing a seminar on “Role of Parliaments in cementing regional integration” at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS). Last month, US President Trump’s aide on South Asia Alice Wells had warned Islamabad that it faced long-term economic damage with little return if Beijing keeps pursuing CPEC which, according to her, would profit only China.

PEC, heralded as a game-changer by both Pakistan and China, “is going to take a growing toll on the Pakistan economy, especially when the bulk of payments start to come due in the next four to six years,” Wells said at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars on November 22.

However, on the same day, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing angrily spurned US criticism of his country’s multibillion dollar infrastructure push in Pakistan as he publicly gave point-by-point reply to the objections raised by Wells.

Talking with reference to the project, Umar said CPEC is around \$70 billion project but most of the loans are granted at a negligible interest rate. The minister, however, clarified that the problems of Pakistan are supposed to be resolved by Pakistan through hard work.

The National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, who was invited as the chief guest at the seminar, said Pakistan is ready to facilitate neighboring countries so that they also benefit from CPEC. Qaiser said the economic, trade and cultural ties among the countries in the region were centuries’ old. Immense opportunities are available for promoting cooperation among countries of the region in trade and other sectors, he added.

He said Pakistan wants to increase effectiveness of CPEC as a means to further progress and prosperity of the region. The NA speaker said Pakistan is going through a war like situation in the last 30 years and its economy has suffered a lot due to Afghan war and the war against terrorism.

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing said in the next phase of CPEC, special economic zones would be built in Pakistan. He said China would now invest in building vocational and training centres and in research in agriculture and livestock sectors. Most of the CPEC projects are investment of Chinese companies and not loans to the Pakistan government, he clarified. Jing said CPEC was launched because of the friendship between Pakistan and China, adding that China wants progress and development all across Pakistan.

He said China would succeed in eradicating poverty among its people in the next year.

Parliamentary Committee on CPEC Chairman Sher Ali Arbab said Pakistani population is huge and it is a challenge as well as an opportunity. “We have to take the lead for achieving prosperity for people of Pakistan and for the region.”

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said the next phase of CPEC was relocation of Chinese industry to Pakistan. “China has offered one billion dollars for socioeconomic development in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and certain areas of Sindh,” he said.

The Nation

Chinese minister meets PAF chief in Beijing

BEIJING - Chinese State Councilor and Defense Minister General Wei Fenghe met with visiting Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of the Air Staff of Pakistan Air Force, in Beijing.

Wei said China and Pakistan are unique all-weather strategic cooperative partners. Military-to-military relations between China and Pakistan are an important pillar of bilateral relations, Chinese media reported Wednesday.

It is hoped that the two sides will work together to implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, further strengthen high-level exchanges and strategic communication, enrich and expand practical cooperation, enhance the capacity to deal with various security risks and challenges, so as to contribute to building a closer community of shared future for China and Pakistan in the new era, Wei added.

Chinese companies keen to set up JVs in multiple sectors in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD - A delegation of Chinese companies led by Yong Yang visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and showed keen interest to setup JVs with Pakistani counterparts in multiple sectors including IT, cyber security, real estate, solar energy, banking & finance, printing, certifications and other fields. Senator Mian Attique and Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Vice President FPCCI was also present at the occasion.

The Chinese delegation members said that this was their first visit to Pakistan, which was very encouraging and added that they would bring more Chinese companies to Pakistan to explore JVs and business partnerships. They said that their companies were doing business with many countries around the world and now they were focusing on Pakistan for business collaborations.

They said that Chinese companies were ready to join hands with Pakistani counterparts in many fields including green & environment friendly constructions, building of smart towers, production of agricultural products, improving internet & cyber security, producing IT products, generating solar energy, establishing e-educational platforms, promoting e-commerce and other fields. The Chinese delegation members also briefed the local business community about major products of their companies.

Addressing the Chinese delegation, Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the current age was the age of digital economy due to which rapid changes were occurring in the business field. He stressed that Chinese companies should setup JVs in digital businesses with Pakistani counterparts to turn Pakistan into a digital economy. He said that Chinese companies should bring technology and establish partnerships with Pakistani entrepreneurs to produce value added products that would bring significant improvement in Pakistani exports. He also briefed the Chinese delegates about opportunities of investment and JVs in various sectors of Pakistan's economy including CPEC.

Senator Mian Attique said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was determined to develop Pakistan into a digital economy and stressed that Chinese companies should cooperate with Pakistan in realizing this goal. He said that Pak-China Business Council would act as a bridge to promote B2B linkages between Chinese and Pakistani private sectors.

Tahir Abbasi Senior Vice President, Saifur Rahman Khan Vice President ICCI, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Aslam Khokhar, Khalid Chaudhry also shared ideas for developing strong business linkages between Pakistani and Chinese companies to further improve bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries.

Nawaiwaqat

چین کی مدد سے پاکستان نخل کیلئے فوڈ باسکٹ بن سکتا ہے: صدر لاہور چیئرمین

لاہور (کامرس رپورٹر) لاہور چیئرمین کے صدر عرفان اقبال شیخ نے کہا ہے کہ چین کی جدید ٹیکنالوجی اور تجربہ کی مدد سے پاکستان اس نخل کے لیے فوڈ باسکٹ بن سکتا ہے، پاکستان وسیع زرخیز زمین، تمام موسموں اور دنیا کے بہترین نہری نظام جیسی نعمتوں سے مالا مال ہونے کے باوجود جدید ٹیکنالوجی کے فقدان کی وجہ سے فائدہ نہیں اٹھایا۔ انہوں نے ان خیالات کا اظہار لاہور چیئرمین میں چین کے چھوڑنے کی اعلیٰ سطحی وفد سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے کیا۔ لاہور چیئرمین کے نائب صدر میاں زاہد جاوید احمد، چیئرمین چائنا پاکستان اکنامک اینڈ ٹریڈ کونسل شفیق الرحمن اور صدر چین جیان لونے بھی خطاب کیا۔

چین، پاکستان نے زرعی پیداوار بڑھانے کیلئے منصوبے تشکیل دیئے ہیں، خسر و بختیار

اسلام آباد (نمائندہ نوائے وقت) وفاقی وزیر برائے غذائی تحفظ و تحقیق خسر و بختیار نے کہا ہے کہ زراعت سی بیک کا اہم حصہ ہے، چین اور پاکستان نے سی بیک کے تحت زرعی پیداوار بڑھانے کیلئے طویل المدتی تعاون ناقابل تسخیر بنانے کے مترادف ہے، زراعت کی ترقی اور کسان کی خوشحالی برآمدات میں اضافے اور کثیر غیر ملکی زر مبادکمانے کا

بہترین ذریعہ بن سکتی ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ ہمیں زراعت کے شعبے میں پالیسیوں کے تسلسل اور جدید ٹیکنالوجی، نئے رجحانات و تجربات اور مشینری کے استعمال کی ضرورت

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December 20, 2019

Pakistan Observer

China, Pakistan launch smart classroom vision

As part of its efforts to broaden and deepen its operations in Pakistan in various fields, the Global CEO of Weidong, Yuan Hao, inaugurated Weidong Smart Classrooms here in University of Engineering and Technology. The inauguration ceremony was attended by leading professors of the University, members of academic community, senior management of Weidong as well as members of civil society. The idea of smart classroom is part of Higher Education Commission's Vision 2017-2025. Mr. Long Dingbin, the Chinese Consul General Lahore was the Chief guest at the occasion. While speaking at the occasion he emphasized that "China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic and cooperative partners, good friends, good brothers, and good neighbors." The Consul General further added that, "in recent years, CPEC has added new dimensions to the bilateral friendship. Now that CPEC has entered the second phase, cooperation focus has shifted to social livelihood, agriculture and industrial park. Cooperation on education is not only an indispensable part of the bilateral relations, but also an important component of CPEC in social livelihood sector. According to a report of Gawadar Pro mobile news APP, the smart classroom soon to be initiated is exactly an embodiment of the cooperative results of education between our two countries. Commenting on the cooperation of Weidong, the Consul General underscored that: "I do appreciate the strong support from Weidong Cloud Education Group and SUSTech as well. And I'm also grateful for the guidance of UNESCO-ICHEI on the establishment of the smart classroom together with UET Lahore, which is a good thing for the promotion of exchanges and cooperation on the higher education between our two countries." The members of University of Engineering and Technology lauded the efforts of both Chinese government as well as the Weidong in promoting and supporting the Smart Classrooms in the historical UET of Lahore. They expressed the hope that such initiatives will play a critical role in connecting Pakistan with the tectonic shifts happening in the global landscape of information technology and equip Pakistani students and entrepreneurs with tools to benefit from the advancements in IT sector.

The Nation

CPEC Chairman calls on Sheikh Rashid

ISLAMABAD - Chairman China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Lt. General (Retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Thursday called on Minister for Railways Sheikh Rashid Ahmed.

The Minister congratulated Asim Saleem Bajwa on assuming the charge of Chairman CPEC,

Said a Press release issued here. Sheikh Rashid said that Asim Saleem's appointment would provide impetus to the projects under the CPEC.

He said that Pakistan Railways was already undertaking the mega project of Main Line-I (ML-I) which was 1872 kilometers long upgradation of Karachi - Peshawar train route.

The project, being executed as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), would bring economic revolution not only in Pakistan Railways but also in the country, he added.

Giving details of the project, he said that the development of ML-I would include fencing on both sides, repair of bridges and laying of new track from Peshawar to Karachi.

“The project will remove all the unmanned level crossing on the Railway network of ML-I which will also control trains accidents,” the Minister added. He said that the ML-I would be completed in three phases and after the completion of the project, the minimum speed of the train would be 160 kilometer per hour.

“The present government was committed to run the affairs of the Pakistan Railways in transparent manner, “he said. Unfortunately, the Minister said that the previous government purchased engines from abroad and got commissions in the deals, setting aside national interests.

The News

AAUR and Chinese university sign MoU

Rawalpindi: Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) and Shihezi University of China (SUC) signed a Memorandum of understanding (MoU) to extend the scientific cooperation between both universities, here on Thursday.

Prof. Dr. Qamar Zaman Vice Chancellor PMAS-AAUR and Prof. Dr. Fenghua Zhang of SUC signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations.

Under the MoU, both institutes will conduct research on arid oasis and water resource management in the different areas. Both institutes also address the issues of water conservation, salinity, and technology for sustainable agriculture, integrated river basin management from High Mountain to bottom desert zone, remote sensing based monitoring of agricultural land Stalinization and degradation and through improved management trans boundary protection of soil, water and biodiversity. On the occasion, Chinese delegations members Dr. Jiaping Wang, and Dr. Haichang Yang, PMAS-AAUR Director External Linkages Dr. Atta Ul Mohsin, senior faculty members, were also present.

Prof. Dr. Qamar Zaman said that land & water management is a key challenge for the socio-economic development of Pakistan. He also discussed land and water management detail and highlighted threats, challenges and opportunities in Pakistan's context.

He further said that due to increasing population, land use is increasing and water resources are decreasing. There is dire need for future planning to provide alternate solution for water scare

areas and to aware the people about the importance of water and land. He expressed the hope that both institutes will work together to achieve targets.

An International Seminar on “Sustainable Management of Land and Water Resources in Pakistan” also held for students and faculty members. Chinese delegation including Prof. Dr. Fenghua Zhang, Dr. Jiaping Wang, and Dr. Haichang Yang from Shihezi from University of China delivered lecture and share their experiences about Base for Oasis Crops Efficient Production and Agricultural Environment Protection

Dr. Jehanzeb Masud Cheema Associate prof Agri. Engineering, Additional Direction Industrial Linkage, Dr. Khalid Saif Ullah Director of the Institute of Soil Science & Director ORIC and Dr Shahzad Suhail Associate Professor and Dr. Naveed Anjum Assistant Professor from PMAS-AAUR also delivered lectures on soil, land, water management issues in Pakistan.

Speakers stressed on the need for addressing the issue of water resources and action plans to promote water cooperation for sustainable water & land management in Pakistan. They were of the view that “It is the need of the hour to augment new water sources to overcome the upcoming shortage of water in Pakistan.

Delegation visited different research station and departments of university for future research and development of projects.

Nawaiwaqat

سی پیک کے تحت توانائی سیکٹر میں 17.7 ارب ڈالر کی سرمایہ کاری کی گئی

اسلام آباد (اے پی پی) چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری منصوبے کے تحت ملک میں توانائی کے منصوبوں سے 10 ہزار 70 میگاواٹ بجلی قومی گرڈ میں شامل کی جا رہی ہے، سی پیک کے تحت توانائی سیکٹر میں 17.7 ارب ڈالر کی سرمایہ کاری کی گئی ہے۔

December 21, 2019

Business Recorder

China acting as ‘economic booster’: LCCI chief

LAHORE: “Back-to-back visits of Chinese trade delegations are not only reflect unbreakable friendship between the two countries but are also an ample proof of Chinese investors’ growing interest in Pakistan.”

President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Irfan Iqbal Sheikh expressed these views while addressing a delegation of Chinese investors at the Lahore Chamber on Friday. China is acting as economic booster for Pakistan in true sense of words, he said.

He was of the view that Chinese investment and cooperation for building dams in Pakistan can be faith changer as agriculture sector of Pakistan is starving for water and industrial sector is in a dire need of cheap hydel electricity.

“Pakistan is looking for foreign investors and buyers especially belonging to China. It will not be wrong to say that at present it is the most appropriate time and environment where both countries can add a new dimension to their bilateral ties,” he added.

LCCI president said that in last few months, we did have the honour of hosting important trade missions at Lahore Chamber visiting from different parts of China. Frequent visits of Chinese delegation to Pakistan to explore trade and investment opportunities are enough to prove that Pakistan is top priority of the Chinese businessmen, he said.

He invited the Chinese businessmen to join hands with their Pakistani counterparts in information technology, real estate, solar technology, banking & finance, printing, security, cosmetics, porcelain manufacturing and general trading.

LCCI Senior Vice President Ali Hussam Asghar said that both the countries not only share border but also have unanimity of views on various political & economic issues.

“The two countries have a combined market of more than 1.5 billion people but the trade volume needs to be pushed up. Chinese importers may have better prospects for Pakistani goods particularly of carpets, leather and leather products, surgical equipment, sports goods, fruits and vegetables, rice, pharmaceuticals and, cotton,” he added.

Senator Mian Atiq Ur Rehman hoped that Chinese businessmen would find more opportunities for trade and investment.

He said that being a major hub of trade and economic activities, Lahore can provide more opportunities to the Chinese entrepreneurs. He hoped that visit of delegation would be result-oriented and Chinese companies will find new trade partners in Pakistan.

Dawn News

China festival brings food, culture of the Middle Kingdom to the city

KARACHI: A two day Chinese Cultural and Food Festival wrapped up at the Beach Luxury Hotel here on Friday. Apart from the Chinese food, the 30 or so stalls offered Pakistani snacks and confectionery items and even handmade imitation jeweler and decoration pieces.

The Chinese tea sets with four little cups and a teapot beckoned many customers as did the ceramic bowls, chopstick sets, handmade dolls and silk scarves.

Fun-filled activities and some excellent soothing Chinese music also added to the ambience. Many visitors posed with the big laughing Buddha statue or against the huge Chinese dragon as their food were being prepared. Some enjoyed the traditional dances and fireworks. There were also free boat rides and kite flying at the China Creek in front of the hotel.

Most food stalls were set up by well-known eateries. Some of them were solely dedicated to selling Chinese food such as various soups, egg-fried rice, chowmen, while others sold a few Chinese items with other dishes. For instance there was one selling cheesecake and other desserts but they also offered hot and sour soup. Another had dumplings but pakoras too. Yet another offered coffee and bun kebab but spaghetti, macaroni and cheese and lasagna also. There was also stall offering just seafood such as boiled mussels and clams, butter-fried prawns, plain fried prawns, tiger prawns, lobster, chili crabs etc. And if nothing else interested you there was a stall only dedicated to salads and salsa.

Acting Consul General of the People's Republic of China Chen Xiaodong, the chief guest on the occasion, appreciated the initiative as he went around each stall and tasted the food, including the Pakistani cuisine.

Pakistan Observer

Corrupts have no political career in China

All those sympathizing with mafia in Pakistan, must draw lessons from Peoples Republic of China which has already jailed 400 governors and ministers and seems determined to banish corruption, saying those indulging in it, will end their political career forever. China, world's most populous country with 1.5 billion peoples, had turned the lead of history, guarding jealously its fundamental principles of socialism, and yet moving forward, and that too at phenomenal rate to be in race with the modern world, and be technological leaders. It changed its strategy from being purely a communist country with tunic, a mild green uniform for men and women, from top to bottom; it has come a long way since changing strategy in 1978. The road definitely must have been arduous, ridden with hurdles, and difficulties. Yet what human endurance and will to forge ahead, though difficult to sustain, yet was pursued relentlessly, paying it in the end because of sheer perseverance, determination, devotion and duty. Details of all this and many more achievement of attained in last over 40 years, was given at a long briefing session for participants of the Asia Media Workshop at People's Daily office here by Seng Shiming, a professor of doctorate, representing Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, which, though largely successful, still has hunger for taking the country peaks of pristine glory. Agreeing that misconceptions, and deliberate ill-will spread from time to time about Chinese philosophy, its success in mixing fundamentals with modernization, and driving it skyward, which the world has reluctantly begun to acknowledge. They must now say that openly but in their hearts of hearts, they know that China is well on the road to become the world leader in modernization, technological advancements, innovation, and securing a happier, brighter future for their human mass, 800 million of which has already been uplifted from below the poverty line, a role model, which even prime minister Imran Khan repeatedly acknowledged, and wants to adopt those principles to uplift the life style of his own people in Pakistan. Shimming, speaking through an interpreter, repeatedly emphasized that Chinese socialist system is different from those of Scandinavian countries like Sweden, Denmark, and Sweden. Shimming added that

that plenary session of the 19th Communist Party congress, will look for new guidelines to expedite the onerous task of uplifting the country's face, and prove the old saying of hare and tortoise race wrong, for tables can be turned with commitment and devotion. In mobile cell technology China has already way ahead of several countries, introducing 5G system of cell phone and inventing new digital network of televisions, laptops, cell phones, which was demonstrated to journalists at Huawei headquarters Thursday. About checking inflations rate, a price most countries pay in technological advancement, he said Chinese system has indeed been effective. Merely pork prices shot up, that all, as for per capita income he said it varied from regions to regions and from provinces to provinces, so it should not be a worry for common man. Governance has been main theme for the Chinese Communist Party, and today discipline in life style of people, officials and those in communist party, are too vivid to escape notice. China is forging ahead, showing to the world, how old traditions, fundamentals of State governance, and latest advancement can be achieved through inter-mixing of broad principles.

Benefits of BRI to Pakistan lauded

The lately held International Conference on “Cross-Regional Media Fusion among the Belt and Road Partners” by the Centre for Global and Strategic Studies (CGSS) has shown the world how the Belt and Road Initiative is highly welcomed by its member counties.

“Belt and Road Initiative is a harbinger of new era and will bridge the gap between the North and the South,” Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan said at the conference. Major General Syed Khalid Amir Jeffery (ret'd), President CGSS said in the opening remarks that the BRI was a comprehensive project to promote regional connectivity. According to Gwadar Pro APP, prominent speakers from China, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan spoke high about the benefits of the BRI. From Uzbekistan, Ismail Muzaffar Chief Editor, UZREPORT, Tashkent presented his views on Uzbekistan's new strategy of development through media integration. He said Uzbekistan was working diligently for media development and many new government and private channels have been launched with the objective to create awareness among the masses regarding the real facts of the BRI project.

The Nation

China gifts old embassy building to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD- China yesterday announced to gift its old embassy building to Pakistan for the Foreign Service Academy. Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi appreciated Chinese government's offer of transferring Old China Embassy building in Islamabad to FSA. He was talking to Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing during his visit to the building at Diplomatic Enclave in Islamabad.

The Foreign Minister also extended special thanks of Prime Minister Imran Khan for this good move of China. As a goodwill gesture the Chinese Embassy will hand over the building to the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs after its complete renovation and will bear the expenses incurred on the renovation of the building. The Foreign Service Academy will be relocated to the building gifted by China after renovation.

December 22, 2019

Pakistan Observer

FPCCI lauds Pak-China bilateral trade in RMB

China is a trillion dollar economy, trillion dollar exports and imports, surplus in current account, high and growing per capita income with low level of inflation, unemployment and certainly lower interest rate', this was stated by Engr. Daroo Khan Achakzai in his welcome address to Airy, CEO ICBC Pakistan along with his team who visited Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry and held a meeting with FPCCI members and apprised them of the benefits of under taking trade in RMB currency. The FPCCI Chief underscored the need to use RMB as trading currency between Pakistan and China. He said that Currency Swap would be mutually beneficial and go a long way in strengthening economic ties between the two neighboring countries. He also highlighted that average trade volume between Pakistan and China is about US\$ 20 billion annually in which imports from China is US\$ 18 billion and export from Pakistan to China is merely US\$ 2 billion. There is a huge export surplus of US\$ 16 billion in the favor of China. "That is why, Pakistan and China signed bilateral Currency Swap Arrangement to reduce the pressure on the foreign exchange reserves and give a quantum jump to the bilateral trade between the two countries", he said. The FPCCI President also appreciated the services rendered by ICBC in the backdrop of capital-intensive mega investment projects of CPEC and China Pakistan Free trade Agreement (CPFTA) in implementing and facilitating bilateral trade in RMB.

Thus, reducing the ever-increasing pressure on SBP foreign exchange reserves Airy, CEO of ICBC Bank informed that RMB is now approaching its final frontiers, full convertibility and transformation into a "normal" currency used by companies and individuals in some countries especially southeast Asia and regions such as HK MACAU etc. TMB usage in trades and investment with China has opened the door to many new opportunities. He said that SBP has taken comprehensive policy related measures to ensure that imports, exports and financing transactions can be denominated in RMB. All public and private sector enterprises (both of Pakistan and China) are free to choose RMP for bilateral trade and investment activities. Citing some facts and figures he said that market making volume by ICBC Pakistan in first 11 months amounts to 11 billion, 2.5 times of the volume of last year, showing more and more businessmen are inclined to using RMB when trading with Chinese. However, compared with the total trade settlement between China-Pakistan, it only accounts for 5% indicating an enormous space and chances for all businessmen and banking industry.

The News

Zero tariff between China and Pakistan to increase up to 75pc

BEIJING: Proportion of zero tariffs between China and Pakistan to get increased from 35 to 75 percent with coming into force the 2nd Free Trade Agreement between the countries. The proportion of zero tariff commodities will gradually increase, thus substantially raising the level of trade liberalization, says China Economic Net in its report published on Saturday.

Quoting its special commentator Prof. Cheng Xizhong, the report stated the trade liberalization is a development trend, which has both advantages and disadvantages. In my opinion, the advantages are primary. First, it is conducive for the introduction of advanced technology and management experience. Second, it is conducive for promoting reform and improving international competitiveness. Third, it is conducive for the vast number of consumers to get cheap and high-quality products.

China is an active promoter of trade liberalization, especially in order to increase the export of goods by friendly neighboring countries to China; China has adopted many preferential policies to gradually reduce the trade deficit of these countries with China.

It is worth mentioning that recently India has announced its withdrawal from the negotiation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Negotiations on the agreement began in 2013 and RCEP will soon be signed. China's reform and opening up began in Shenzhen. At that time, we had a saying "Shenzhen speed", which means that China's development speed is very fast. At that time, there was a modern high-rise with one floor built in less than five days on average. In early 1980s, Shenzhen was just a small fishing village. After about 25 years of development, it became a modern city, which led to the rapid economic development of the whole country.

The construction of Gwadar Port began at the beginning of this century and it has been nearly 20 years now. Looking at the recent photos of Gwadar Port, it could be assumed that the speed of construction is not satisfactory; in particular the urban development has not taken its shape yet. Although the port is navigable, the scale of material imports and exports is very limited.

Gwadar Port is an extremely important platform, which can extend the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) westward to a more distant region and become an important platform for regional connectivity. At the same time, the construction speed of Gwadar Port determines the development speed of Pakistan as a whole. Therefore, there is need to speed up the construction of Gwadar Port and make it "Shenzhen of Pakistan".

December 23, 2019

Business Recorder

Pakistani students praise Chinese teacher

BEIJING: A number of international students particularly Pakistanis studying at Hunan Vocational College of Chemical Technology has praised their Chinese teacher for taking the utmost care of their food and looking after them during sickness.

A group of nine Pakistani students who arrived to study in the college early this year had to face some problems due to the difference in language, culture, and customs. However, Prof. He Jing, the class teacher, extended a meticulous care to the Pakistanis and other international students and helped them adapt the environment. In hearts of all these students, Prof He Jing is their “Chinese mother”, according to a report published in the local media here on Sunday. According to Prof. He Jing, “Caring the students must be like caring for her own children and she did the same.”

When Pakistani and other international students first arrived at the college, due to different eating habits, Prof. He Jing reported to the school leaders and opened a special window for them to eat delicious meals keeping in view their religious beliefs. Some international students did not adapt the wet weather, and soon fell ill and suffered from cough and a high fever. She not only took them to the hospital for treatment but worked as an interpreter because the patients and the doctors could not understand each other’s language. Prof. He Jing also arranged food for them and spent three full nights in the hospital till the condition of the students declared stable.

“We came to China far away, and Prof. He Jing gave our group the same sense of belonging”, one student said. “Teacher He Jing is the same for Chinese students and foreign students. Some international students did not arrive in time or went out in private. In order to ensure discipline, Prof. He Jing first started with enforcing discipline and guided them with the traditional Chinese education system.

Due to strict management and strict teaching, some students found it difficult to accept and showed resistance. Prof. He Jing always did her work with patience and meticulous and emphasized on the importance of observing discipline. Abdul Rehman, a student in her class commented, “It’s our great pleasure to have such a kind, loving and caring teacher like you.”

Daily Times

Sargodha University works out Confucius Institute formalities with Chinese counterparts

Following the signing of MoU between University of Sargodha and Hanban (Confucius Institute Headquarters) in Beijing in the presence of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chinese premier Le Keqiang on October 8, 2019, Vice Chancellor Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad and Director Pakistan Institute

of China Studies Dr. Fazal ur Rahman participated in the 2019 International Chinese Language Conference” held at Changsha, China.

On the sidelines of the Conference, Hanban organized a meeting among the three stakeholders of CI at Sargodha University i.e. Hanban, Henan Normal University (HNU) and Sargodha University (SU) to work out the details of Implementing Agreement between SU and Hanban. The high-level meeting was attended by Prof Ma Jianfei, Deputy Chief Executive of Hanban, Prof Zhao Guoxiang, and Chairman of the Council at HNU, Vice Chancellor SU, Dr Ishtiaq Ahmad, Mr Zhong Heqing, Cultural Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad, and officials of the Provincial Education Ministry of Henan Province and the International Department of the Henan Normal University.

Prof Jianfei welcomed SU’s entry into the community of global CIs. He explained the key objectives of the CI and hoped that the fifth CI in Pakistan will play a pivotal role in developing deeper understanding of Chinese language and culture in Pakistan to bring the people of two brotherly countries closer.

Dr. Ahmad thanked Hanban, HNU and the Chinese Embassy for creating this exceptionally significant opportunity for SU, which will help Pakistani youth to acquire language skills, develop deep understanding of Chinese culture and civilization to become useful partners in development of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative. He explained the crucial role of SU for being located in the agricultural hub of Punjab and how he envisaged building upon this opportunity to benefit the youth and local community.

The Chinese counterparts assured the Vice Chancellor of their full support and hoped the CI at SU will be a milestone in the development of Pakistan and China-Pakistan relations.

The meeting at Changsha was followed by a visit to HNU, which being a partner university will share the management of the CI at SU. During the formal meeting, the leaders and officials of the two universities shared their vision and discussed the processes to be undertaken for finalization of the Implementation Agreement. The meeting was attended by Prof Chang Junbiao, President of HNU, Prof Cheng Yunxiang, Dean of College of International Education, Prof Li Yongxian, Dean of School of Chinese and Literature, Prof. Liang Xiaodong, Dean of Faculty of International Studies, Prof. Liu Xianguo, Dean of College of Physical Education, Prof. Duan Xu, Dean of College of Music and Dance, Prof. Ding Xiaosheng, Party Secretary of Life Sciences, and Prof. Du Xuguang, Vice Dean of Academy of Fine Arts.

The meeting concluded by agreeing that:

- * The two sides will make preparations in line with Hanban’s policies for establishing the CI and signing of the Implementation Agreement as soon as possible.
- * CI will be used as a platform for cooperation in the other areas of common interest and resources available in the two universities.
- * Exchange of short academic visits of faculty and students.

* Creating opportunities for split degree program and scholarships on reciprocal basis

Pakistan Observer

China will implement OBOR idea in consultation with Pakistan

PEOPLES Republic of China dispelled impression Sunday that it wishes to dictate terms to countries, participating in One Belt-One-Road (OBOR) idea. It instead would give it practical shape only in consultation with them. That principle also applied to Pakistan which is China's partner in 67 billion roads CPEC project. This was clarified in unambiguous terms by Dr Jin Xin, Director of China Centre for Contemporary World Studies, and International Department of Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party at a media briefing at People's Daily office here.

He was asked whether CPEC meant bringing Chinese Companies and workers to Pakistan for economic zones to be set up under the plan, or confining itself to joint ventures with Pakistani entrepreneurs, and brings their skilled manpower and technical staff for training session for those hired for these projects. CPEC, because of its biggest ever investment in Pakistan, has received national endorsement for on completion it will take Pakistan to pristine heights of economic uplift. However some doubts existed that it would mean Chinese domination in major projects, which was erased by the highly placed official of the ruling party of this country. Dr Jin emphasized that BRI (Belt and Road idea) was an economic proposition ensuring development of Infra-structure in less developed countries in order to make them stand on their feet and produce quality goods, essential for their future, and for uplifting the face of that country. For instance, he explained that Japan may be asked to help Thailand develop such an asset for itself and be counted among the rising nations of the world. Dispassionate analysis would show that China's history has been replete with heroism and helping the people of the world, instead of being an imperial or colonial power, which former Soviet Union was, and paid the price with its disintegration in Afghanistan. Chinese help for the people of Korea and Vietnam is shining glittering chapter of modern history.

He added that countries, with different philosophies, policies and perceptions can participate if they so wished to. The idea is to globally connect them together so that not so rich or less fortunate countries, too produce quality goods, and raise the level of their respective people. "We like to share our experiences with countries with a view to develop their railways, waterways, air traffic, and information highway. BRI is economic cooperation; he said and added that globalization needs combined efforts of all? China over the years for international cooperation it had many options like one for China, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, but he lamented that western media reports had been creating confusion about BRI, which was regrettable. In removing such misconceptions media can play a very effective role by explaining to the world real intentions behind such an idea, vision of President Xi Ji Ping. Lot of misinterpretation was done about China's plans in Sri Lanka and Djibouti. About CPEC, he said, China will pick up projects in consultation with the Pakistani government.

China to set up research centre at MNSUA

Under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the Chinese Agriculture Ministry will set up an Evapotranspiration Research Centre at the Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture (MNSUA). A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Schezin University (China) and the MNSUA had been signed the last week, said Professor Dr Shafqat Saeed, Dean Faculty of the Agriculture and Environmental Science, MNSUA. A three-member delegation of the Schezin University visited the MNSUA and signed the MoU. Dr Shafqat Saeed said the agriculture sector was facing a shortage of water, adding that water was saline in some areas in the country which was also affecting the agriculture productivity.

Drop in CAD at cost of industrial growth not acceptable: FEBR

The Friends of Economic and Business Reforms (FEBR) has appreciated the government's efforts to narrow down current account deficit but warned the authorities that balance of accounts should not be at the cost of local industry's growth. FEBR President Kashif Anwar, in a statement issued here on Sunday, said that current account deficit reduced to \$1.821 billion in July-November FY20, from \$6.733 billion a year earlier due to huge fall in imports while exports posted a marginal growth. The government strict import policy along with high cost of doing business owing to multiple raises in fuel cost and energy tariffs have almost halted the industrial production, he added. The current account deficit reduction should be based on growth in exports, resulting into growth in industrial production as well as employment generation. But unfortunately the present turnaround is largely due to the fall in imports that has accompanied sharp slowdown in growth after the currency devaluation and gradual increase in interest rates, which sent shockwaves through the economy. The industry raw material which is not manufactured in Pakistan has also included in list of high import duties. It is good that the current account deficit narrowed 80% to a 41-month low at \$259 million in September last but it also came at the cost of country's economic growth. The deficit stood at \$1.27 billion in the same month of last year. Kashif Anwar observed that the measures taken by the central bank to aggressively cut unwanted imports through a significant hike in the benchmark interest rate and attempts to revive exports and earn higher remittances through rupee depreciation helped bring down the current account deficit. The measures, however, have adversely impacted the growth of gross domestic product (GDP) at the same time, he added. He said that for the first time in 10 years, the growth in large-scale manufacturing (LSM) industries contracted over 3.6% in the last fiscal year ended June 2019 after almost all major sectors recorded reduction in their output, deepening concern about a protracted economic slowdown and a high unemployment rate. FEBR President said that the government would have to fix structural issues in the economy once and for all. We have to increase exports on a sustainable basis, create import substitutes to make a permanent reduction in imports, attract higher remittances and bring foreign direct investment (FDI) in different projects to have a sustainable current account balance," he said. Foreign direct investment into Pakistan also surged 78 percent to \$849 million in July-November FY20, while portfolio flows stood at \$1.2 billion, which is good news for the country, he added. FEBR appreciates that the government was successful in bringing down the deficit from a historic high

of \$19.897 billion in FY18 to \$13.830 billion in FY19. “On one hand, this massive decline has helped government reduce the current account deficit, whereas on the other, it has also slowed down the overall economic activity in the country.” The data showed the large decline in imports was the real force behind the 64 percent reduction in the deficit whereas, exports of goods and services during the quarter increased by a meager 1.38 percent or \$99 million. The exports services during the quarter clocked in at \$7.259 billion compared to \$7.160 billion in the same period last fiscal year. Kashif Anwar said that the reduced current account deficit is a positive omen for the government, which is struggling with slow economic growth and high inflation.

The Nation

Chinese entrepreneurs urged to help Pak exporters

LAHORE - Chinese efforts to bring mutual trade to a win-win situation would be a great favor to the economy of Pakistan. Chinese entrepreneurs should help Pakistani exporters to show their full presence in the Chinese markets.

These views were expressed by LCCI Vice President Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad while talking to a 24-member Chinese delegation from Shandong Province of China at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The delegation, which has a vast range of businessmen from investors to vendors, was led by Yang Jun while LCCI EC members Muhammad Khalid, Haji Asif Seher, Wasif Yousaf & Fayyaz Haider and Mustafa Kauser were also present.

Mian Zahid Jawaid Ahmad said that the balance of trade between the two countries is heavily in favor of China, which requires to be turned into a win – win situation for both the countries. Pakistani products are best of the best and easily cater to the needs of Chinese market.

He said that both the countries not only share border but also have unanimity of views on various political & economic issues. The two countries have a combined market of more than 1.5 billion people and the trade volume needs to be pushed up. The Chinese importers may have better prospects for Pakistani goods particularly of carpets, leather and leather products, surgical equipment, sports goods, fruits and vegetables, rice, pharmaceuticals, cotton etc. He said that Chinese investors should explore the business opportunities in the fields of refrigeration, healthcare products, locomotive accessories, rubber products, steel pipes/sheets, laser equipment, bearings, engineering tools, auto parts and machinery etc. He said that the projects under CPEC which holds key importance for One-Belt-One-Road program is inspiring the business community of China to consider Pakistan for further expanding trade & investment relations. This scenario promises to add new dimensions to bilateral ties. “It is encouraging to see that public and private sectors from both sides are actively engaged in policy consulting, technology exchange, market networking, investment consulting and brand recognition etc. We hope that these interactions will give us more exposure to excel”, he added. China opens its market to Pakistani agricultural products.

December 24, 2019

Pakistan Observer

China to invite 10,000 political parties representatives for consensus on Belt and Road Initiative

CHINA plans to build healthy relationship with all political parties, and groups of the world, to fulfill the plan of Belt and Road initiative some 10,000 delegates from political parties of the world groups will be invited because the dream has to be realized, said Jiang Jian, of International Department of Central Committee of the Communist Party at a media briefing here Monday.

He made it clear his country did not wish to impose its will on anyone. It had already established contacts with several political parties of the world, and wants to work in unison so that better results could be achieved of a major initiative of President Xi. Lamenting that Western media had been building unnecessary hype that China was a threat to peace far from truth. The world knows China's role as peace-maker, and its endeavors and consistent hard work to ensure a happier future for the people of different countries. China never posed threat to any country of the world. Its communist party was formed 98 years ago, and the country and now it is in 70th anniversary of its founding. Instead of interfering in the affairs of sovereign countries, it concentrated on improving the life style of its own people, and those of many other country, lifting some 800 million of its people from below poverty line, which mean that during the last 7 years ever since President Xi Ji Ping, took over as secretary general of the party, and as head of State, 137 million souls were alleviated from poverty annually. China's per capital income rose from US dollars 40 in 1949 to almost 1000 Dollar in last 40 years, which was far above the performance in the field of European States. China's motto has always been peace, progress, development, for itself and for others, afflicted with poverty, and struggling to uplift the fate of its masses. Poverty alleviation programme hopefully will be completed by the end of next year, i.e. 2020, he said.

He said because of its efforts, political parties from some 400 countries had been contacted in 60 countries, with which it had been maintaining good relationship. Jianhua that China never posed threat to world peace in the last 5000 years. History bears testimony to that. There could not be a single instance of aggression from our side. In fact it helped countries repel aggression in the past(perhaps a reference to Korean war of the 50s, and Vietnam war that went on for more than a decade).China believed in development and democracy, and treated all countries equally irrespective its size of territory or population. It never occupied any territory, he went on record. He said that it desired that South Asian countries developed and be a source of strength to for world peace. China in fact contributed largest number of troops to peace keeping force under the United Nations in areas of conflict from time to time. Unfortunately Western countries wanted to sabotage China's efforts for peaceful world, flourishing economy, and happier future for the people of the world. Many groups were active in destroying its efforts, which indeed was

regrettable. China was willing to work with other countries in improving the balance of payment position with them, he concluded.

China opens its market to Pakistani agricultural products

China is trying to increase its import of agricultural products from Pakistan, so as to enhance bilateral trade between the two countries. There are some special arrangements for some goods. Recently, Pakistan has obtained a quota of 300,000 tons of sugar to export to China, reports China Economic Net on Monday. According to the report, currently 80% of the world's sugar comes from sugarcane and 20% from beet. Pakistan's sugar is mainly produced from sugarcane. Pakistan is rich in raw materials for sugar production and their quality is relatively good. On the other hand, China's sugar manufacturing equipment and technologies are far more advanced. If Pakistani producers want to improve sugar quality and increase export, it was suggested they should import relevant equipment and technologies from China or establish joint ventures with Chinese partners, so as to improve the country's international competitiveness. China has a large population, and Chinese people like to eat fruits. Now, China has become the largest importer of agricultural products. In 2018, it imported 137.1 billion U.S. dollars of agricultural products, including 4.86 million tons of fresh fruits, with an increase of 26%, and the volume increased by 36% reaching 7 billion U.S. dollars. It may be mentioned here that in the past, China imported a large number of fruits from India and Australia. Due to the recent outbreak of a virus in India, China has suspended the import of fruits from India for the time being. Due to the high price of Australian fruits and some other reasons, China may also reduce the import of fruits from Australia. At the same time, Pakistan mango, citrus and keno have successively obtained market access in China. As a result, Pakistan has got an opportunity to significantly increase its export of fruits to China. Pakistan does not play an important role in China's foreign trade. China's export to Pakistan accounts for less than 1% of China's total export, while China's import from Pakistan only accounts for about 0.01% of China's total import. But considering the relationship between the two countries and China's wish to help Pakistan strengthen its financial position, China is trying to import as much from Pakistan as possible. As long as Pakistan's agricultural products, especially fruits, are of good quality, the Chinese markets are fully open to Pakistan, the report added.

Gwadar's contribution in GDP to surge to over \$200b by 2050

The contribution of Gwadar's smart port city in Pakistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will rise up to US\$200 billion to \$300 billion by 2050. According to a forecast by ministry of planning and development, the contribution of Gwadar in Pakistan's economy would rise to \$6 billion in short term by 2025 and \$24 billion in 2035. Similarly the per capita income of the citizens of Gwadar city would be around \$2000 in 2025 while it would rise to \$4000 by 2035. According to the long term forecast, the per capita income of the city would further surge to around \$10,000 to \$15,000. Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan is a vital part of the multibillion dollar China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which after completion would transform the port city into a hub of industrialization, commercial activity and international marine trade. As

the city would grow, it will also create a huge number of employment opportunities for the local as well as for the people hailing from other parts of the country, an official in the ministry said. He said the development of the port, free zone and industrial zones will create huge job opportunities and the employed population is expected to reach 9000 to 12000 in short term, 24000 to 30,000 in medium term while 100,000 to 120,000 in long term. The labor participation will also be increased and Gwadar will become a productive and efficient city. The Gwadar master plan was developed way back in 2006, and it got delayed due to flaws and lack of interest by the past governments.

However on August 23 this year, the governing body of Gwadar Development Authority accorded final approval to the Master Plan while the feasibility study (PC-II) for implementation of Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan was approved by Balochistan Provincial Development Authority (PDWP) at a total cost of Rs 300 million on November 13, 2019. Under the plan, the government is planning to build diversified, prosperous, dynamic, and green industrial system so as to achieve fast economic growth and establish a new engine for regional economy. In the short term, Gwadar advantages in fisheries and geographical location will be given full play, with focus on its competitive industry.

December 25, 2019

Pakistan Observer

Game changer in year 2019

CHINA-Pakistan Economic Corridor is excelling with pace and as the year 2019 is soon going to end, this CPEC project outshines while shunning all kind of negative propaganda created against it. CPEC is a project of regional connectivity and is an extension of China's vision of grander linkages in the form of One Belt, One Road-OBOR initiative. An enormous initiative of connecting Asia with other regions, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a multibillion dollar venture as part of China's "One Belt, One Road" concept. By way of Gwadar as its pivot in Pakistan, CPEC holds remarkable assurance of economic surpluses not only for Pakistan and China but other regions also. These include Central Asian Republics, Far East, Middle East, Africa and Europe. Located on Pakistan's Makran coast and near to international gateway of Strait of Hormuz, envisioning a well-designed dock at Gwadar with all coupled services comprising industrial and processing sectors could easily become a foundation for inter and intra-regional economic gain.

It will surely provide foreign depositors encouraging preambles and hoist the region's unfledged zones. The CPEC is a collection of projects currently under construction at a cost of \$46 billion which is intended to rapidly expand and upgrade Pakistani infrastructure, as well as deepen and broaden economic links between Pakistan and the People's Republic of China. The Corridor is considered to be an extension of China's ambitious proposed 21st century Silk Road initiative, and is considered central to Pak-China relations. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as a

pilot project of the “Belt and Road” Initiative, was officially launched in 2013. President Xi Jinping, during his visit to Pakistan in April 2015, noted that the CPEC construction should play a leading role in the practical cooperation between the two countries, and determined the “1+4” layout of cooperation focusing on the CPEC construction supported by the Gwadar port, energy, transportation, infrastructure and industrial cooperation. Practices in the past five years have proved that the CPEC construction is not targeting specific regions or groups, but is aiming at the whole country of Pakistan and benefits all the people of Pakistan.

As the project involves huge amount of investment by China, naturally the rivalries and diplomatic matters question a lot. Considering the Sino-US trade war element, the West had and still has apprehensions how China is encompassing world economy. Likewise the location of Pakistan and Gwadar is a way that it provides cheapest route for world trade thus making it a future economic hub which is not acceptable to rivals. One way or another, this 46 billion dollar mega project has remained in limelight since its inception. Apart from pressure from foreign countries, not to forget that some elements inside Pakistan tried to make it controversial by quoting that China is investing in such a big amount that is equal to selling Pakistan to foreign hands but with time these things are proven wrong. Earlier there were speculations or controversies on this project fund distribution by politicians and local populace or this venture grabbed international attention and remained target of their conspiracies. But this CPEC moved on with success and still continues to flourish without any odds. In the past when general election was about to happen in 2018 or previously when Pakistan went through political hiccups and with ouster of previous governments which worked much on this corridor, a certain group of masses questioned on Pakistan-China joint Endeavour.

Many assumptions were that this project will lose its pace with the change of government in near future or will lose its momentum for development. For those who are pessimistic about this project must know that this project is not bound to political ups and downs rather it's a testimony of over 70 years long Pak-China all weather friendship. And today time has proven that after completing first phase of CPEC project, in year 2019 it has started work on Phase-II which shows seriousness on both sides about the early completion of this project. China as a friendly and time-tested neighbor has always mentioned that it hopes that all parties and sections in Pakistan can prioritize state and national interests, properly deal with their domestic affairs, maintain unity, stability and keep focusing on the economic and social development. China believes that the China-Pakistan strategic cooperative partnership will not be affected by the change of the situation inside Pakistan and China stands ready to work with Pakistan to continue jointly building the One Belt and One Road.

CPEC is an Endeavour of economic opportunities and development and will largely benefit Pakistan. CPEC's importance to China's geopolitical and economic goals is reflected by the inclusion of the project as part of China's 13th five year development plan. Statistics suggest that if the projects are completed in due course with desired investment then the value of those projects would be equal to all foreign direct investment in Pakistan since 1970, and would be

equivalent to 17% of Pakistan's 2015 gross domestic product. Pakistan estimates the corridor project will create some 700,000 direct jobs till year 2030 and add up to 2.5 percentage points to the country's growth rate. Pakistan is one of the top ten emerging economies of South Asia being the 42nd largest in terms of nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 6th most populous country in the world (Pakistan Economic Survey, 2016-17). According to World Bank Report (2017) Pakistan records highest growth in nine years mainly because of growing consumer market and investor confidence in early half of this year. Reports claim that Pakistan has sixth world population giving it a nominal GDP per capita of \$ 1,357 in 2019 which ranks 154 in world and giving it a PPP, GDP per capita of 5,839 in 2019 which ranks 132nd in world for year 2019.

Gross domestic product (GDP) denotes the aggregate value of all services and goods produced within a country in any given year. GDP is an important indicator of a country's economic power. In 2018, Pakistan's gross domestic product amounted to around 314.59 billion U.S. dollars. Pakistan has semi-industrialized economy and its major exports include textiles, leather goods, sports goods, chemicals, carpets and medical instruments. The economy primarily consists of three major sectors which are agriculture, industry and services. Improved security situation of Pakistan and playing pivotal role in war against terrorism, Pakistan's efforts are acknowledged world-wide. Pakistan has strategic location in South Asia with easy access to Central Asian States and China making it an important hub in world trade and investment.

Huge investment through CPEC in various projects has boosted confidence of European and Western countries that wish to invest in Pakistan. Also evading the FATF black list has given foreign investors to trust Pakistan's serious efforts in curbing corruption and money laundering. In the past, the environment for investment has been less favorable due to internal and external circumstances. Over the years the trend of FDI remained fluctuating and irregular. Two peaks have been observed in the past where FDI was maximum; one was during 1995-96 and second was in 2007-08 which relatively experienced huge influx of foreign investment inflows especially in the industries of telecommunication, banking and E-commerce. However, the situation has changed from 90s onward where better government policies and initiatives have given rise to investment friendly climate. FDI inflows are increasing showing the improvement in multinationals' confidence in country economy.

Currently, Pakistan has made many successes by making it easier to start a business, setting up of electronic processing for exports and imports, and strengthening port infrastructure because of which Pakistan has ranked at 147th in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index among 190 countries (Economic Survey of Pakistan, 2017). Generating favorable circumstances of investment in Pakistan via CPEC, Pakistan's macroeconomic conditions have improved and its economy has maintained a momentum of rapid growth. Over the past five years, Pakistan's GDP grew by an average of 4.77%, especially in the 2017-2018 fiscal year when Pakistan's GDP grew by 5.8%, being the highest growth rate in the recent 13 years. Pakistan's annual foreign direct investment grew from US\$650 million to US\$2.2 billion, and the per capita annual income rose

from US\$1,334 to US\$1,641. CPEC has solved the problem of limited investment capacity caused by insufficient savings and shortage of foreign exchange in Pakistan and provided a high-quality source of impetus for Pakistan's economic development. As of January 2019, CPEC included 9 completed early harvest projects and 13 projects under construction, with a total investment of US\$19 billion. It drove Pakistan's economic growth by one to two percentage points every year and created 70,000 jobs in Pakistan. The Chinese government provided US\$5.874 billion in concessional loans to Pakistan, with a consolidated interest rate of only 2%, far lower than the average interest rate. The Chinese government also provided US\$143 million in interest-free loans for the Gwadar East-Bay Expressway project and free assistance for some livelihood projects in Pakistan.

CPEC is not about industrialization but one of its prime focus is on agriculture too. As Pakistan's economy is agrarian based hence to ease the lives of farmers, provision of new technologies and equipment and robust training of farmers is also CPEC agenda. Construction of deep sea port at Gwadar is in process but the port is operational with day to day small scale activities. Likewise, construction of nine Special Economic Zones was proposed in this flagship project. Special economic zones (SEZs) are considered as engines of economy for their role to uplift the economy through trade boost-up, widening export base, geographic expansion and other social privileges. Around the world there exist several examples of successful SEZs also located in Asian region. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor proposed nine SEZs in all provinces of Pakistan. Efforts to boost people to people contact, student exchange programmes, educational and social liaison on both sides of Pak China are also vision of CPEC. Apart from focusing on G2G and B2B, efforts for strengthening people to people contact, media and cultural exchanges (including movies, drama, theatre etc.) are part of CPEC too. Both sides intend to promote Chinese and Pakistani culture and heritage as a way of long term partnership and for this Consortium of Top Business Schools from Chinese and Pakistan sides are established. HEC is also leading one of the projects.

Apart from industrial projects, there are certain sectors which are waiting for immediate response by government and officials. Tourism is one such sector which needs immediate attention as during construction of CPEC routes there are many unexplored beautiful areas in Pakistan which if developed with all necessities can generate revenue apart from providing jobs to locals. Likewise with the construction of another port in the country, sea food sector can be explored and exported to countries which rely on sea-food as basic commodity. With this the tin, processed and halal packed food products industry can gain momentum too. Instead of relying on big industries, small and medium enterprises hold equal opportunities in Pakistan and must not be neglected. CPEC is a win-win model and past few years have proved that if something is done with sincerity and good intentions, result definitely come as desired. Hopes must be kept high that in coming few years, this CPEC will surely prove a fate changer to Pakistan.

December 26, 2019

Dawn News

From The Past Pages of Dawn: 1969: Fifty Years Ago: Chinese Muslims' gift

KARACHI: The chandelier to be installed in the mausoleum of the Quaid-i-Azam will be a gift from the Muslims of the People's Republic of China. The ship carrying the prized chandelier entered the Pakistan waters early yesterday morning.

Manufactured by the top-notch artisans of China, the chandelier is 65 feet tall and is made in four tiers, each tier being circular in shape and dotted with star and glass beads so that the special fittings produce a mystical light and shade effect. No cost estimate of the chandelier is available, because it is being presented to the Pakistan Government by the Muslim Association of China. It will be recalled that the order for the chandelier was originally placed with a British firm and cost about Rs25, 000.

A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad, commenting on the gift, which coincides with the 93rd birthday anniversary of the Quaid-e-Azam, said that it was a very beautiful symbol of close friendship between China and Pakistan.

Protecting CPEC

THIS is apropos the news item 'CPEC to push Pakistan deeper into debt burden, cautions US' (Nov 23). Pakistan should preserve, protect and complete the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project as it is in our national interests.

But we must also continue to develop better, broader and deeper economic and trading ties with the US. It is inevitable that the Sino-US competition and rivalry will gather pace in the coming competitive times. We must diversify and broaden our interests and ties with all important regions i.e., the US, the West, the Arab-Islamic world, China and its allies, and, of course, Russia and Central Asia. This strategy is perhaps what India has been following all along. The greater the variety in our ties, the greater will be our standing in the world trade.

The more we are globally involved, the more we will be better understood and, consequently, the more input we could put in to discuss and resolve pending and emerging issues in the Middle East, South and Central Asia and Asia as a whole.

We are already one of the prized contributors of peacekeepers to the UN efforts the world over. Our think tanks and the establishment should carefully assess this international relations philosophy so that we do not become a part of 'a specific alignment'.

Chinese keen to invest in economic zones

ISLAMABAD: Chinese business delegation on Wednesday visited Allama Iqbal Industrial City to strengthen bilateral trade relations through exploring business potential and investment opportunities.

The delegation visited the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) of Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Both sides discussed issues for improvement in various sectors and projects, said a press release.

Highlighting the development projects of the FIEDMC, Mian Kashif Ashfaq said that around Rs357 billion foreign and local investments will be injected into various projects, which clearly indicates that investors have reposed complete confidence in the present regime. More than 25 Chinese firms have made agreements to invest in the industrial city, he added. He said that Allama Iqbal Industrial City has been planned over an area of 4,000 acres, which is strategically located on Motorway M-4 near Sahianwala Interchange, Faisalabad.

He further said that all industries within the export processing zone will be exempted from tax for a period of 10 years and plants, machinery, raw material and other equipment can be imported duty-free. Representatives of the Chinese delegation said Pakistan and China were all-weather strategic co-operative partners and their partnership was aimed at promoting peace, development and prosperity in the region.

They stressed that the Chinese investors were confident about Pakistan's economic potential and hoped that the economic relationship between the two countries would increase. Later, the delegation visited different parts of industrial city and expressed their satisfaction over the pace of development of various ongoing projects.

The FIEDMC chairman said the importance of the CPEC as a strategic alternative is immense, leveraging the economic opportunities that can unleash its strategic significance and bring prosperity, peace, as well as stability in the whole region.

Pakistan Observer

Chinese investors delegation visits FIEDMC

A high-level Chinese investors delegation Wednesday visited Allama Iqbal Industrial City, a mega prioritized project of Special Economic Zone (SEZ) of Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) under CPEC to strengthen bilateral trade relations through exploring business potential and investment opportunities. Mian Kashif Ashfaq, chairman FIEDMC and Muhammad Aamer Saleemi chief operating Officer received the delegation and apprised them of the development of the project. Both the sides discussed issues for improvement in various sectors and projects. Highlighting the development projects of FIEDMC, Mian Kashif Ashfaq said that around Rs357 billion foreign and local investments will be injected into various projects, which clearly indicates that investors have reposed complete confidence in the present regime. "More than 25 Chinese companies had made agreements for investments in the industrial city," he added He said that Allama Iqbal Industrial City has been planned over an area of 4000 acres, which is strategically located on Motorway M-4 near Sahianwala Interchange, Faisalabad.

He further said all industries within the export processing zone will be exempted from tax for a period of 10 years and plants, machinery, raw material and other equipment will be imported duty-free. Representatives of the Chinese delegation said Pakistan and China were all-weather strategic co-operative partners and their partnership was aimed at promoting peace, development and prosperity in the region. They also emphasized that the special relationship between the two countries was reflected in expression of warmth by the Chinese people towards Pakistan at every occasion. They stressed that the Chinese investors were confident about Pakistan's economic potential and hoped that the economic relationship between the two countries would reach the level of their excellence.

The Express Tribune

Chakdara-Gilgit road to be alternate CPEC route

PESHAWAR: The provincial government is working on constructing a road to link Chakdara in Lower Dir with the northern town of Gilgit as an alternative route for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in the province. Like other CPEC routes, this route is also expected to help boost tourism and economy along with it.

This was disclosed on Wednesday during a meeting between Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Chief Minister Mahmood Khan with the provincial Minister for Communications and Works Akbar Ayub Khan at the CM Secretariat in Peshawar. The route will comprise the Shandoor and Chitral roads as well. During the meeting, it was disclosed that work to finalise the Project Concept-1 (PC-I) of the 'Chakdara-Gilgit CPEC link is expected to be completed soon. Mahmood said that the government believes tourism has great potential to uplift the economy of the region, adding that they were developing tourist destinations in the northern areas to provide employment to locals.

He reiterated that expanding communication networks, building roads, promoting tourism and opening industrial zones remain the top priorities of the provincial government.

The chief minister added that the provincial government has initiated projects for sustainable development and prosperity in the newly-merged tribal districts (NMTDs). Efforts in this regard were underway to improve bilateral trade with Afghanistan and other Central Asian countries to boost economic activities in the province.

Such activities, he hoped, will further enhance regional cooperation, law and order and bilateral trade. However, the chief minister hinted that there were sparse funds available locally to achieve such development; hence he said that foreign investment was crucial for the development of the province. For this purpose, he said that the provincial government is trying to attract foreign investment and making it easier to do business in K-P.

Mahmood further stated that the provincial government is taking all possible steps to bring about an economic revolution in the province and that they will create public awareness about all public interest measures so that the people can draw benefit from such initiatives.

The chief minister said that the government has formulated an integrated strategy for economic stability in the province. Operationalizing of industrial zones across the province will not only pave the way for development but will also provide greater employment opportunities to the people, he said. The chief minister further stated that focus was also being given for peace and prosperity in the province along with developmental projects. K-P Information Minister Shaukat Ali Yousafzai and CM's Principal Secretary Shahab Ali Shah were also present on the occasion.

Chinese delegation visits Allama Iqbal Industrial City

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Chinese investors visited the Allama Iqbal Industrial City, a mega prioritized project of the Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), to strengthen bilateral trade relations through exploring business potential and investment opportunities.

The Chinese officials met with FIEDMC Chairman Mian Kashif Ashfaq, along with other officials, and discussed issues for improvement in various sectors and projects.

Highlighting the development projects of FIEDMC, Ashfaq said that foreign and local investments of around Rs357 billion will be injected into various projects, which clearly indicate that investors have reposed, complete confidence in the present regime.

“More than 25 Chinese companies made agreements for investments in the industrial city,” he added. He said that the industrial city has been planned over an area of 4,000 acres, which is strategically located on the M-4 motorway near Sahianwala Interchange, Faisalabad. The chairman further added that all industries within the export processing zone shall be exempted from tax for a period of 10 years, and plants, machinery, raw materials and other equipment will be imported duty-free.

Representatives of the Chinese delegation said that Pakistan and China were all-weather strategic co-operative partners and their partnership was aimed at promoting peace, development and prosperity in the region. They stressed that the Chinese investors were confident about Pakistan's economic potential and hoped that the economic relationship between the two countries would reach new heights.

The Nation

China transferring knowledge, tech under CPEC

ISLAMABAD - China will continue to focus on transfer of knowledge and technology to Pakistan under CPEC for further cultivating the country's socio-economic structure. The cooperation between Pakistani government and China is distinctive with that of other countries, says a report published by the Gwadar Pro APP. So far China is the only country which has offered Pakistan the technology and knowledge transfer in various fields, especially energy, transport and agriculture. In the energy sector, China has transferred various renewable energy production technology methods to Pakistan, including wind energy. Cooperation in industrial

sector under CPEC is also ensuring transfer of technology, knowledge and skills to Pakistan. CPEC is therefore helping to promote knowledge-based economy in Pakistan, which is the need of new age in the world. According to the report, in the agriculture area, CPEC has allowed new avenues of technology transfer and cooperation in agro-chemicals, pesticides, seed and fertilizer sectors. Under CPEC, to bring latest technologies to Pakistan, government is taking appropriate measures. Government of China, on priority basis, under the Economic Cooperation Agreement, is also taking steps to develop these industries of Pakistan and to bring modern technology in practice, the report added.

December 27, 2019

Pakistan Observer

China in the Middle East

THE Middle East widely known for the origin of first civilization, rich history, blessed with natural resources and its geostrategic location further makes it epicenter of competition for global and regional players. The Middle East since post-cold war remained under the US ascendancy. However, China in the last decade has emerged a significant player in the region. China, unlike the US, orchestrates its economic activities rather than military power. China's obsession with ME is attributed for two bona fide reasons, its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and energy demand. China has become the biggest importer of the crude oil, half of its supply is imported from the Middle East. In mankind history, the Middle East remained crossroad for trade routes having significant sea lines connecting Asia to Europe and Africa. Thus, the Middle East would be a crucial region for China's energy need and its monolithic BRI. Beijing, in the Middle East, intends to avoid direct confrontation with Western intervention rather desires to remain neutral in the region. According to Dr Degang Sun Deputy Director of the Middle East Studies, Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, China articulates that China believes in multiplier order in the Middle East avoiding interference in domestic politics, promoting win-win situation for all stakeholders that would promote stability through "developmental peace" rather than the western notion of "democratic peace". China so far has signed 15 partnership agreements with the ME countries participating in maritime security missions and anti-piracy in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Above all, it has conducted considerable operations for the purpose of rescuing its nationals from Yemen in 2015 and Libya in 2011. Meanwhile, China expedited its efforts for mediation in Yemen and Syria. It played a leading role in Iran nuclear deal persuaded Iran to sign the deal. It is a fait accompli, without Iran's support enhancing foothold in the Middle East would be counterproductive to China. Fascinatingly, China is not bothered with the US sanction against Iran instead is going to invest \$ 400 billion investment in Iran damning the US sanction. China will invest in Iran's oil and gas sector; out of \$ 400 billion it will invest \$ 280 billion in Iran's oil and gas and petrochemical sector, while \$ 120 billion will be invested in transport and manufacturing infrastructure. On the other hand, China is unlikely to alienate Iran's archrival, Saudi Arabia. Keeping both Iran and

Saudi Arabia under Chinese influence is increasingly important for the Chinese clout in the region. China has also signed an economic venture \$ 65 billion with Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia tends to reduce its dependency on oil and wishes to diversify its economy. To diversify its economy China would be the best destination for it. Apart from the economy, Saudi Arabia's Air Force has deployed Chinese unmanned drone attacks. Both states in western China have held joint counter-terrorism exercises. China is reluctant to involve militarily in the region, however, its military involvement is likely to increase in near future. Managing of security of the region merely by the US will certainly cause a great deal of damage to the Chinese interest. Gulf countries waited long ago for the diversification of their economies and are keen to participate in BRI. Naser Al-Tamimi, a Middle East analyst says that "many of these states perceive China as a useful tool in their strategies to diversify not just economically but also politically at a moment of apparent US retrenchment". Iran's recent attack in the Gulf has caused consternation for the Gulf States as they anticipated counter-attack against Iran by the US. The US unwillingness to attack Iran stunned and compelled Gulf States to tilt towards China. Al-Tamimi further says that Gulf States are cognizant of China's limitations as a security provider, thus, unwilling to annoy the US too. The Middle Eastern states wish to see Chinese presence in the region; they support Chinese doctrine of non-interference castigating western intervention in the region. Beijing is also wary of the US intentions of disrupting oil supply to China and its central role in the protection of shipping lanes. China a great pursuer of win-win situation realizing the US to shun cold war mentality believes that both China and the US need to establish new security order based on burden-sharing and public welfare that will ultimately pave the way for peace and development. For the accomplishment of BRI China intends to cooperate with Russia and EU to reduce conflicts in Syria, Libya, Yemen and Israel-Palestine. In short, the US war-oriented foreign policy, toppling regimes, supporting proxies and its presence in important areas of the region would be an acid test for China in the Middle East. The writer works at the Institute of Strategic Studies, a think-tank based in Islamabad.

ACCA focuses on building connectivity among BRI countries

The first workshop of the China-Central Asia Accounting Elites Exchange Programme officially kicked off at the Shanghai National Accounting Institute. The programme, proposed jointly by the Shanghai National Accounting Institute (SNAI), the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute (CI) and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), was announced as one of the important outcomes of the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing in April this year. The programme consists of four workshops in a two-year cycle, targeting officials from departments in the accounting field in China and Central Asia, as well as professionals from companies, industry associations, accountancy firms and other accounting theory and practice circles. It will organize symposia, training sessions and field visits with in-depth discussions on topics such as the development of accounting standards, talent cultivation, regulation, the development of accounting service industry, new technology and the development of the accounting sector. Nearly 30 experts from the accounting standards setting departments, accounting regulators, and accountancy profession

of all 11 CAREC countries including China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Georgia attended the first workshop. Li Kouqing, President of SNAI, Iskandar Abdullaev, Deputy Director of CI and Ada Leung, Director of ACCA Greater China attended the opening ceremony and delivered speeches. Speaking about the programme and ACCA's continuous role in promoting opportunities around the Belt and Road Initiative, Sajjeed Aslam, head of ACCA Pakistan said, "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a great economic opportunity for Pakistan. The accounting professionals have a duty to promote the 'Belt and Road' connectivity to assist governments and businesses to do more trade with other BRI countries. With strong presence in the region, ACCA will continue to play a leading role." In his speech, Li Kouqing said that strengthening the construction of 'accounting infrastructure' is vital for improving economic development. A sound accounting infrastructure can promote a country's growth and stability. Specifically, the accounting infrastructure consists of three factors, namely accounting standard system, accounting regulatory framework and accounting talent system. Accounting standard system sets the criteria for accounting method and finance report, aiming to improve the unification, factuality and comparability

Pak-China media cooperation vital to defeat negative propaganda Xinhua News Agency launches bilingual service for local Pakistani media houses

With over 200 bureaus all over the world, more than 10,000 photographers and news service in 12 languages, China's premiere Xinhua News Agency is all set to provide cutting-edge news services (photo, text, graphic, video etc.) to Pakistani news agencies, print and electronic media in both Urdu and English.

A formal ceremony in this regard attended by representatives of both Pakistani and Chinese media took place here Thursday.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Information & Broadcasting Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan, Ambassador of China Yao Jing also attended the introductory ceremony of 'Xinhua-All-Media-Services' participated by the news agency's top officials and their Pakistani counterparts.

Bureau Chief Xinhua News Agency Islamabad, Liu Tian accompanied by General Manager of Xinhua News Agency Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau, Zhao Yue on the occasion gave away Xinhua News Agency service's formal approval letters to various Pakistani newspapers and news agencies' heads that can now use its service in their respective media outlets.

According to the contract signed between Chinese and Pakistani news media houses, Pakistani English and Urdu news agencies can use Xinhua news service in both languages and this cooperation would be extended by the Chinese service for free for first six months.

"It may be mentioned here that earlier Pakistan Observer has also signed an agreement with China's prestigious news agency and the cooperation between the two news organizations has led to projection and promotion of Pak-China cooperation in various sectors including energy, industry, infrastructure and above all China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)."

While appreciating the landmark agreement between Chinese news agency and its Pakistani counterparts, Special Assistant to Prime Minister Imran Khan on Information & Broadcasting, Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan said close coordination among Pakistani and Chinese media outlets was vital in defense of national and economic interests of both countries and defeat the negative propaganda against projects that are proving game changer for the entire region.

She also called upon the Pakistani media to portray positive image of Pakistan and strengthening the government's endeavors in this regard. She said anti-Pakistan narrative with regard to CPEC could be defeated only by active cooperation between the two countries' media players.

Ambassador of China Yao Jing also welcomed cooperation between Xinhua News Agency and Pakistani media saying Pakistani media so far has projected and protected the mutual interests of Pakistan and China by defending China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at all levels. There is however some isolated voices that under the influence of the western countries' propaganda played a negative role, however, by and large Pakistani media performed its duties responsibly.

According to the ambassador, the year 2019 has remained very crucial with regard to projection of Pak-China relations and the year 2020 would see an increased and robust cooperation between the two countries' media. In 2019 work on Karakoram Highway expedited, Orange Line train completed and many other big and small projects were either completed or are being completed on fast track. He termed Prime Minister Imran Khan's China visit of key importance that gave impetus to the cooperation between the two countries.

Certificate-presentation of Chinese training course held

The certificate presentation award ceremony of the Chinese training course for Punjab police was held at the University of Punjab. The ceremony was attended by Long Dingbin, the Chinese Lahore Consul General, Prof Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, Vice Chancellor of Punjab University, Sheikh M. Umar, DIG of SPU Punjab Police and other. Host Director of CIPU, and 50 police officers representatives who participated in the training course, reports Gwadar Pro Net. Chinese musical Zither and Kungfu were performed by teachers from CIPU before the ceremony. Long Dingbin, Chinese Lahore Consul General congratulated the successful completion of the Chinese language training course and underscored that China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic partners and good friends, brothers and neighbors. In order to smoothly promote the construction of the CPEC and ensure the safety of Chinese enterprises and Chinese citizens, the Punjab provincial government has set up a special security protection unit of more than 5000 people, reflecting the mutual care and support between the two "iron brothers". The Consul General further said that in September this year, at the proposal of Mr. Nadeem and the active coordination of the Consulate General, the CIPU successfully organized the Chinese training courses for SPU police officers, which will help both sides, remove language barriers, enhance understanding and promote cooperation.

Prof Niaz Ahmad Akhtar, the Vice Chancellor of Punjab University stated that his mission is to raise the productivity of their graduates through quality education and practical knowledge to contribute in a significant way to the national economy. Chinese learning is conducive to

creating and disseminating bilaterally mutual cultural understanding, friendship and humanity communication between China and Pakistan.

The Nation

Firdous seeks media's role to counter anti CPEC propaganda

ISLAMABAD - Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan on Thursday urged the media to play an effective role to counter the anti-CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor) propaganda of the enemies.

Addressing the signing ceremony of memorandums of understanding (MoUs) by the Chinese news agency Xinhua with local media houses, she emphasised on strengthening of media cooperation and coordination for countering negative propaganda against the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of which CPEC was a key component. She said that it was not possible to defeat the enemy's designs against CPEC without the help of media.

Any negative story could harm the CPEC project and shake the confidence of investors, she said.

So, a responsible role of the media, being a true Ambassador of Pakistan for the success of CPEC was very important, she added. Dr Firdous said that the MoUs signed by the Chinese news agency would help increase the cooperation between the Chinese and Pakistani media.

The two countries media collaboration was must for the successful implementation of the CPEC project, she added. Xinhua, which was already providing its services in 12 languages, had recently introduced its Urdu Service which was highly appreciable.

“It is heartening to note that Xinhua has active collaboration/subscription service with over 20 media houses in Pakistan, including Jang Group, Nawaiwaqat, Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), Independent News Pakistan (INP), Express, Daily Times, Hum News, Pakistan Today, etc.” She said that Xinhua had already proved its role in portraying positive image of Pakistan internationally.

On average it published over 1,400 positive stories about Pakistan annually, she said. She said that Xinhua was actively engaged in dissemination of news from Pakistan for last over 60 years. It had significant contribution in promoting China-Pakistan friendship and bilateral relations, she added.

The News

CPEC termed great economic opportunity for Pakistan

LAHORE: The first workshop of the China-Central Asia Accounting Elites Exchange Programme officially kicked off at the Shanghai National Accounting Institute.

According to a press release issued here on Thursday, the programme, proposed jointly by the Shanghai National Accounting Institute (SNAI), the Central Asia Regional Economic

Cooperation Institute (CI) and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), was announced as one of the important outcomes of the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing in April this year.

The programme consists of four workshops in a two-year cycle, targeting officials from departments in the accounting field in China and Central Asia, as well as professionals from companies, industry associations, accountancy firms and other accounting theory and practice circles.

It will organize symposia, training sessions and field visits with in-depth discussions on topics such as the development of accounting standards, talent cultivation, regulation, the development of accounting service industry, new technology and the development of the accounting sector.

Nearly 30 experts from the accounting standards setting departments, accounting regulators, and accountancy profession of all 11 CAREC countries including China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Georgia attended the first workshop. Li Kouqing, President of Shanghai National Accounting Institute, Iskandar Abdullaev, Deputy Director of Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute and Ada Leung, Director of Association of Chartered Certified Accountants Greater China attended the opening ceremony and delivered speeches.

Speaking about the programme and Association of Chartered Certified Accountants' continuous role in promoting opportunities around the Belt and Road Initiative, Sajjeed Aslam, head of Association of Chartered Certified Accountants Pakistan said, "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a great economic opportunity for Pakistan.

The accounting professionals have a duty to promote the 'Belt and Road' connectivity to assist governments and businesses to do more trade with other BRI countries.

With strong presence in the region, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants will continue to play a leading role." In his speech, Li Kouqing said that strengthening the construction of 'accounting infrastructure' is vital for improving economic development.

December 28, 2019

Pakistan Observer

China assures uplift in tourism, hydel, mineral sectors

The Economic and Commercial Consular of Chinese Embassy, Dr. Wang Zhihua on Friday held a meeting with senior Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Atif Khan to discuss investment in various sectors including tourism, hydel power and minerals. During the meeting, they also held detailed discussion on various aspects of China- Pakistan Economic Corridor and Rashakai Economic zone in Mardan. Senior Minister for Tourism and Culture, Atif Khan informed the Consular about ongoing development projects in tourism sector in the province. He said that four tourism

zones were being setup in the province and focus was being given to boost religious tourism in the province. The minister informed that one billion rupees has been allocated to preserve archeological sites in the province. On this occasion, Chinese Consular appreciated various projects to boot tourism sector and expressed his interest in investment in various development projects. Appreciating the provincial government's steps to promote religious tourism, Dr. Wang Zhihua said that it would not strengthen economy but would also enhance country's image at international level. The two sides agreed to get benefit from each other experience in tourism sector and it was decided that Chinese Tourism Board would give training to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tourism Department for promotion of tourism in the province. The Chinese Consular also assured participation in conference to be held in March for the promotion of religious tourism.

Meanwhile, Apprising Chinese counselor General regarding tourism Senior Minister said that Counselor General of China expressed his keen interest in various projects for the development of tourism in the province and said that the plan to create tourism zones was praise worthy. At the meeting, China Tourism Department and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tourism Department agreed to benefit from each other's experiences and work together for the promotion of tourism.

The Nation

Xinhua team visits Nawaiwaqat office

Lahore- A delegation from China's news agency Xinhua visited the offices of Daily Nawaiwaqat and The Nation here on Friday.

The delegation consisted of Mr Zhao Yue, the general sales manager of Asia Pacific Regional Bureau at Xinhua; Mr Wang Xiaoming, its sales manager; Mr Tang Binhui from Xinhua's Urdu service; Mr Liu Tian and Jamil Bhatti.

The delegation visited the offices following an agreement signed between the news agency and the media group regarding sharing of news items, photos etc. The delegation also met with Nawaiwaqat Group Director Administration Syed Ahmad Nadeem Qadri who was accompanied by IT Head Qaiser Nadeem and Manager Human Resources Shafiq Sultan.

The delegation was briefed about the group's history and its contribution to the national and international media affairs. The delegation was also informed about the series of articles titled "From Belt and Road Initiative to CPEC" published on the directives of Group's Managing Director Ramiza Majid Nizami. They were told that the Pakistani nation warmly welcomed the BRI and CPEC projects.

"These projects have further strengthened the bilateral relations between Pakistan and China. The Pakistani nation loves and respect China and its people," Director Administration Syed Ahmad Nadeem told the delegation.

He further said that Nawaiwaqat Media Group was highlighting the hidden aspects of the China's road project better than any other media group of the world.

“Under the BRI, a huge sum of 800 billion US dollar will be invested in different sectors which will definitely lead to the prosperity of the peoples across the world, “he maintained.

Later, the delegation met with Editor Editorial Saeed Aasi and got information about its editorial policy. Then News Editor Dilawar Ch took the delegation to different departments of the media group. Likewise, the delegation also went to the offices of The Nation and met with News Editor Mr Riaz who briefed them about different stages of the English daily's publication.

December 29, 2019

Dawn News

China Southern Airlines to operate 3 flights from Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: China Southern Airlines will operate three flights in a week between Islamabad-Kunming-Guangzhou. This was announced at a ceremony organized by China Southern Airlines at local hotel.

In a briefing, a spokesperson of the airline said the flight would have duration time of four hours and 25 minutes. It will operate between Islamabad and Kunming, the capital of China's Yunnan province. The Minister Counsellor for Chinese Embassy in Islamabad, Dr. Wang Zhihuai, said this would be the fourth route between the two countries. He said this air connectivity would significantly contribute towards enhancing exchange of visits between the two countries.

“It will help promote people to people contact and enhance trade as well as economic ties,” he added. He said the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had strengthened relations in every aspect of life, adding that CPEC had entered into a new and second phase as currently more than 400 companies and 20,000 Chinese workers were working in Pakistan.

Dr. Wang Zhihuai said that over 2,000 Pakistani businessmen visited China in 2019 and many were participating in different export and import promotion exhibitions with the aim to boost trade relations between the two countries. Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Director Maqsood Ali Khan said Pakistan's CAA was making all out efforts to increase the number of flights for different destinations of the world.

‘CPEC, apart from projects, is about Pak-China friendship’

LAHORE: PML-N Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed has said at a seminar on Saturday the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was not all about roads and other developmental projects but to strengthen ties between the two countries. He said the CPEC was a project of ‘One Belt, One Road Initiative’ involving more than 170 countries.

Due to the CPEC, Mr. Syed, who is also chairman of Pakistan-China Institute, said 75,000 individuals in Pakistan had got jobs and \$20 billion investment was being made. He said China

sided Pakistan at that time, when no one was ready to invest in Pakistan, and made investments in Pakistan. He said the Pakistan-China Institute had so far organized eight seminars in various cities across the country.

Governor Chaudhry Sarwar said those hatching conspiracies in relations between Pakistan and China would never succeed as both countries had rock solid friendship. He said China sided with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue and at all forums, including FATF. He said Pakistan Army's sacrifices in the war against terrorism were unprecedented in the world. He said the Kashmir issue must be resolved in accordance with the United Nations resolutions to restore regional peace.

He said Pakistan and China had historic relations and the CPEC project was a big example of friendship as this project was ensuring development of Pakistan as well as creating vast employment opportunities. Under the CPEC, he said, some 1,544 kilometers long roads had so far been constructed, while 1,456 kilometers roads were under construction. He said 5,320 megawatts of electricity had also been added to the system. Under the CPEC, he said, nine special economic zones had been established and both countries also signed the CPEC Phase-II.

Chinese Consul General Long Dingbin said Pakistan was China's best friend and would move ahead shoulder-to-shoulder with Pakistan. Under the CPEC, he said, historic economic development and employment opportunities created in Pakistan in the last six years. He said Chinese companies had paid \$300 million as tax in Pakistan and provided jobs to thousands of Pakistanis.

Dunya News

China's border trade with Pakistan increased significantly this year

BEIJING (APP) – With the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Pakistan's domestic economic growth, the trade volume surged this year at a major border port between China and Pakistan.

Cargo import and export reached 66,600 tons in the first 11 months at Khunjerab Pass in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, up 46.8 percent from the same period last year. Trade volume increased by 1.4 times to 5.99 billion yuan (around 856.3 million U.S. dollars) during the same period, according to a report of China News Network on Sunday.

About 5,000 meters above sea level, Khunjerab Pass is a major trade port between China and Pakistan, and an important gateway to South Asia and Europe.

China mainly imports textiles, agricultural products and daily commodities there, and exports plants and herbs.

The authorities at Khunjerab Pass said they will continue to increase customs clearance efficiency to facilitate trade in the future. Urumqi customs statistics show that from January to November 2019, the total value of imports and exports from Xinjiang ports to Pakistan was 5.5

billion yuan, an increase of 1.2 times compared with the same period last year. Among them, exports to Pakistan were 5.49 billion yuan, an increase of 1.3 times, mainly in textiles, apparel, and mechanical and electrical products.

With the CPEC Project, China and Pakistan can achieve comprehensive connectivity, diversification and mutual benefit. It is not only a model project and flagship project of China's "Belt and Road" initiative, but also provides an important opportunity for the development of Pakistan.

In recent years, the flagship project of Belt and Road Initiative has driven a large number of major infrastructure projects such as energy, electricity, roads, and railways, injecting a source of power into the development of China-Pakistan trade.

Xinjiang, as the core area of "the Silk Road Economic Belt", is promoting the interconnectedness between China and Pakistan and driving the economic and geographical advantages of the regions along the route. According to Urumqi Customs, since February this year, the value of imports and exports from Xinjiang ports to Pakistan has maintained a year-on-year growth. Among them, in November alone, the value of imports and exports from Xinjiang ports to Pakistan reached 1.82 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 74% and a month-on-month increase of 63.8%.

Xinjiang port to Pakistan is dominated by small amount trade, and it has grown significantly, accounting for 70.5% of the total value of Xinjiang port to Pakistan trade.

Import and export through general trade was 1.56 billion yuan, an increase of 17.9%, accounting for 28.4%. Private enterprises are the main force for import and export. From January to November, the import and export volume through the Xinjiang port to Pakistan was 4.31 billion yuan, doubled, accounting for 78.4% of the total value of Xinjiang port to Pakistan trade during the same period. It is understood that the main trade port between Xinjiang and Pakistan is Hongqilafu Port in Ta County, Kashgar Region. This port is the only land entry and exit passage between China and Pakistan, and also an important gateway to the South Asian subcontinent and even Europe.

From January to November, the import and export of Hongqilafu port to Pakistan was 5.2 billion yuan, an increase of 1.3 times, accounting for 94.5% of the total value of Xinjiang port to Pakistan trade during the same period. Large-scale engineering construction has driven exports of machinery and equipment, road and bridge construction equipment, Pakistan's agricultural recovery, the healthy development of the service industry, and large-scale manufacturing output.

At present, the construction of the corridor is in the stage of substantial expansion in pursuit of high-quality development. This project is a sign of a high degree of China-Pakistan development strategy. Pakistan is a key node in the process of China's going west. Urumqi Customs will continue to increase port construction, serve key engineering projects, and improve customs clearance efficiency, laying a good foundation for the construction of the "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor".

Pakistan Observer

China welcomes tax exemption for Gwadar's development

Pakistani government has tabled Tax Laws (Amendment) Ordinance before its Lower House of Parliamentary Committee for getting approval on tax exemptions of all taxes for both Gwadar Free Port and Free Economic Zone that is a welcome step. The Chinese government highly appreciates the efforts of the government of Pakistan promoting business activities in Gwadar. The National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance and Revenues took up Tax Laws (Amendment) bill recently for kick-starting deliberations on the ordinance in order to convert into law with approval of both Houses of Parliament. Earlier, the Tax Laws (Amendment) Ordinance was promulgated by President Arif Alvi for granting tax exemption of Income Tax, Sales Tax and Customs Duty. Now the PTI led government wants to convert ordinance into permanent law with the approval of Parliament. While giving briefing to the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance and Revenues, the representatives of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the country's main tax collection agency, told the parliamentarians that the proposed bill aimed at providing all those concessions which were provided to Singapore Port Authority but now these incentives were extended to consortium of Chinese Companies so it should be approved with immediate effect.

The FBR high-ups told MNAs that all these tax exemptions were granted to Chinese companies under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The National Assembly panel will continue deliberations in its coming meetings but it is hoped that approval of this bill would be granted before lapse of given time frame of ordinance. The tax laws (amendment) bill has sought concessions to amend the Income Tax Ordinance, Sales Tax Act and Customs Act. Chinese companies are playing catalyst role for developing Gwadar Port as a strategic and commercial hub under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The China Overseas Port Holding Company Limited (COPHC) took over operations in 2013 of the port from a Singaporean company. The concession agreement included a tax holiday for both the operators of Gwadar Port and the businesses being set up there, reports Gwadar Pro mobile news APP.

Pakistan-China have rock-solid friendship: Sarwar

Punjab Governor Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar has said that those hatching conspiracies in the relations between Pakistan and China will never succeed as both the countries have rock-solid friendship. China has sided with Pakistan on Kashmir issue and at all forums including FATF. Pakistan Army's sacrifices in the war against terrorism are unprecedented in the world. We have always talked of peace however Kashmir issue will have to be resolved not tomorrow but today and in accordance with United Nations resolutions to restore regional peace.

He was addressing a seminar on 'Friends of Silk Route' organized by Pakistan-China Institute at a local hotel on Saturday. Pakistan-China Institute's Chairman Senator Mushahid Hussain, Chinese Consul General in Lahore Long Dingbin, Russia's Honorary Consul General Habib Ahmed, senior journalist Arif Nizami, Punjab Board of Investment and Trade (PBIT) Sardar

Ilyas Tanvir, Pakistan-China Institute Director Mustafa Haider and others were also present. Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that Pakistan and China friendship is not because of any government but of historic relations between the people of the two countries. Since assuming office of the Prime Minister, Imran Khan has visited China thrice. Undoubtedly, CPEC (China, Pakistan Economic Corridor) is a glaring example of Pak-China friendship as this project is ensuring development of Pakistan as well as creating vast employment opportunities. Under the CPEC, he mentioned that 1,544 kilometers long roads have so far been constructed and another 1,456 kilometers roads are under construction, while 5,320 mega-watts of electricity has been added to the system. Under the CPEC, he continued, nine Special Economic Zones have been established and both the countries have also signed the CPEC Phase-II. He said, China is such a friend of Pakistan that has always stood by Pakistan in difficult time, citing that China has supported Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir and FATF. Relations between Pakistan and China are getting stronger with each passing day; he said and added that no enemy could shatter their relations through conspiracies. Senator Mushahid Hussain said that eight seminars have so far been organized by Pakistan-China Institute in various cities of Pakistan. CPEC is not all about roads and other developmental projects but to strengthen ties between the two countries. CPEC is a project of 'One Belt; One Road Initiative' involving more than 170 countries. Due to CPEC, 75,000 individuals in Pakistan have acquired jobs and 20 billion dollars investment is also being made. China had sided Pakistan at that time when no one was ready to invest in Pakistan but it had made investment here. Chinese Consul General Long Dingbin said that Pakistan is our best friend and we will move ahead should-to- should with Pakistan. We have supported each other in all kinds of international scenarios and the enemy cannot dent our friendship. Under the CPEC, he said, historic economic development and employment opportunities created in Pakistan during last six years.

Nawaiwaqat

سی پیک سے چین صنعت، زراعت اور ٹیکنیکل تعلیم میں پاکستان کی مدد کر رہا ہے: سعید احمد ڈوگر

رائے ونڈ (نامہ نگار) تحریک انصاف کے سینئر ہنما سردار سعید احمد ڈوگر نے کہا کہ حکومتیں 5 سال پورے کرنے کیلئے آتی ہیں لیکن وزیر اعظم عمران خان اصلاحات کیلئے آئے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ سی پیک سے چین صنعت، زراعت اور ٹیکنیکل تعلیم میں پاکستان کی مدد کر رہا ہے اور ہمارا رویہ مستحکم ہو رہا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ وزیر اعظم کی توجہ عوام کو بہترین طبی سہولیات دینے پر مرکوز ہے، ہسپتالوں میں اصلاحات باہر ملکوں کے ہسپتالوں کی طرز پر کر رہے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ تبدیلی کے بغیر پاکستان آگے نہیں جاسکتا۔

December 30, 2019

Business Recorder

Boosting Pakistani products to China

BEIJING: A 'Pakistan pavilion' was opened in Yiwu, a city located in China's Zhejiang Province to display products of Pakistani manufacturers and traders aimed at boosting imports

from Pakistan particularly after the implementation of China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA).

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Naghmana Alamgir Hashmi formally inaugurated the pavilion. Commercial Counsellor, Embassy of Pakistan, Beijing, Badar uz Zaman and the members of the Pakistani business community were present. Amir Suhail alias Jehanzeb Afridi, one of the founders of Pakistan pavilion informed on Sunday that the facility would provide Pakistani traders an opportunity to market their products in China. He said the Pakistani businessmen could only send samples of their products for display if they were not personally present in China.

The CPFTA Phase-II has allowed Pakistani businessmen to export around 313 new products on zero duty to the Chinese market. As Pakistan is already enjoying zero duty on export of 724 products to china under the first FTA, after the implementation of the second FTA, the country has been allowed to export a total of 1047 products to China on zero duty. Amir Suhail, also a former representative of Peshawar Zulmi in China, said the Yiwu was one of the biggest cities for exports and in the coming days, it would also become a hub of imports to China.

“If Pakistani traders take benefit of this pavilion, we could help achieve export targets set by our government,” he added. Other businessmen Shah Nawaz Kakar, Haji Malang Shah, Naoman of Shan Masala and Eman Logistic Company are the co-founders of the pavilion.

He said at present, there was a great demand for salt lamps, sports goods, decoration pieces of copper and chromites, carpets and spices. China has twice organized import exhibitions in Shanghai during the last two years as it wants to import quality products from different countries including Pakistan. “If our traders actively participate in different trade fairs in China to market their products, they can get import orders with good price,” according to an economic expert.

It is worth mentioning that Yiwu is the world’s largest consumer good purchasing center having an area of 4.7 million square meters accommodates 70,000 booths and sells 1.7 million kinds of goods. Over 400,000 overseas businessmen come to Yiwu each year, and over 13,000 overseas businessmen from more than 100 countries including Pakistan and regions reside in Yiwu city.

December 31, 2019

Business Recorder

Pakistan to undertake 27 projects through \$1bn grant from China

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will undertake 27 projects in diverse sectors including agriculture, health, education, drinking water and poverty alleviation with the grant of US\$1 billion provided by China. According to official sources, the Joint Working Group on socio-economic development of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had identified six sectors for the projects to be launched during the second phase of CPEC.

Projects would also be started for up-gradation and renovation of vocational and technical schools, solar power lighting project, smart classroom project, medical equipment for hospitals, provision of agricultural tools and equipment and setting up of Pakistan China joint agricultural laboratories.

Projects such as solar power lighting equipment for Balochistan, provision of solar water pumps in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, water filtration plants in Azad Kashmir and smart classroom project for higher education were in the fast track category.

Pakistan was already benefiting from the energy and infrastructure projects completed under CPEC and these projects would provide a foundation for setting up nine special economic zones in the second phase of CPEC.

Daily Times

Chinese envoy foresees much better Sino-Pak ties in 2020

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing said he was looking forward much better Sino-Pak ties in the year 2020, particularly in social sector, and pushing forward industrialization in Pakistan.

With the smooth implementation of the first phase of CPEC, their bilateral friendship has entered a new stage of enhanced cooperation. The two sides will undertake joint ventures for development of free trade industrial zones, the Ambassador said while addressing a gathering of students, academia, diplomats and journalists gathered at the Annual Sangam Club Gala 2019 held here on Monday at the Chinese Embassy.

Yao Jing said that peace and prosperity will be the hallmark of the New Year, and the two countries would be making joint efforts to achieve this cherished goal and to further improve the living conditions of their people for a better life.

The two countries, he added, are struggling to meet the common aspirations of their people, particularly the youth, who are their future hopes to carry forward their decades' old deep-rooted friendship. The ambassador told the attendees of the event that Sangam Club is a new leaf added to the tree of Pakistan-China friendship and it would go a long way in further cementing people-to-people contacts between the two iron-brother nations.

The ambassador assured that their growing mutual exchanges, particularly at the young generation's level, will keep growing in the years to come. The Embassy organized a 'Sangam Club Gala' in which it has invited people from all walks of life who have visited China on the invitation of the Chinese Embassy in recent year.

The purpose of the gala was to get these people together under one roof to share their diverse experiences in China, exchange notes, and provide suggestions for further promoting people-to-people exchanges between Pakistani and Chinese people.

CPHGC to construct school in Gaddani

China Power Hub Generation Company (Pvt) Ltd and The Citizens Foundation (TCF) signed an agreement to construct a school in the Gaddani, Lasbella. Being constructed at a cost of PKR 30 million, the school will accommodate 180 children and will be a source of education for the less privileged segment of our society. Construction of the school building has commenced and the first class will be inducted in April 2020. CPHGC has so far spent PKR 124 million on various sustainable CSR initiatives since 2016. The CPHGC-TCF School in Gaddani will be the first TCF School to be financed by a CPEC project. This is the 2nd collaboration between CPHGC and TCF. Earlier, in 2018, at the time of the FIFA World Cup, CPHGC financed the construction of a football pitch at the TCF-Mouza Kund School. Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Zhao Yonggang, CEO, and CPHGC reiterated the company's commitment to help improve the living conditions of the people of Lasbella.

Pakistan Observer

CPEC phase-II to get additional stimulus in 2020: Asad

Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar on Monday said the benefits of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will start to trickle into the productive sectors of the economy including industry and agriculture during the year 2020. The first phase of CPEC (early harvest projects) addressed key infrastructure gaps in the economy with focus on energy and transport bottlenecks, he said in an article. He said the big projects under CPEC targeted to be completed in 2020 include the trade and transport connectivity projects of KKH Phase-II Havelian-Thakot (118km) road and the Sukkur-Multan (392km) highway. These projects will significantly reduce the transit time and encourage greater trade of goods and services. Whereas, he said Rs40 billion in Chinese grants is being invested in Gwadar for upgrading the airport and roads infrastructure.

He said the big project targeted to be launched in 2020, is the up-gradation of the Railways Main Line (ML-1), a \$9 billion project – which will significantly enhance the railway infrastructure for trade in goods and services. Phase-II of CPEC will build on the success of the early harvest projects and in 2020 resources will be focused towards generating greater economic activity and job creation, he added. Umar said CPEC Phase-II focuses on industrialization, socioeconomic development, agriculture modernization, and tourism promotion. Central to Phase-II is the development of three Special Economic Zones (SEZs) on a priority basis, namely Rashakai (Nowshera), Allama Iqbal (Faisalabad) and Dhabeji (Thatta). The SEZs will help to attract large FDI into Pakistan and help to reverse the tide of de-industrialization over the last 10 years. The government has announced incentives including tax holidays to attract business to make investments in Pakistan through joint ventures with local industry. With respect to economic performance of the government, he said that Inflation was the biggest challenge facing the economy in 2019 as Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation accelerated to 10.8 percent during July-November FY20, compared to 6.1 percent in the same period last year. Rise in inflation is a

direct consequence of the economic challenges inherited by the PTI government. This includes large twin deficits and record high circular debt. When PTI government took office, current account deficit had hit record levels of \$20 billion, with dwindling foreign exchange reserves and large external debt payments looming ahead. To avoid a default on debt obligations the government had no option but to realign the exchange rate. Between August 2018 to December 2019, the currency devalued by 25 percent (from 124 to 154). This has been a major contributor to rising inflation. “Through significant reduction in the twin deficits, we are targeting to reduce inflation in 2020.

Greater stability in the exchange rate, zero borrowing from SBP and tighter monetary policy are all measures geared towards bringing down the burden of inflation. On top of these policy measures, the government has also increased subsidies to shield consumers from rising power and gas costs. Similarly, government has allocated higher subsidies at utility stores and ‘roti-tandoors’ for citizens.”The planning minister said the PTI government strongly believed in making Pakistan a welfare state and in the FY20 Budget, the government substantially increased pro-poor spending under the PM Ehsas program. Budget allocation for the PM Ehsas program has increased significantly to Rs190 billion in FY20. This includes unconditional cash transfer program (BISP) of Rs 5,500 per quarter to 5.1 million beneficiaries. Under the Waseela-e-Taleem program, 3.2 million children in 50 districts are receiving conditional cash transfer of Rs1, 000/quarter to reduce drop-out ratio. PM has recently launched 200,000 Ehsaas undergraduate scholarships program for the unprivileged children.

The Express Tribune

K-P wants water projects under CPEC

PESHAWAR: Even as it works on developing two routes for the multi-billion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor along with special economic zones and tourist spots along them, the provincial government on Monday hinted at including water supply projects in the corridor as well. This was directed by the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Chief Minister Mehmood Khan on Monday while presiding over a meeting on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects in the province at the CM Secretariat in Peshawar.

During the meeting, Mahmood was briefed about the inclusion in CPEC of the 260 megawatts (MW) Jamshil Torren More and the 350 MW Torren More Kare projects in Chitral. Their inclusion has been agreed on in principal during the last meeting of the CPEC Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC). The projects will be included in the corridor after it is evaluated by a panel of experts and representatives from both sides.

Another project which has been provisionally included in CPEC is the second phase of the Swat Motorway project. The project has already been approved by the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). Furthermore, the technical survey of Peshawar-Dera Ismail Khan Motorway project is also being carried out. Mahmood was further briefed that a project for solarizing some

800 existing water supply schemes has been included under CPEC's Socio-Economic grant. For this purpose, a revised PC-I worth Rs695.406 million, non-ADP, had been approved.