



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

April 1-15, 2020

A pilot project of PICS

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April 01, 2020

Business Recorder

Chinese group donates 10,000 face masks for NTDC employees

LAHORE: Chinese Energy Engineer Group, Jiangsu Power Design Institute Company Limited, has donated 10,000 medical face masks for the employees of National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) to keep them protected from Coronavirus while performing their duties.

In this regard, a three-member Chinese delegation led by Xia Zhihao visited NTDC House and handed over the said masks to Deputy Managing Director NTDC Wajahat Saeed Rana.

Speaking on the occasion, the representative of Chinese Energy Engineer Group said they are confident this donation will further strengthen NTDC`s efforts against COVID-19. He appreciated and said that the efforts of government of Pakistan to deal with the pandemic are very strong and impressive.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/01/17-page/832063-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

Chinese foundation delivers donation to Pak embassy

The Beijing Lianxin Charity Foundation delivered donation comprising emergency relief supplies such as disposable gloves, protective face shields etc. to embassy of Pakistan as a part of gesture of true friendship says a message received here from Beijing. General Secretary of the organization, Mr. Cai Peng said that this donation is a manifestation of an all-weather friendship between Pakistan and China. He termed COVID-19 as a pandemic which is to be fought by the world together.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-foundation-delivers-donation-to-pak-embassy/>

CPEC: A corridor of energy security

Brig Muhammad Khan (Retd)

A recently published book entitled, “The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor of the Belt and Road Initiative: Concept, Context and Assessment” provides an in-depth analysis of this gigantic Chinese project. The author ‘Siegfried O. Wolf’ has researched and highlighted the philosophy behind Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and more on about the strategy of Economic Corridors (ECs). The primary objectives of having these economic corridors are to connect China with its neighbors and the countries having raw material and energy resources. The raw material and energy resources are essentially required by China for its sustained growth and economic development. China may have a heavy industrial base for the production of goods; however it lacked the energy resources needed to run its huge industrial base. The home-grown Chinese energy resources are insufficient to meet the requirement of this colossal economic base.

Currently, China is importing over 80% of its energy resources from Middle East, Central Asia and African Continent. Chinese imports for its energy resources from Middle East and Africa pass through the Indian Ocean all along until it enters into South China Sea. The Strait of Malacca is a key point in the Indian Ocean which can put Chinese imports into lot of constraint in a future regional and global security scenario. The Strait is, indeed, a narrow passage of water between the Indonesian island of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is guarded by Indian and other regional states which are friendly to the United States.

The former Chinese President Mr. Hu Jintao identified this vulnerability of China as ‘Chinese Malacca Dilemma in 2003. Since then Chinese leadership and think-tanks have been working on the project to find some alternative for the Chinese imports, especially its energy needs. In the event of blocked of Malacca Strait, there are less alternatives routes available to China for its trade and imports. The ‘Sunda Strait’ is the nearest alternative for the continuation of Chinese trade and imports, however, its ‘narrowness and shallowness’ make it as incompatible to take on the weight of modern ships and heavy traffic. Lombok and Makassar Straits provide yet other alternatives to China for the continuation of its imports. However, China considers this inappropriate since it is causing heavy expenditure owing to longer routes. It may cost China “additional shipping costs, ranging from \$84 to \$220 billion per year.”

Under the prevailing regional and global security situation, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the only secure route, which can guarantee the Chinese energy security. It is less expensive and more secure for the sustenance of Chinese energy needs. It is a project which China has envisioned after years of deliberations, while weighing its pros and cons. President Xi Jinping is the architect of this project, who has been embarked upon the position of life-time President and Secretary General of Communist Party of China (CPC).

From the Chinese perspective CPEC is the most significant part of BRI. The timely completion of CPEC will provide a boost for the completion of other projects and corridors of the BRI. The Chinese dream for global governance depends a lot on the implementation of BRI and CPEC. BRI is a dream of President Xi Jinping which he derived from two motivations. One, the Chinese Renaissance by restoring its century’s old global position and two, fulfilling the Deng Xiaoping’s idea of Chinese modernization. It is to be noted that China was world dominant power until 18th Century. It had trade relations with all international countries and civilizations up-to and even beyond Atlantic Ocean. All Chinese relationships with rest of the world were through Silk Road which President Xi Jinping has envisioned to revive through Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The primary motives China plans to attain through CPEC are purely economic and commercial in nature. China desires an un-interrupted flow of its energy resources (oil) from the Middle East and Africa through Gwadar Deep Sea Port. The true manifestation and utilization of this deep sea port can be done through the development of CPEC, an important artery of the BRI.

Upon its completion, there will be an assured energy security for the Chinese energy imports. Chinese energy security would further guarantee the continuation and expansion of Chinese industrial development and economic growth. Upon completion of its geo-economic objectives, China will be more sure economically. The geostrategic and geopolitical goals of China are

intrinsically linked with its economic development. After all, economy drives the global politics and Chinese economy has progressed through leaps and bounds in the last few decades, stands next to US economy today.

In a rapidly evolving regional and global security situation, Pakistan holds the key for the continuance of Chinese economic development by providing a secure energy corridor. Sequel to the development and Operationalization of Gwadar Port, completion of CPEC as per schedule is the real challenge, facing China and Pakistan. Two security divisions under Pakistan Army have been established to ensure physical security of the CPEC route. Achieving domestic consensus over CPEC and securing its route were gigantic tasks, planned and executed by Pakistan with a lot of foresight, professionalism and dedication. While the developmental work on CPEC is underway, there is a need to secure the long-term economic interests of Pakistan. The utilization of Pakistani geopolitics for the CPEC warrants two things; the ownership of the corridor must be with the state of Pakistan and a sizable portion of the economic dividends of the CPEC must be given to Pakistan for the development of education, health and other projects of human security.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-a-corridor-of-energy-security/>

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor amid pandemic

Dr. Sarwat Rauf

One of the significant economic projects of the 21st century namely China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has been gaining so much fame since its commencement. The world's economists were assessing its feasibility; in the meantime a contagion reported in China which later declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). The reports of the falling economies have been appearing since the beginning of 2020. Explicitly, the evolving situation is upsetting worldwide economists and policymakers. The epidemic has created an odd situation for top-notch leaders of states, economic institutes and defense sectors. Currently, the leaders of developed countries around the world are trying to find vaccine with the help of their scientists. Against this background, the pandemic has also offered a prism to gauge China's project of regional integration and its interaction with the rest of the world in a global emergency.

Undoubtedly, the current situation is moving most of us to think whether the President of China Mr. Xi Jinping, was fully aware of all the challenges in the pathway of regional integration? Was he cognizant that a novel virus would make people sick and a new security threat will challenge the feasibility of CPEC?

To understand the prevailing cynical situation, it is imperative to know that since the beginning of CPEC, many countries have been busy disrupting it by spreading false news which is why skepticism still exists. Although CPEC was gaining considerable popularity in the world; however, critics were also disparaging its expediency. Various commentators called the plan an imaginary project and some added it to the list of impossibilities.

Notwithstanding the doubts, Pakistan and China have been steadfast in the completion of CPEC. The interesting aspect is that both countries continued their struggle for achieving the set targets in all kinds of social odds, political upheavals and economic difficulties. The ongoing project has

already brought Beijing very close to Pakistan. The movement of people between these two states has been increased. The students and entrepreneurs from Pakistan have been frequently moving to China, similarly, Chinese workers linked to CPEC projects, are either settling or moving to Pakistan. However, in the current situation, a standstill situation is obvious because of the lockdowns and border closures.

Whilst the recent crisis has reversed the whole world, the citizens from both countries have also come under great stress. As the clouds of despair have been shadowing the world; China started to fight against COVID-19 with healthcare tech. In order to minimize the risk of cross-infection, several Chinese firms have developed technologies for contactless delivery and spraying sanitizers.

Initially, no one was aware of the potency of new Corona Virus but China's gradual move to normalcy is becoming a ray of hope. Interestingly, Chinese efforts are admired by thousands who had hitherto remained cynical. Doubts were being cast that COVID-19 will affect ongoing China-supported CPEC-related projects in Pakistan. Conversely, the Chinese government is helping Pakistan in difficult times; equally government of Pakistan is showing confidence in the government of China. Both states are fighting for the greater good of people in Pakistan and China, to control the spread of the disease. Unequivocally, China is setting an example to normalize the situation and restore societal activities, while at the same time minimizing disease-related dangers.

Amid a surge in the nationwide count of COVID-19 patients in Pakistan, Beijing has promised to help Islamabad in this critical time while praising the political and military leadership for standing with the Chinese people in a difficult situation. Indeed, China is upholding a message of friendship, yet the Virus has become a litmus test for the CPEC and China-Pakistan friendship. In return, the Government of Pakistan has shown its full trust in measures taken by China in handling the Corona Virus. Both countries have also publicized their commitment to the scheduled construction plan under CPEC and reiterated to stand with each other. Moreover, China has also sent a heavy consignment of medical supplies to Pakistan. The Chinese medical aid to combat the lethal virus includes virus test kits, masks and protective suits. Especially, amid growing scare financial assistance has also been given to Pakistan to build an isolation hospital. Since China has won plaudits for managing the disease outbreak relatively well, the hope of getting out of this danger is growing slightly and it looks like work on CPEC will become normal. Foreign Minister of Pakistan Mr. Shah Mahmood Qureshi has recently stated that CPEC would go ahead even in this pandemic, and there will be no curtailment in the project. He has also assured that the current pandemic will not have any long-run impact on the CPEC; however, a slight slowdown is possible in the short run. The current crisis is being considered as temporary glitch by the authorities on both sides and it is believed that it will march forward to benefit the whole region.

Despite all these official satisfactory remarks, it should not be ignored that current measures to stem the spread of the elusive virus are costly and would definitely affect the economies of both states. There would be a slow return to the full functioning of the economy and the majority of

the Chinese workers/engineers would take some time to come back. Moreover, the domestic and global campaign of disinformation would make it difficult to restore the confidence of the business lobby. In all these twists and turns, it is expected that both countries will sail through these murky waters and normal exchange of people between the two countries would resume soon.

(The writer is Assistant Professor in IR Department, NUML, and Islamabad)

<https://pakobserver.net/china-pakistan-economic-corridor-amid-pandemic/>

The Nation

China enterprises donate 35ton medical supplies to help Pakistan combat Covid-19: Ambassador Hashmi

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Naghmana Alamgir Hashmi said on Wednesday that the Chinese companies, foundations and individuals had donated 35 tons of emergency relief supplies to help Pakistan combat Covid-19 pandemic.

“China without a doubt is our all-weather friend and has always supported Pakistan in difficult times. In response to our appeal, Chinese companies and individuals are fully helping Pakistan to fight against new coronavirus,” she said in an interview.

Ambassador Hashmi said, so far, the Chinese companies and individuals had noted 20 tons of emergency relief supplies worth RMB 25 million to the Embassy of Pakistan, Beijing. The Chengdu Consulate of Pakistan had also received 15.5 tones of emergency medical supplies including ventilators.

Ambassador Hashmi remarked that efforts were also being made to arrange more donations and hoped that more medical supplies would be donated by the Chinese brethren during next few days.

“We will start airlifting these emergency relief supplies to Pakistan on special flights to be arranged by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA),” she added.

It is worth mentioning that the Chinese government has so far donated emergency supplies such as testing kits, masks, protective suits and ventilators to help health authorities in Pakistan to fight the deadly disease.

In addition, emergency medical supplies were dispatched from China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. China’s renowned Alibaba Group also donated medical supplies to help Pakistan overcome the challenge. Many friendly sister cities and provinces in China joined by Red Cross Society also donated the epidemic response and control materials to Pakistan.

The Chinese government was helping Pakistani authorities to build a temporary makeshift hospital. Last week, this hospital has been put into construction in Islamabad.

To share experience against the coronavirus disease, the Chinese side held a video conference with Pakistan’s health authorities to evolve a strategy against the pandemic. A team of Chinese medical experts selected by the Health Commission of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was currently visiting Pakistan to provide consultations of pandemic control, patients’ treatment and

laboratory works and guide and train Pakistani medical staff. The team currently in Islamabad will stay in Pakistan for around two weeks and will also visit Punjab and Sindh provinces.

<https://nation.com.pk/01-Apr-2020/china-enterprises-donate-35-ton-medical-supplies-to-help-pakistan-combat-covid-19-ambassador-hashmi>

April 02, 2020

Dunya News

NCC decides to open work on CPEC projects

The National Coordination Committee on Thursday decided to open work on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

The meeting held with Prime Minister Imran Khan in chair reviewed overall situation of coronavirus in the country. The prime minister was apprised about the health condition of pilgrims who had returned from Taftan. He was informed that many of those who contracted the disease have recovered. Following the decision to open work on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, the construction industry will be opened from April 3, while PM Imran Khan will also announce a massive package for the construction industry to maintain the economic activity important to deal with the coronavirus challenge.

According to sources, the prime minister's economic team has completed consultation on the relief package and an advisory has been issued to the provinces for the transportation of labour related to industry in this regard. The committee also decided to issue an advisory regarding Friday prayer and Taraweeh, while the local administration will take decision keeping in view the situation.

Earlier, addressing a ceremony in connection with distribution of 100 billion rupees tax refunds amongst the businessmen in Islamabad, PM Khan said that a massive package for the construction industry will be announced on Friday to maintain the economic activity important to deal with the coronavirus challenge.

He said we have decided to open the construction industry and give it the necessary incentives in order to provide job opportunities to the people. He said this will also support the uplift of the industries allied with the construction. He said that the construction of road infrastructure does not entail the danger of the spread of coronavirus. He said necessary SOPs will also be developed to ensure the safety of the workers.

Imran Khan said the commerce ministry has also framed a list of industries which can be opened in the current situation. The prime minister expressed satisfaction that trajectory of coronavirus in Pakistan is not like that has been witnessed in other countries. He was confident that Pakistan will be able to overcome this problem. Imran Khan said promoting industries and giving incentives to the business is important to take forward the country. The refund of one hundred billion rupees today to the business community is part of that process. It is our utmost effort to ensure timely refunds to the business community so that they do not face any liquidity issue.

The premier said the ministry of commerce and industries is in constant touch with the business community as to how together we can overcome the challenge pose by coronavirus.

Imran Khan said our weaker segments of the society are at greater risk owing to the pandemic. He said we are trying to reach out to them under Ehsaas program.

He said a cash grant of twelve thousand rupees each will be given to twelve million poor families to protect them from the negative impacts of coronavirus.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/539385-NCC-decides-to-open-work-on-CPEC-projects>

Pakistan Observer

Corona fund won't be misused, PM assures nation Says China gave priority to Pakistan after controlling corona

Islamabad Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday assured the nation that the Corona Fund would not be misused and despite tough economic conditions, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government has announced biggest \$8 billion relief package in the history of the country. Talking to a private television on Wednesday, he said that the government is developing a data of underprivileged class, adding that the data won't be misused as he himself is monitoring the process. The prime minister said that the laborers in the United States and the United Kingdom are registered while 80 percent laborers in Pakistan are not registered. The government wants to reach the 80 percent unregistered laborers, he said. Regarding Dam Fund, the premier said the funds collected for the construction of Diamer-Bhasha and Mohmand dams were safe and no one can use them as former CJP Justice Rtd Saqib Nisar collected the funds. "I want everyone to donate towards this fund which will be used to take care of all those who have been made destitute by the lockdown," the prime minister wrote in a tweet. The prime minister, addressing a gathering on Wednesday, said that China gave priority to Pakistan with medical assistance for the coronavirus pandemic as soon as it brought the outbreak in its territories under control. He said that the worldwide demand for healthcare staff and material had shot up in the wake of the pandemic. "I read today that the US had opened visas for health workers to assist them in handling the situation," said the prime minister, noting that it was quite difficult to acquire a US visa in the past. The prime minister lauded China for lending medical assistance and supplies to Pakistan to help curb the disease. PM Imran also paid tribute to doctors, nurses and medical staff fighting on the frontlines in Pakistan. He said that the government is constantly thinking about how best to facilitate them and the nation is standing firm behind them. "Your protection is our number one priority," he said, indirectly addressing the medical staff tending to coronavirus patients. The prime minister expressed fear that the pandemic will peak in Pakistan, but no one knows at what rate. He noted that Pakistan has had relatively fewer fatalities as compared to the ratio around the world. He said, "Data on our daily wagers is being collected. We will also dispense funds from the Ehsas programme and then this fund will be an added source to help people buy essential items for their families." Labeling this an unprecedented initiative and putting stock in people's charitable spirits, the prime minister said that Pakistanis donate like no other nation in the world. He recalled earthquakes and floods which had wreaked much damage

in the country but put no dent in people's willingness to help. "But what happened was there was a duplication of services. There were areas where there was a great amount of work done and some in which there was no one and people were left hungry," said PM Imran. He said with the use of information technology and the Ehsas initiative, everyone who wishes to donate will be registered and will be able to see which areas need the most assistance. "Everyone will know who is doing what and where," the premier had said. Meanwhile, talking to Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing, Imran Khan said that the medical equipment provided by China will greatly strengthen Pakistan's capacity to handle Covid-19 pandemic. He expressed sincere gratitude to China for supporting Pakistan in helping contain Covid-19, reports Gwadar Pro App on Wednesday. Pakistan has recently received tones of protective gear and testing kits from China to contain the spread of coronavirus. The continuing and unprecedented assistance from China via air and road comes at a critical time when Pakistan's medical workers struggle to treat patients as the number of confirmed cases has surpassed 2075.

<https://pakobserver.net/corona-fund-wont-be-misused-pm-assures-nation-says-china-gave-priority-to-pakistan-after-controlling-corona/>

April 03, 2020

Dawn News

PM wants resumption of construction, CPEC work

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday ordered a relief package specifically for the construction industry and directed resumption of all China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) related infrastructure and energy projects.

The package for construction industry will be unveiled today (Friday).

The premier also directed formation of a Codal Research Committee (CRC) for devising an action plan that would allow the center and provinces to jointly deal with Covid-19's brunt on the country's economy. The decisions were taken in two separate meetings held to assess the impact of the pandemic on economy and common man.

During a meeting, Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar apprised the prime minister about steps being taken for better coordination between provinces and the center to combat Covid-19, revival of construction industry, CPEC projects and food security.

Another relief package to be announced today

"The relief package will also support the uplift of other industries allied with the construction sector." PM Khan said.

He added that the construction of road infrastructure will not pose any danger regarding spread of coronavirus. The PM further said a Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) was being devised about how the construction industry and its related sectors will work during lockdown. "SOPs will also be made for the safety of the workers," he added.

The premier said the Ministry of Commerce has compiled a list of industries which will operate during countrywide lockdown. In a separate event, PM distributed tax refund cheques to

businessmen. He said these were part of the relief his government is giving to keep industry afloat.

A press release issued by the Prime Minister Office (PMO), quoted the PM as saying: “A Codal Research Committee (CRC) should be formed to give suggestions to the National Coordination Committee in its next meeting regarding different sectors and how these could perform during prevailing lockdown situation.”

The prime minister expressed satisfaction over the government’s arrangements to combat Covid-19. Chairing a meeting on energy, he directed the ministry concerned to accelerate reforms in the energy sector by removing systemic hurdles and effectively utilizing the limited resources for ensuring relief to the common man.

Minister for Energy Omar Ayub, Finance Adviser Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, Commerce Adviser Abdul Razak Dawood, Special Assistant to the PM on Petroleum Nadeem Babar and senior officers of ministries attended the meeting.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1546014/pm-wants-resumption-of-construction-cpec-work>

Pakistan Observer

DCM highlights Chinese people’s struggle against deadly virus Pakistan needs to learn from China how to combat Covid-19

ZUBAIR QURESHI

The novel coronavirus (Covid-19) caught China by surprise from the very beginning, but China, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese government defeated the deadly virus putting its people’s lives first and ensuring joint efforts, confidence, unity, and struggle. Life now is returning to normalcy and the Chinese people and the government are using their knowledge of the virus to help other nations faced with the same challenge. Deputy Chief of China Mission in Pakistan Pang Chunxue said this while speaking at an online policy dialogue titled “Combating COVID-19: Lessons from China” organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Thursday. Sharing her experiences of last three months, she said Chinese had made some swift actions regarding total lockdown of Hubei province, made useful preventive and controlled measures by persuading people to stay at home convincing them to be socially distant and provided people with daily essentials so that they could stay at home comfortably. Pang Chunxue emphasized that China has paid good attention to the importance of think tanks, their input is very important to governments and the general population. Moreover, she specified that CPEC was in a new stage and that this new stage focuses on the cooperation of China and Pakistan to develop socioeconomic infrastructure, education sector, agriculture sector and also the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Speaking on the occasion Mr. Haroon Sharif Economist, Former Minister of State for Investment stressed the need to focus on future partnerships on human development that will lead to social and economic prosperity in the region. So far there is some social development under CPEC but not to the extent that is needed, he added. Executive Director SDPI Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri said our approach in fighting coronavirus was urban-centric; urban dwellers have some sort of health

care, but in small towns and villages' health care were non-existent. "We need to focus on villages; similarly bilateral or multilateral institutions should discuss specific districts or advise them how to cope up the situation. Joint Executive Director, SDPI, Dr. Vaqar Ahmed said it was important for the relevant ministries in Islamabad to engage more closely with the foreign missions and embassies and seek guidance for improving Pakistan's response to COVID-19. "Countries like China, S. Korea and Japan that were among the first to experience incidence of virus can now explain regarding various systematic approaches to lockdown and what are the options in the coming days for a gradual relaxation in lockdown at least for some essential industries such as food and health sector." Director China Study Centre, SDPI, Shakeel Ahmed Ramay was of the view that institutional mechanism of China was very important to study, how policy and decision making there is being done. "We need some mechanism if we want the desirable results replicated from China," he said. The session was moderated by Dr. Hina Aslam Associate Research Fellow, SDPI.

<https://pakobserver.net/dcm-highlights-chinese-peoples-struggle-against-deadly-virus-pakistan-needs-to-learn-from-china-how-to-combat-covid-19/>

The Nation

Pakistan appreciates China's support to cope with coronavirus

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan on Thursday said China had proved to be an all-weather friend as it provided all possible help amid the coronavirus outbreak.

Speaking at a weekly news briefing here, Foreign Office spokesperson Aisha Farooqui said China had extended significant relief assistance to Pakistan to fight the Covid-19 pandemic.

"On 28 March, a special aircraft from China brought relief assistance to Pakistan including 12,000 test kits, 300,000 masks and 10,000 protective suits. In addition to this, an 8 member medical expert team also arrived in Pakistan from China. The medical team will be in Pakistan for 2 weeks and will also visit Karachi and Lahore. Moreover, the Chinese government has also provided support worth \$ 4 million for a separate hospital for Coronavirus patients," she elaborated.

The spokesperson said private organizations in China such as the Alibaba Foundation and Jack Ma foundation had donated 50 thousand test kits and 50 million face masks. "Another special flight reached Islamabad on 2 April from Beijing, and brought in relief assistance worth \$ 3 million from various Chinese organizations, which was coordinated by our Missions in China. This included PPE, (Description Personal protective equipment) ventilators, face masks and essential testing kits," she maintained.

Aisha Farooqui said since the outbreak of Covid-19, we are in close coordination with the Chinese government. The Chinese government is following a "double-quarantine" policy for the officials of Chinese companies working on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects in Pakistan, she said. Aisha Farooqui said the officials traveling to Pakistan spend fourteen days in quarantine in China before travelling to Pakistan and after reaching Pakistan. "They remain in quarantine for fourteen more days. Established medical procedures are also followed during the

process,” the spokesperson said. Coronavirus, she said, has now become a pandemic and international community is taking swift and aggressive measures to contain its spread. “CPEC comprises long-term projects whose completion, in many a cases, is spread over many years,” Aisha Farooqui said.

She said Pakistan was quite confident that “we will be able to complete CPEC projects in time and, going forward, the short-term impact of coronavirus will be counterbalanced by effective and swift mobilization of resources for timely completion of CPEC.”

In addition to the assistance received from China, private donors in Singapore, Japan, and UAE had also sent relief assistance, she said. “The US also earmarked \$1 million for capacity building of health sector staff of Pakistan as well as for better identification and investigation of Covid-19 cases. Another US \$1 million from existing funds of USAID has been redirected to help Pakistan fight against Covid-19 pandemic,” she explained. Reiterating Prime Minister Imran Khan’s call, she said, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi highlighted the need for debt relief and restructuring for developing countries during his talks with counterparts. She said the world agreed with Pakistan’s views on debt relief.

She pointed out that the EU Foreign Affairs Ministers’ Video Conference, International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the G-20 Summit have discussed the issue of support for the fragile countries.

She said Pakistan welcomed these endorsements as a step in the right direction and hoped they will culminate in concrete steps at the earliest. On Kashmir, Aisha Farooqui said, 55 people had tested positive for Covid-19 in the occupied territory so far. “The Foreign Minister had a detailed telephone conversation with Secretary General Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Dr. Yousef A. Al-Othaimen, on this subject in which he highlighted that continued restrictions on communication and movement in held Kashmir were preventing unfettered supply of medicines and other essentials, as well as dissemination of information needed to combat the disease,” she said.

“The FM also highlighted concerns regarding the possibility of spread of Covid-19 among the large number of Kashmiri youth incarcerated by India,” she added. Aisha Farooqui urged the Indian government to lift restrictions in occupied Jammu and Kashmir saying these can be deadly during a health crisis such as COVID-19 pandemic. She said Pakistan welcomed the recent announcement by Afghan leadership on the formation of the negotiation team, which should pave the way towards the commencement of intra-Afghan negotiations process. Pakistan believes it is an important step, reflecting the commitment of the leadership to according priority to peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Asked about Afghan envoy Atif Mashal demands temporary opening of borders for Afghans stuck in Pakistan, the spokesperson said: “The proposal is under consideration.”

Aisha Farooqui said like other countries both Pakistan and Iran were also making efforts to control the global pandemic Covid-19. Aisha Farooqui said the government was fully aware of the situation faced by Pakistan nationals as a result of travel bans imposed in different countries, following the outbreak of Covid-19. “PIA has operated special flights to bring back stranded

Pakistanis from Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Qatar and Thailand. Plans for repatriation from Istanbul, Kuala Lumpur, Tashkent, Baku, Baghdad, London and Toronto have been finalized, while plans for repatriation of our nationals from other destinations are also under active consideration. As this is a dynamic and evolving situation, these plans will be reviewed regularly,” she said. The spokesperson said all Pakistan missions had been instructed to provide assistance to “our nationals abroad in these difficult times. This includes food, medicines, accommodation and extension of visas, in case of expiry of short-term visas.”

<https://nation.com.pk/03-Apr-2020/pakistan-appreciates-china-s-support-to-cope-with-coronavirus>

April 04, 2020

Business Recorder

Chinese company donates masks

PESHAWAR: The China Gezhouba Group Company Pakistan Head Shi Yu called on Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mahmood Khan here on Friday and announced donation of 60000 protective masks and 1000 3M brand protective suits as a gesture of good will. KP chief minister appreciated this friendly gesture.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/04/2-page/832393-news.html>

Framework for SEZs

BoI initiates consultation process

ISLAMABAD: The Board of Investment (BoI) has initiated consultation process for development of a national framework for the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) development, including a policy for private zones, single enterprise zones, conversion of existing industrial estates into the SEZs.

The BOI prepared a standardized template for the development agreement in line with the SEZ Act 2012 for public but in a process of developing template for private sector SEZs.

The Ministry of Law and Justice has been consulted, whether the status of SEZ may be awarded to a single enterprise under the SEZ Act 2012 and rules frame there under.

The ministry has principally endorsed single zone applications.

The notification of Sheikhpura Sun Tao Paper Mills (Pvt) Limited, Sheikhpura as sole enterprise SEZ is pending with the BOI. No private developer is, however, allowed to develop SEZs under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The documents available with Business Recorder show that a total of nine SEZs under the CPEC will be developed by public sector and the participation of private developer is not permitted.

The BOI has notified only one SEZ under the CPEC and rest eight have been under process.

The participation of private developers has been allowed in development of non-CPEC SEZs.

Total 13 SEZs have been notified since the promulgation of the SEZ Act 2012. One SEZ under the CPEC and 12 comes under non-CPEC, which have been notified.

Total number of non-CPEC SEZs is 22. Out of total, four will be developed by the public sector and six by the private sector as 12 were already notified. The government approved allocation of Rs19.90 billion for five years and Rs2.19 billion was allocated for the current financial year.

The board in consultation with the Power Division and the Planning Commission has evaluated the required amount of funds, which will be allocated in the financial year 2020-21.

A meeting of the Board of Approvals constituted under Section 5 (i) of the SEZ Act 2012 was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Imran Khan on March 4, 2020.

The committee evaluated two applications Bostan and Hub for award of status of SEZs in Balochistan.

Two more applications of Naushahro Feroze and Bholari, Sindh for award of status of the SEZ were evaluated.

A private developer applied for Bolhari SEZ in Sindh.

The BOI prepared a standardized template for the development agreement in line with the SEZ Act 2012 for public but was in a process of developing template for private sector SEZs.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/04/3-page/832402-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

MOIT to sign MOU with China in ICT field

ISLAMABAD Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MOTT) will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with China for cooperation in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT). “Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication is working on bilateral cooperation initiative with its Chinese counterpart, in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)” said a press release issued here on Friday. A draft of MOU has already been approved by Federal Secretary IT Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui. The MOU is encompassing ICT infrastructure development, application innovation, human resource development, cyber security, radio spectrum regulation and technology business forum for harnessing the benefits of ICT cooperation and resulting in enhancing digital space for the greater benefit of people and especially the youth.

<https://pakobserver.net/moit-to-sign-mou-with-china-in-ict-field/>

China Red Cross sends medical supplies to Pakistan

A batch of medical supplies worth RMB 4.56 million by Red Cross of China arrived here to help Pakistan fight COVID19. After receiving a medical aid request from the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), the Red Cross Society of China mobilized social forces to raise funds and medical supplies, and purchased materials urgently needed in Pakistan. According to Gwadar Pro, approximately 2.4 tons of medical supplies include 2,000 surgical hoods donated by Tuoren Medical Devices Co., Ltd., 10,000 nucleic acid testing kits from Shanghai Bio-Germ Medical Biotechnology Co., Ltd... 200,000 KN95 masks purchased with RMB 3 million donated by the Red Cross Society of China Inner Mongolia Branch.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-red-cross-sends-medical-supplies-to-pakistan/>

Chinese girl donates pocket-money to support Pakistan

BEIJING “Hi, Pakistani kids! Thank you for donating masks to us. Now it’s time for us to return your help,” wrote YaoYang, a Chinese girl, in a letter to Pakistani children, accompanied with her donations of 80 surgical masks. According to Gwadar Pro App, Yao, 8 years old, is a student of grade two in a primary school in China’s Xiamen city. She knows from the media reports, that the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has hit many countries around the world recently. She came up with an idea to donate masks to the heavily-hit countries. However, she had to choose one country to make the donation, as her pocket-money was only 100 Yuan (\$14) at the time. After discussing with her father, Yao decided to aid Pakistan; as she knew that right after the epidemic broke out in China, Pakistan mobilized the whole nation to provide assistance to China. Yao’s parents gave her another 200 Yuan to buy masks for Pakistani friends. With all the money, Yao bought a total of 80 surgical masks. Besides, Yao donated a rag doll. In her letter to Pakistani children, Yao drew a picture. On this picture, three children wearing masks hold hands, one of whom is Yao and the other two are Pakistani kids. Yao said, “I just want to share my knowledge and experience on COVID 19. I hope children in Pakistan can protect themselves well from the virus.” She advised Pakistani kids to wear surgical masks and that’s why she donated masks. Yao’s masks, letter, doll and two suits of protective gowns, goggles and gloves donated by her parents were delivered by courier to the Pakistani Embassy in China on March 16, 2020. Pakistani ambassador to China Naghmana Alamgir Hashmi sends a thank-you note to Yao Yang on March 19, 2020. To Yao’s surprise, the Pakistani ambassador to China Naghmana Hashmi sent a thank-you note. The ambassador thanked Yao for her donations to Pakistani children, and Yao’s efforts and contributions to Pak-China friendship. Yao said, “I could hardly believe that he Pakistani ambassador did write a letter to me. It was out of the blue. I was very excited.” Yao’s mother told Gwadar Pro, “Yao is very interested in Pakistan now. She looks for Pakistan in the world map and asks us to tell her knowledge and stories about Pakistan.” “I want to visit Pakistan someday,” said Yao, adding “I want to make friends with Pakistani kids. I also want to enjoy Pakistani food.” In her letter, Yao also invited Pakistani kids to Xiamen, a famous tourism destination.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-girl-donates-pocket-money-to-support-pakistan/>

April 05, 2020

Business Recorder

Chinese embassy gifts 20,000 masks

ISLAMABAD: Embassy of the People’s Republic of China gifted 20,000 masks to Islamabad Police, a police spokesman said on Saturday.

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing lauded the efforts of Islamabad police in this critical time and said that the force was standing on the front line in the fight against COVID-19, said a press release. Such cooperation will also continue in the future, he added. Meanwhile, Inspector

General of Islamabad Police Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan thanked the Chinese ambassador over assistance in the challenging time and hoped that the pandemic would be overcome through China's assistance.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/05/2-page/832486-news.html>

Fight against Covid-19

Chinese doctors hold meeting with health team

LAHORE: While the number of Corona positive cases is on rise with 1087 cases in 26 districts of the province of Punjab, a team of Chinese doctors, which is currently visiting Pakistan to help the country contain the spread of the coronavirus Saturday held a meeting with the Punjab health team and shared their experience vis-à-vis preventing spread of COVID-19. The Chinese team held consultation with the provincial health minister Dr Yasmin Rashid, provincial secretaries for health (primary & specialized) and medical experts here at King Edward Medical University. The provincial health minister Dr Yasmin Rashid said that Punjab has started learning best practices in case detection, prevention and clinical management from the Chinese experts on COVID-19.

Mamengui, Li Fengson, Ludong Mi, Song Yuanlun, Envernasi Rola, Xeng li, Meng Kenren, Liovoen Li were part of the Chinese team.

During the meeting with Chinese doctors, Dr Yasmin Rashid said: "Pakistan and China enjoy special friendship. At this time of crisis, it is very important for us to learn from China. China has made a remarkable achievement by effectively controlling the pandemic. On our part, we would utilize all resources to control the spread of Corona and learn from their experience.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/05/3-page/832501-news.html>

Dawn News

Chinese firms begin due diligence of Pakistan Steel Mills

ISLAMABAD: The Privatization Commission (PC) has shared the first draft of human resource, financial and tax due diligence with the Pak-China Investment Company (PCIC) and the Bank of China (BOC) for the purpose of reviving Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM).

In an update on the privatization programme, the commission said on Saturday that the Financial Advisers' Services Agreement (FASA) has already been signed with the PCIC and the BOC, and a team of China's Sinosteel has recently been on a visit to Pakistan.

The draft of human resource, financial and tax due diligence were shared with the Ministry of Industries and Production (MOIP) and the PSM management on Thursday for their review and inputs before placing it and the proposed transaction structures for approval of the Cabinet Committee on Privatization, the statement said.

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the PC team led by Minister for Privatization Muhammad Mian Soomro along with Adviser to the Prime Minister on Energy Nadeem Babar held a series of video conferences and meeting during the week with pre-qualified investment parties for the privatization of the two RLNG power plants: Haveli Bahadurshah and Balloki of the

National Power Plant Management Company Limited (NPPMCL). Nepra chairman also participated in the discussion.

The impending legal and technical issues relating to the privatization of the two power plants have been sort out amicably with the provincial governments and line ministries, the commission said in its statement. These include ‘true-up’ tariff by Nepra, amendment in land conversion rules and water use agreements for power plants by the Punjab government and alignment of gas supply and power purchase agreements by the ministries of power and petroleum resources in the context of RLNG agreements, prevalent till 2025, the statement added.

The commission said that relevant information has been uploaded on the virtual data room (VDR) for due diligence by the pre-qualified bidders. Presently, investors’ due diligence is in progress, but physical site visits of the pre-qualified bidders could not be scheduled due to the current national and international lockdown situation.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1546544/chinese-firms-begin-due-diligence-of-pakistan-steel-mills>

Chinese doctors visit KEMU, share expertise on coronavirus

LAHORE: An eight-member delegation of doctors from China visited the King Edward Medical University (KEMU) on Saturday and shared their expertise to combat the Covid-19 pandemic effectively.

The delegation arrived in Pakistan on the request of the Punjab government to help local medics in diagnosis of the virus and the patient management to minimize mortality rate.

They included Mamengui, Li Fengson, Ludong Mi, Song Yuanlun, Envernasi Rola, Xeng li, Meng Kenren, Liovoyen Li. The delegation consists of physicians, experts of infectious diseases, pulmonologists, preventive public health officials and nurses.

They met with the senior medical teachers at the KEMU, consultative dialogues and apprised them of their experience to eradicate the deadly disease from China.

Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department Secretary retired Captain Usman Younis, Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Secretary Barrister Nabeel Awan, KEMU vice chancellor Prof Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Chief Executive Officer of the

Mayo Hospital Prof Dr. Asad Aslam Khan and other senior faculty members of the varsity were present. Punjab Health Minister Prof Dr. Yasmin Rashid welcomed the delegation and thanked them for helping the government in difficult time. She said the Punjab started learning best practices in case detection, prevention and clinical management from the Chinese experts on COVID-19.

“Pakistan and China enjoy a special friendship. At this time of crisis, it is very important for us to learn from China. China has made a remarkable achievement by effectively controlling the pandemic. On our part, we are utilizing all resources to control the spread of Corona and learn from their experience,” she said. The health minister informed the delegation that in a very short time, 1,000-bedded hospital has been prepared in Punjab.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1546506/chinese-doctors-visit-kemu-share-expertise-on-coronavirus>

Pakistan Observer

Gwadar port remains operational during Covid-19 pandemic

Gwadar Port, a major project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is functioning well despite the Covid-19 pandemic. The comments came as some reports in Western media suggested Chinese teams' are unable to return to their posts amid the pandemic, which is stalling many Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects, Global Times reported. A large number of projects under the BRI, like the one in Gwadar, employ a limited number of Chinese staff and rely on local employees for most roles. According to the latest head count, there are two Chinese employees and 140 Pakistani employees working at Gwadar Port. "The port is functioning well. Chinese workers have returned to their posts, having completed their 14-day self-imposed quarantine," a source close to senior management at the port's operator told the Global Times. "The port's operations have not halted. That's the nature of our business. We take turns to have some holidays," the source said. However, the source added that while there is no negative impact on its operations, the port cannot remain unaffected by the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on global shipping. "Many ships drop by Gwadar after visiting a number of other ports first, and with global shipping being disrupted by the pandemic, there has been quite some re-routing and this has affected the port," said the source. Located in southwest province of Baluchistan, Gwadar Port began to play a new role as economical transit stop and time-saving trade port for land-locked Afghanistan when it shipped fertilizer in January. As Pakistan entered lockdown last week, the port followed relevant rules and put on hold some of the projects in the nearby Free Trade Zone. Construction of a steel tube factory has been halted and a business center has been closed as precautions to stop the novel coronavirus from spreading. Business development to attract foreign investors has also come to a temporary halt.

<https://pakobserver.net/gwadar-port-remains-operational-during-covid-19-pandemic/>

April 06, 2020

Business Recorder

CPEC projects to meet deadlines despite Covid-19 issue: Hashmi

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Naghmana Alamgir Hashmi has said that all the projects being completed under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework would meet their deadlines as all the preventives and control measures had been put in place against the spread of Covid-19.

"In consultation with the Chinese government and companies, we have put in place a double quarantine system for the Chinese workers returning to Pakistan after the New Year's vacations to ensure that other workers don't infected," she made these remarks while speaking in "World Insight" of China Global Television Network (CGTN). The interview was conducted by one of top and celebrated Chinese anchorperson Tian Wei.

She informed that the first phase of CPEC was almost near to completion as 90 percent of projects were already commissioned and the remaining were only months away from the finishing point. When the novel coronavirus pandemic happened in China, the government of Pakistan didn't stop issuance of visa or impose any restriction on traveling between Pakistan and China to ensure that projects were continued and completed on time. The double quarantine system also worked 100 percent and as a result there was not a single case of coronavirus that went to Pakistan from China and the projects didn't stop.

Terming the CPEC as an extremely important project for Pakistan, she remarked, "If we need to recover from our economies, it is even more important that this cooperation in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Special Economic and Industrial Zones doesn't stop under any circumstance." •

About President Dr. Arif Alvi's recent visit to China during Covid-19 outbreak; she said that Pakistan and China were all weather friends. Two weeks ago, President Dr Arif Alvi visited China to express solidarity and show the world that both the countries were standing by each others in difficulties and challenges.

"At a time, when there was a lot of politics being played on the new coronavirus and there were very determined efforts by some countries to isolate China, we stood by China. Pakistan did not evacuate its people and we donated our entire stocks of medical supplies to China," she added.

About medical supplies recently airlifted to Pakistan to help combat Covid-19, she said that this was a combination of some crucial equipments procured and purchased by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of Pakistan but overwhelming tonnage of the equipment and supplies consisted of donations made by the Chinese companies and friends. "It is great satisfaction for me to tell you that donated items have a value of RMB 25 million and it is very huge contribution made by the Chinese friends," she added.

Ambassador Hashmi said that some of the items included crucial testing kits, X-ray machines and other lot of equipment. It also included a reasonable amount of traditional Chinese medicines. "It is a huge help and this is not only one flight that we are operating. A lot of our Chinese friends have promised for many more donations. We are very grateful to our Chinese brothers and sisters," she added.

Terming the current outbreak huge challenge, she said that Pakistan was a developing country and there were large areas in the cities and villages where poverty still existed while the population was not 100 percent literate. Under the prevailing circumstances, the government had so far done quite well. It had allowed local business under strict regulations to open up for certain number of hours every. The government also announced economic package to support the small and medium enterprises besides directly supporting the families and individuals who depend on daily wages. Prime Minister Imran Khan had also formed a youth tiger force against coronavirus to create social awareness and to provide food and ration on daily basis to families who depends on daily wages, she added. Ambassador Hashmi said that the government also involved the Islamic scholars who come up with advice in the light of the religion on virus controls.

About the shortage of testing kits, she informed that the entire population could not be tested with 50,000 testing kits because Pakistan was a country of over 230 million people and most of them were living in remote areas. "So learning from the Chinese experience, we are also employing the same method. And we are very closely monitoring the patient or population that is showing signs of coronavirus. If he or she tests positive, we trace the people who have been contact with him or her in last 40 days and put them in self quarantine," she added. "We will have to take the methodical approach which China adopted that is the only method which is feasible." • Regarding lesson from China's health advisers, she responded that it was not only Pakistan but the entire world had learned from China. "We are also very carefully analyzing the practices of Chinese government, hospitals and doctors." •

The embassy was summarizing and transmitting all that material to the relevant authorities back home. "At this moment, our country needs us and each member of my embassy has risen to the challenge and we are working round the clock."

Ambassador Hashmi said, "We started the awareness program well before the epidemic and cases of coronavirus started coming to Pakistan; as a large number of Pakistan community including 28,000 students, of which 1300 students were concentrated in Hubei and about 1186 in Wuhan evoked a lot of interest back in the general public and students.

They were again and again urging that this virus situation could hit any country. So in Pakistan also, we should be aware to how to deal with it. When it came to Pakistan, general public to a large extent was already aware about the disease. "This awareness gave our doctors and institutions to print out and prepare a lot of videos and written material which they circulated to the general public to create awareness that helped us in big way," she added.

On temporary hospitals, she said that Pakistan had done exactly that China had done. For remote areas where 70 percent population existed, the government had even converted rail coaches into temporary isolation units. "We are also converting a lot of our government buildings and schools to reduce the pressure on the hospitals. We have asked our retired doctors and nurses to come and work as volunteers. We are also trying to monitor residential areas and people as well to identify the patients."

<https://www.brecorder.com/2020/04/06/586705/cpec-projects-to-meet-deadlines-despite-covid-19-issue-hashmi/>

Dawn News

Chinese experts for extending lockdown by 28 days in Punjab

LAHORE: The Chinese doctors currently visiting Lahore have suggested to the Punjab government to extend the current lockdown for 28 days to save the province from Covid-19 havoc and later gradually and cautiously start lifting restrictions while taking the conditions into account.

Chinese delegation leader Dr. Maming Hoi busted the myth that the coronavirus would fade away with the advent of summer, saying, "The possibility of spread of the coronavirus in hot weather cannot be ruled out and ignored".

The delegation of Chinese doctors and a chief nurse called on Chief Minister Usman Buzdar at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Sunday. Health minister Dr. Yasmin Rashid was also present besides the health departments' secretaries.

The Chinese experts said the social distancing measures could play an important role to save people from the coronavirus. They also advised the government that it would be more appropriate that coronavirus patients should be admitted to a hospital or kept at quarantine center instead of keeping them at home.

Bust the myth of Covid-19 death in hot weather; CM says Govt. to act on Chinese suggestions

The Chinese doctors said the use of plasma had proved to be beneficial in saving lives of the patients suffering from adverse conditions. They suggested that the use of three anti-viral medicines for the affected patients had proved to be curative and effective.

“At times, the coronavirus symptoms do not appear and people having better immune system and immunity recover early while coronavirus can prove to be dangerous for the elderly and for those suffering from other ailments,” a Chinese doctor said.

The Chinese experts shared their observations and experiences with the meeting in order to help the government effectively cope up with the pandemic and also check its rapid spread. They gave their assurances to extend all possible assistance to the Punjab government to prevent and eradicate the pandemic.

CM Buzdar and Health Minister Dr. Rashid inquired from the Chinese doctors about various matters related to coronavirus.

Mr. Buzdar said the government would act upon the suggestions and recommendations of the delegation. The chief minister thanked the Chinese experts for giving their assurance to extend their all-out cooperation and added that China had always proved to be a highly reliable friend of Pakistan and stood by it in any difficult situation.

Mr. Buzdar complimented that China by overcoming the coronavirus pandemic in a short span of time had set example for the world and added that the government would benefit from the Chinese experience for protecting the masses from the pandemic and eradicating it.

“The Chinese model is a role model and worth pursuing precedent for the whole world in order to effectively preempt and overcome this pandemic,” the CM added.

The Chinese doctors and specialists said that standard operating procedure (SOP) being adopted by the Punjab government to undertake precautionary measures and treatment facilities were effective. They said the timely steps would prove beneficial and fruitful to impede the spread of coronavirus.

Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department Secretary Muhammad Usman gave a briefing about the exact statistics of coronavirus patients in the province.

Meanwhile, CM Buzdar and Dr. Yasmin Rashid held a one-to-one meeting and discussed the measures being adopted by the Chinese doctors and specialists in the wake of Covid-19.

Dr. Rashid apprised the CM of the Chinese model for overcoming the pandemic.

Mr. Buzdar directed to undertake all necessary measures to ensure successful implementation of Chinese model. He asserted that the government would implement Chinese model for treatment of patients and make Chinese steps as a part of the Punjab government's SOP being undertaken to control the pandemic.

Delegates visit KEMU: The experts from China held a meeting with senior and leading clinicians of the province at the King Edward Medical University on Sunday. KEMU Vice Chancellor Prof Khalid Masood Gondal welcomed the delegation at the interactive sessions.

Punjab Health Minister Prof Yasmin Rashid attended seminar as the chief guest and asked the Chinese experts to share their experiences, especially about the use of antibiotics.

The vice chancellors, principals, deans, professors, general practitioners, administrators, medical superintendents from various state run medical institutions of Punjab were present. Prominent amongst them were Prof Javed Akram, Prof Aamir Zaman Khan, Prof Zafar Chaudhry, Prof Mustafa Kamal Pasha, Prof Farid Zafar, Prof Mehmood Ayyaz and Prof Arif Tajjamal.

The Chinese experts talked about clinical features, proportion of cases with pneumonia and multi organ failure due to Covid-19 severity. They also shared the management plans for mild, moderate and severe cases. They stressed on the preventive measures at the right time, especially regarding social distancing, hand hygiene and sanitation.

In the question and answer session, the doctors asked the questions related to management of Covid-19 cases, ventilation and pneumonia management, treatment of multi organ failure, plasma therapy and other control measures for the outbreak. China delegation gave detailed answers to every question and shared their experiences and workable solutions.

Prof Saqib Saeed and Prof Khalid Masood Gondal expressed gratitude to the guests on behalf of all doctors and faculty of the KEMU. Dr. Maming from China gave his concluding remarks.

(Asif Chuadhry also contributed to this report.)

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1546803/chinese-experts-for-extending-lockdown-by-28-days-in-punjab>

Pakistan Observer

China's safety model useful to defeat coronavirus

CORONAVIRUS out-break has shaken the huge global health system and economies, but the way China stepped up to contribute to the response by accomplishing their tasks including updating infrastructure, fighting misinformation and providing virtual work and awareness tools is surprising. Various news reports from China have revealed that during the last week, only one new case of coronavirus infection was reported from the origin city of the disease, Wuhan. Head of the Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at Hong Kong University, Ben Cowling, in his recent article published last week, has verified that China, due to its strict initiatives, has brought almost an end to its first wave of coronavirus infections. The World Health Organization (WHO) in a statement has acknowledged the efforts of China government for adopting effective safety measures to overcome the pandemic. 'No doubt that China has taken drastic measures and techniques to isolate and quarantine its virus-affected people in a disciplined way, WHO said,

adding that Chinese used effective initiatives of successful lockdowns for huge numbers of people, shutdowns of vast swaths of society, everywhere in the country.’ Talking to APP, Medical Superintendent Services Hospital Dr. Iftikhar Ahmed said that Chinese safety model has proven a successful to overcome the disease. The Chinese as a nation set an example by adopting aggressive ‘social distancing’ and ‘self-quarantining’ initiatives to overcome the pandemic, he added. He expressed the hope that transmission of the coronavirus was likely to slow down due to the advent of warm and humid season conditions ahead. Moreover, the human immune system in warm temperature become stronger than in winter, he added. ‘The global epidemic was likely to stay till the start of hot weather conditions, adding we need an awareness and management campaign on the lines of Chinese model’, he informed. Giving the details, he said that washing of hands with soap at least five times a day, avoiding public gatherings, strict social distancing, sanitizing homes and mobile phones regularly, spread awareness, educating people in family and at work place, were the salient features of Chinese safety model. According to Chinese Health Ministry document, its current population is around 1.42 billion, and more than 50 million people were placed under an aggressive lockdown from January, due to the spread of virus. The world, which was scared from China, is surprised on its speedy recovery from the deadly virus. Chairman of the Consortium for the Globalization of Chinese Medicine, Dr. Cheng in his recent statement has said that Chinese traditional herbal medicine cure was another reason of the recovery from the deadly disease, adding that the Chinese traditional herbs were safe, effective and easy to use in coronavirus treatment. He confirmed that after good results, the Chinese government was now advising doctors to consider mixing Western antiviral drugs with traditional Chinese herbal medicine in treatment of the affected patients. The WHO health mission to China which included 13 foreigner and 12 Chinese scientists has released a finding report in which it has observed that the government and people of China adopted unprecedented aggressive measures to combat the deadly virus, saying a few weeks ago the Chinese hospitals were overflowing with COVID-19.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinas-safety-model-useful-to-defeat-coronavirus/>

The Express Tribune

Qureshi urges joint efforts against virus from SCO platform

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Monday called for using the platform of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) for joint efforts and effective strategies to combat the global outbreak of coronavirus pandemic.

Talking to SCO Secretary General Vladimir Norov, Qureshi said that Pakistan also wanted to hold a video conference of the health ministers from South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) countries to benefit from each other’s experiences regarding the epidemic.

During the telephone call, Qureshi and Norov discussed in detail the prevention of the spread of coronavirus pandemic and adopting effective strategies to overcome the challenge. He also apprised the Norov about the efforts made by Pakistan to tackle this challenge.

Pakistan considered the SCO an important forum as the population of its member countries is more than 40% of the world population and a quarter of the total global gross domestic product (GDP), the foreign minister said.

“The whole world is currently dealing with the corona pandemic,” he said. “Joint efforts need to be implemented through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization platform to prevent the spread of the pandemic so that effective strategies can be adopted to counter the pandemic,” he added.

“The way China has defeated this global epidemic is commendable, we have to use the experiences of China. China is helping Pakistan a lot in dealing with the corona epidemic. The timely publicity of the strategy adopted by the China to address the global challenge is a great step of the SCO Secretariat.”

The minister praised the call from the SCO health minister’s conference on April 1, to address the global pandemic challenge and its emphasis on the need for adopting a joint strategy and joint efforts to prevent the outbreak. Qureshi told the SCO secretary general that Pakistan also wanted to hold Saarc countries health ministers’ video conference to benefit from each other’s experiences regarding the coronavirus epidemic.

Qureshi also appraised Norov of Pakistan’s proposal regarding the restructuring of the debt owed by the developing countries to support their economies in the context of the current global outbreak. He said he had also contacted the UN secretary general, the OIC secretary general and the foreign ministers of several European and other countries. “They have reacted positively to the proposal,” the minister said.

Qureshi hoped that the SCO would play a significant role in advancing the debt restructuring proposal through its platform. Norov applauded the proposal of Prime Minister Imran Khan and stressed that economic support to the developing countries was urgently needed.

He assured that the SCO Secretariat would continue to use all possible efforts to prevent the spread of this outbreak. Qureshi invited Norov to visit Pakistan as soon as the situation permitted, which he accepted.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2192150/1-qureshi-lauds-chinas-valuable-support-dealing-covid-19/>

The Nation

Pakistan so far gets 20 ventilators as donation

ISLAMABAD - Till now, Pakistan has received only 20 ventilators as donation from abroad (mainly China), reveals the latest information regarding donations available on the official website of National Disaster Development Authority.

Out of these total 20 ventilators, 5 are normal ventilators, 5 are portable ventilators and the remaining 10 are ICU ventilators. However, according to the official details uploaded by NDMA, 40 home ventilators, 3 ICU ventilators and 20 normal ventilators are expected to be delivered as donations to Pakistan in the next few days.

To battle the global pandemic of coronavirus, Pakistan has received eighty percent of donations from China alone. However, private company Ali BABA, few international NGOs and Singapore also aided Pakistan in fighting and eradicating coronavirus from the country.

Ali Baba donated 57,600 testing kits and around 500,000 face masks to Pakistan. The international NGOs donated 4 thermal scanners, 50 thermal guns, 3000 sanitizers, 10,000 masks, 1000 goggles, 1000 suits, 1000 gloves and 2 ambulance buses. Whereas Singapore donated 1500 goggles, 400 face shields and 2800 coveralls. The rest of all the donations are made by China.

The flight from Urumqi to Gilgit Baltistan brought ventilators (5), face masks (200,000), N-95 mask, testing kits (sample kits 2,000), and protective suits (2,000).

Another flight came from Urumqi along with Chinese doctors and brought protective suits (5,000), n-95 (10,800), medical mask (100,800), defibrillator monitor (5), CPAP (9), invasive ventilator set (3), testing kits (10,000), VTM (10,000), a-Interferon (9,600), Ribavirin IV Fluids (1,800), Umifenovir (1,500) Levofloxacin (1,000), Azithromycin (2,100), Anti-Bac Linezolid Needle (15,810), Anti-Bac Ceftriaxone (4,200), Methylprednisolone (4,500), Hydroxychloroquine Sulfate (500), VC Tablets (360), Chloroquine Phosphate (120), Lianhua Qingwen (2100), Huoxiang Zhengqi Herbal (1,400), Fufang Yizhihao Herbal (1,260), Zukamu Herbal (2,100) and Xuebijing IV Fluids (14,000).

After this flight, China sent another flight from Wuhan which brought disposable coveralls (10,000), n-95 (20,000), medical face masks (300,000), ICU ventilators (10), and portable ventilators (5).

After the flight from Wuhan with donations, Singapore assistance came along with Coveralls (2,800), Goggles (1,500), and face Shields (400).

These are the donations which Pakistan has received as yet. However, according to the data uploaded by NDMA in their official website, more deliveries are expected from China. Each flight from Guangzhou, Wuhan and Chengdu are expected to arrive in the coming days.

Flight from Guangzhou is expected to deliver further non-medical mask (400,000), home ventilators (40), ICU ventilators (3), protection suit (2,000), goggles (10,000), face shield (10,000), medical face mask (100,000), sanitizer (182,816 bottles) and thermal gun (200).

Flight from Wuhan is expected to supply additional ventilators (5) and testing kits (33000), whereas the flight from Chengdu is expected to donate gloves (20,100), ventilators (15), face mask (5,667), protection suits (15,000), sanitizer (10,000ltrs) and non-woven fabric weighing 1442kg.

<https://nation.com.pk/06-Apr-2020/pakistan-so-far-gets-20-ventilators-as-donation>

April 07, 2020

Business Recorder

KU receives 7,000 N95 facemasks from Chinese university

KARACHI: The University of Karachi on Monday received as many as 7000 N95 facemasks from the Sichuan Normal University of China.

The masks were handed over by the Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute at University of Karachi Professor Zhang Xiaoping to the KU Clinic.

The KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, Registrar Professor Dr Saleem Shahzad, Pakistani Director CIUK Professor Dr Muhammad Nasiruddin Khan, Senior Medical Officer KU Clinic Dr Syed Abid Hasan and others were also present on this occasion.

Professor Zhang Xiaoping shared that Pakistan and China are good friends for many years and when the coronavirus occurred in China, we got a lot of support from Pakistanis. The KU VC Professor Dr Khalid Iraqi and the CIUK Professor Dr Muhammad Nasiruddin Khan and others recorded video messages and prayed for early recovery of affected persons and we got a lot of special support and wishes from the people of Pakistan.

He said that now as Pakistan is also facing serious situations due to Covid19, the Chinese government and people are very much concerned and willing to support Pakistanis, Sichuan Normal University (SNU) which is the hosting university of the Confucius Institute has decided to provide durable facemasks to the teaching and non-teaching staff of Karachi University.

Meanwhile, the KU VC Professor Dr Khalid Iraqi said that the administration of the University of Karachi is very grateful to the SNU for their gesture. He observed that Pak-China friendship is getting stronger and deeper with the passage of time and such a difficult time is bringing them closer to each other.

He acknowledged that China soon after controlling the situation in Wuhan and other affected areas, come forward to support and help Pakistan against the Covid19. He also appreciated the role and services of the staff of the varsity's Clinic and said the whole staff is available around the clock to facilitate the teachers and non-teaching staff.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/07/5-page/832703-news.html>

Pakistan Observer

Chinese firm donates traditional medicines to combat virus

BEIJING a Chinese pharmaceutical company has donated Traditional Chinese Medicines (TCM) to a hospital in Karachi to help Pakistan's health authorities in their efforts to prevent and control of Covid19 pandemic. Hunan Anbang Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd (Anbang) has delivered 600 boxes of traditional Chinese medicine to a mobile cabin hospital in Karachi to combat the Covid-19, according to a report of China Economic Net (CEN). At the handing over ceremony held recently, Anbang official introduced that the donated medicine, Yinhuang Qingfei capsule, has been listed as a recommended TCM in the treatment plan for the Covid-19 by the provincial TCM regulator in Hunan, China. This capsule is effective for patients infected with the novel coronavirus, according to Anbang's Chairman Chen Feibao. What's more, this capsule, the first ever traditional Chinese medicine for bronchitis, passed the clinical trial in Pakistan in 2019 and proved effective for Pakistani patients. Anbang's first batch of donation 1,500 boxes of Yinhuang Qingfei capsule to Pakistan, were sent from China's Changsha city. When asked about the reason of donations to Pakistan, Chen said, Anbang, as a pharmaceutical company, has a bounden duty to fight against the virus with Pakistan, who mobilized the whole nation to provide assistance to China, soon after the epidemic's breakout. Besides the donation to the cabin hospital, Anbang also donated 100 and 300 boxes of Yinhuang Qingfei capsule to the Union of

Overseas Chinese in Karachi and the Air Security Force in the city's airport respectively. According to Anbang, they will send the second batch of medicines to help Pakistan combat the deadly disease soon.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-firm-donates-traditional-medicines-to-combat-virus/>

The News

Pakistani doctors laud Chinese help in battle against COVID-19

BEIJING: Young Doctors Association (YDA) of Pakistan has appreciated the timely and worthy assistance of Chinese government to Pakistan by sending medical team and providing supplies to fight against novel coronavirus.

According to China Economic Net (CEN), a member of YDA Dr. Hashaam Khalid who works at Services Hospital Lahore said that China has sent all required medical supplies. In a situation when international borders are closed a team of eight Chinese doctors came to Pakistan for a two-week visit. And their expertise is proving just like a blessing to us as they fought on the front line. They have the experience and know how to deal with this disease, Hashaam said. "For this timely and useful assistance, we are thankful to the Chinese government, Chinese doctors, people and especially the health officials who are visiting here. I want to ensure that our morale is high and I hope Pakistan will be the second country in the world after China that defeats coronavirus", he told CEN.

Before Chinese assistance there were no such medical equipments to fight on the frontline against the epidemic. These are all things that the medical staff really needs and it is very risky to treat the infected patients if these items are not available.

Pakistan badly needed those medical supplies and China provided these items immediately. Our government also took timely notice of it. Hashaam further said that the Chinese medical team can better guide us on how we should implement our plan effectively. As a developing nation, Pakistan is fighting against Polio, Hepatitis and many other contagious diseases. The hygiene is not good in our society so this expertise would be useful for us.

Faheed Hussain, another young doctor at general hospital Lahore also expressed deep gratitude and told that China's timely donations of medical supplies including masks, gloves and sterilizers helped us to carry out our duty without any fear. He further said that we have found China as a real and true friend in every time of need.

He added that China has sent a huge quantity of medical equipments to Pakistan including test kits, N95 masks, disposable medical masks, medical protective clothes, ventilators, defibrillator monitors and sets of drugs to fight against COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chinese medical team consisting of eight doctors visited different cities of Pakistan including all main hospitals in Rawalpindi and Islamabad and shared their valuable experiences for the prevention and control of the COVID-19 epidemic.

It is worth mentioning that Dr. Ma Minghui, head of the Chinese medical team said on different occasions that their team is hopeful that the Pakistani people together and united with the government at all levels will fight and defeat the coronavirus. "We will focus over the spread and

prevention of this epidemic in Pakistan. We pray for the good health and safety of the Pakistani people” Ma ever said.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/640670-pakistani-doctors-laud-chinese-help-in-battle-against-covid-19>

April 08, 2020

Business Recorder

Covid-19 experience

Pakistani, Chinese armies hold video conference

ISLAMABAD: The Chinese and Pakistani armies hold a video conference on the sharing of experience in the prevention and control of pneumonia caused by new coronavirus, according to Chinese Ministry of Defence here on Tuesday.

Around 20 health officials and experts of the two militaries in clinical, testing, prevention and control related fields attended the video conference in Beijing, Wuhan and Rawalpindi.

The Chinese officials first introduced the overall situation and experience of the Chinese army’s epidemic prevention and control work, new coronavirus pneumonia detection technology methods, main points, and diagnosis and treatment plans.

Subsequently, the two parties focused on the exchange of emergency command coordination, epidemic prevention and control, monitoring and detection, clinical treatment and other topics. Combined with case analysis, the strategies for treatment of critical patients and nosocomial infection control are discussed in depth.

The Pakistani side thanked China for sharing the epidemic prevention and treatment experience for the first time, highly appraising the Chinese military’s active efforts to participate in epidemic prevention and control, and congratulating China on achieving important stage results in combating the new coronavirus pneumonia epidemic. It is reported that this is the first video conference organized by the Chinese military to share experience in the prevention and control of new coronavirus pneumonia outbreaks with foreign troops.

In the next step, the Chinese military will uphold the concept of serving to build a community of human destiny, strengthen international cooperation in the fight against epidemics with the military of the countries concerned, work together to combat the epidemic situation, maintain international health security, and make new contributions to building a human health and health community.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/08/14-page/832911-news.html>

Dawn News

Chinese experts, hospitals’ CEOs want lockdown in Sindh further extended

KARACHI: The three-week province-wide lockdown may not be eased off after April 14 as Chinese experts, owners and chief executive officers of private hospitals and leading doctors

have urged the provincial government to extend the restrictions to stop the spread of coronavirus in Sindh.

The provincial government had imposed a lockdown on March 23 for two weeks and then further extended the restrictions till April 14 in line with a decision made at the national level.

The suggestion to further extend the lockdown first came from experts from China during their meeting with Sindh Health Minister Dr. Azra Pechuho. Then in the evening, CEOs of leading hospitals and prominent doctors met Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and expressed the fear that the coronavirus could spread if the lockdown was not extended.

‘Eight-week lockdown crucial’

Sharing their experience with regard to the coronavirus pandemic, the Chinese experts were of the view that at least an eight-week lockdown was crucial to halt the spread of Covid-19.

According to a health department statement, they while appreciating the steps taken by the provincial government said that social distancing was the key to stop the spread of the virus and the authorities should ensure the lockdown for a longer period.

Murad says he would consult cabinet, other stakeholders whether to extend lockdown beyond April 14

“For effective results, it’s crucial to extend the lockdown. In many areas of China, the lockdown continued for two months which proved fruitful,” said the Chinese experts.

“The Chinese experts reiterated their support to the Sindh government in terms of expertise, medical equipment and sharing experience in its fight against global pandemic.” said the statement.

During the meeting with private hospitals’ CEOs and doctors, the CM said he wanted their support, cooperation and guidance to fight coronavirus.

Those present in the meeting were Dr. Abdul Bari of the Indus Hospital, Dr. Asim Hussain of the Dr. Ziauddin Hospital, Dr. Syed Junaid Shah of AO Clinic, Dr. Saadia Virk of South City Hospital, Dr. Umer Jang of National Medical Centre, Dr. Bilal Faiz of Creek General Hospital, Dr. Farhan Essa Abdullah of Essa Laboratory, Dr. Tahir Yousuf of Tahir Medical Centre, Sindh Healthcare Commission chairman Minhaj Qidwai, SHCC Commissioner Jawad Amin Khan, Dr. Ali Imam of Imam Clinic, Ali Farhan of Darul Sehat, Dr. Salman Fareedi of Liaquat National Hospital, Zerkais Ankleteria of Ankleteria Hospital, Brig Dr. Waqar of Memon Medical Institute, Dr. Mazhar Nizam of Patel Hospital, Commodore Kamran Khan, Dr. Sadiq Ansari, Rehan Baloch and others.

They asked the CM not to ease the lockdown after April 14 as if it was withdrawn the virus would spread like a jungle fire.

They were of the view that a large population of the city comprised of slum dwellers living in small house with large families and travelling in public buses in crowds.

They said that if such kind of crowding was allowed, people would get infected in buses and on the streets and would take the virus back to their home and get their family members and localities infected.

The CM said that he would consult with his cabinet and other stakeholders on the issue.

All the CEOs and owners of the private hospitals assured the chief minister that they would provide him equipment, manpower, technical and expert support whenever the provincial government would be in need.

The CM formed a committee headed by Health Minister Dr. Pechuho and comprising Dr. Asim Hussain, Dr. Saadia and others as members to work out a plan, requirements and arrangements to tackle the situation.

Praises doctors fighting on front lines

In a video message, the chief minister said that during the past 24 hours a doctor while helping Covid-19 patient got infected and within nine days lost his life but saved the life of various others.

He said he saluted all doctors and health workers who were fighting on the front lines against the coronavirus pandemic.

He said that 10,223 tests were conducted so far, including 634 on Tuesday. He pointed out that by Tuesday afternoon 54 new cases of coronavirus were detected raising the tally to 986.

The break-up of 986 cases is: 159 in Hyderabad, two in Jamshoro, one in Badin, 12 in Tando Mohammad Khan, one in Sujawal, one in Dadu, seven in Shaheed Benazirabad, one in Sanghar, four in Naushahro Feroze, 274 in Sukkur, two in Ghotki, 13 in Larkana, one in Jacobabad, 159 in Karachi-East, 66 in West, 110 in South, 93 in Central, 44 in Malir and 36 in district Korangi.

He said 253 coronavirus patients recovered on Monday and 16 others on Tuesday. "Thus the number of the patients recovered so far is 269 which is good news," he said, adding that out of 269 cured patients, 183 were pilgrims.

The CM said that at present 396 patients were in home isolation and 97 were in isolation centers. He said that 18 people lost their lives while fighting the coronavirus. "On Monday, Dr. Abdul Qadir Soomro died," he said, adding that the doctor was infected on March 28 when he was helping coronavirus suspected and confirmed patients and he was admitted to a hospital on March 31 and on April 6 he lost his life.

He expressed his deep sorrow and grief over his sad demise and offered condolence with his family members, colleagues, and doctors' community and said his sacrifice had saved the lives of a large number of patients.

Mr. Shah said that the doctors were fighting on the front line against Covid-19, therefore, their services and the services of paramedical staff were commendable.

The video showed the chief minister saluting the doctors and health workers.

Talking about the government strategy, the CM said that locating, identifying and controlling the source of transmission was necessary for preventing the outbreak.

He said that the response of the government was very prompt adding that the provincial government had established 12 isolation centers throughout the province with a capacity of 170 beds.

He said that the district Rapid Response Committees had already been established and testing services were also developed at different hospitals.

The chief minister once again urged the people to observe isolation by staying at home; even at home people have to maintain social distancing from children and elderly people particularly from those who were asthmatics and cardiac patients.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1547274/chinese-experts-hospitals-ceos-want-lockdown-in-sindh-further-extended>

Pakistan Observer

USA, China & UK top three destinations of Pakistani exports: SBP

ISLAMABAD The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has said that during first eight months of current financial year (2019-20), the United States of America (USA) remained the top export destination of the Pakistani products followed by China and United Kingdom (UK). The SBP on Tuesday said that total exports to the USA during July-February (2019-20) were recorded at US \$ 2755.213 million against the exports of US \$ 2687.053 million during July-February (2018-19), showing an increase of 2.53 percent during the period under review. This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth \$ 1179.304 million against the exports of \$1156.774 million last year, showing nominal increase of 1.94 percent. UK was the at third top export destination, where Pakistan exported products worth US \$ 1141.808 million during the current financial year against the exports of US \$ 1172.866 million during last fiscal year, showing decrease of 2.64 percent, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to United Arab Emirates (UAE) stood at US \$ 1100.851 million against \$ 855.643 million during last year, showing increase of 28.65 percent while the exports to Germany were recorded at US \$ 909.754 million against US \$ 871.801 million last year, the data revealed. During the first eight months, the exports to Afghanistan were recorded at US \$ 728.315 million against US \$ 777.153 million whereas the exports to Holland stood at US \$ 687.618 million against US \$ 626.855 million. Pakistan's exports to Spain were recorded at US \$ 606.391 million against US \$ 617.160 million last year where as the exports to Italy stood at US \$ 524.612 million against US \$ 508.363 million. Similarly, the exports to Bangladesh during the current financial year were recorded at US \$ 512.089 million against US \$ 510.413 million while the exports to France stood at US\$ 294.119 million against US \$ 303.968 million. Pakistan's exports to Singapore were recorded at US \$ 139.487 million during the current financial year compared to US \$ 190.641 million last year whereas, the exports to Canada stood at US \$ 188.811 million against US \$195.322 million, to Saudi Arabia US \$ 317.509 million against US \$ 210.854 million whereas the exports to India stood at US \$ 19.738 million during the financial year against US \$ 273.857 million during last year.

<https://pakobserver.net/usa-china-uk-top-three-destinations-of-pakistani-exports-sbp/>

CPEC gets new lease of life

S M Hali

JUST when the global pandemic COVID-19 shook the entire world and life appeared to be coming to a standstill, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan directed the resumption of all

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) related infrastructure and energy projects. Despite the lockdown due to COVID-19, Pakistan's Gwadar Port, a major project of CPEC under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), continues to function despite murmurings by western media that Chinese teams are unable to return to their posts amid the pandemic, stalling many BRI projects. The port of Gwadar employs only a limited number of Chinese staff and relies on local employees. The latest figures indicate that only two Chinese but 140 employees are currently working at Gwadar Port. According to media reports, only last week, a container ship laden with construction material including steel wire and other essentials for the Gwadar international airport project, docked at Gwadar.

Some work on the construction of Free Trade Zone, steel tube factory and business center had been halted owing to the lockdown but will now resume after the Pakistani Prime Minister's orders. Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Yao Jing informed that the 10th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting on CPEC scheduled to be held in April in Islamabad, is going to be held via video conferencing, as the Chinese delegation, which was due to arrive in Islamabad cancelled its visit due to Coronavirus but consultations will go on since CPEC is the major part of Pakistan-China strategic partnership. Yao Jing reiterated that CPEC project is a platform of regional connectivity and prosperity. He informed that the next phase of CPEC is focusing on the social development of Pakistan with key priorities of 17 fast track projects

aimed at improving the infrastructure of railways, industrial cooperation, agriculture, health and education as well as some more energy projects. Yao Jing appreciated the Government of Pakistan's efforts to fast track the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects. He expressed his desire to put special focus on Rail Transport, Hydel Power Projects, Social Sector Development Projects and B2B collaboration between the two countries. He further stated that China would also consider investing in the low-cost housing program. The Chinese Ambassador said that the meetings of some of the JWG's would be held through video conferencing to ensure preparation for the upcoming JCC meeting without any delay.

Chinese Consul General at Lahore, Long Dingbin has affirmed that the work on CPEC's projects remain uninterrupted in the wake of Coronavirus epidemic. The Consulate General maintains close communication with the Corridor projects in the consular area, especially the "Orange Line" project and Matiari to Lahore ± 660 kV HVDC Transmission Line Project. Pakistan's Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar has expressed satisfaction at the overall delivery of CPEC projects and said that the establishment and operationalization of the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in all of the provinces was a top priority and the progress in that regard was being closely monitored. The SEZs, he said, would act as a catalyst in increasing the growth of local manufacturing. The Minister emphasized the need to increase B2B collaboration in banking, telecom and digital finance, manufacturing and agriculture sectors. The Ambassador assured the Minister that the Chinese side was keen in promoting such relationships between businesses and manufacturing industries.

China's Global Times in one of news reported that the "2019 novel Coronavirus outbreak has been a huge challenge for China. However, China will never leave the CPEC project unfinished,

nor will it let the CPEC collapse despite domestic difficulties. CPEC's potential impact on Pakistan has been compared to that of the Marshall Plan undertaken by the United States in post-World War-II Europe. Industrial production in Europe increased, by a third between 1948 and 1952 when the Marshall Plan was operational. China's Health Silk Road. COVID-19 has expedited China to launch The Health Silk Road, which will run in parallel to the multiple overland Silk Road corridors and the Maritime Silk Road. In a graphic demonstration of soft power, so far China has offered Covid-19-related equipment and medical help to no fewer than 89 nations – and counting. That covers Africa especially South Africa, Namibia and Kenya, with Alibaba in fact announcing it will send help to all African nations; Latin America Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Peru; the arc from East Asia to Southwest Asia; and Europe.

Key recipients in Europe include Italy, France, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Serbia and Poland. But Italy, most of all, is a very special case. Most are donations. Some are trade – like millions of masks sold to France and the US. Pakistan is one of the biggest recipients of China's largesse under the "Health Silk Road". Scores of flights are continuing to bring in much needed medical supplies from China to Pakistan. The supplies comprise surgical masks, body suits, ventilators, medical teams and even a field hospital. The "Health Silk Road" is not only flights from China to Karachi and Islamabad but giant containers are coming in via the KKH, a part of CPEC from Khunjerab. It may be noted that Khunjerab Pass remains closed from October to April due to snow but it was specially opened to let the medical supplies to Pakistan through. CPEC remains on track and is a hallmark of the special bonds between the people of China and Pakistan. The Prime Minister's initiative of restarting CPEC construction projects in the wake of COVID-19, has indeed given the mega project a new lease of life.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-gets-new-lease-of-life/>

Assessing Special Economic Zones of CPEC: Prospects for Pakistan

Hassam Ahmed Siddiqi

THE multi-billion-dollar China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) presents tremendous opportunities for both the states to establish the region as hub of economic opportunities. While South Asian region has been greatly impacted by conflicts and regional rivalries during last few decades, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has emerged as an opportunity for all the states in the region to secure greater economic interests through regional integration. Pakistan's frontline participation in war on terror had pushed back its economic and industrialized progression and unfortunately the country's passive global image is still making it difficult for the leadership to convince the world of our developments on the crossroad to peace, progress and economic prosperity. However, the progress has not stopped. Slowly yet steadily, development on CPEC projects of energy, infrastructure, development of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), Gwadar and western route are underway. In addition, the corridor has boosted bilateral trade between Pakistan and China with an annual growth rate of 18.8% highlighting improved B2B collaborations and people to people exchanges.

While it is a fact that COVID-19 has substantially impacted global economy, it becomes very difficult for countries like Pakistan to meet the challenges of such uncalled for calamities.

Pakistan is already passing through a very tough economic period where on one hand placement in grey zone by FATF has passively impacted country's global economic outlook while on the other hand, gap between government's policies and industrialization is widening due to IMF conditionality. Though it needs to be understood and realized that progress on CPEC projects should not be hampered by any of these issues. Strong economy is the backbone for any country to play a dominant role in international politics. Despite having an ideal geographic location, Pakistan is still a developing state due to multiple reasons one of which is weak economy and industrialization is the only way forward for it to revamp its global stature.

While it should be acknowledged that the country's industrial sector is not developed up to its full capacity, Special Economic Zones of CPEC present a very unique opportunity for the state to grow its industrial sector. Nine special economic zones include the Rashakai Economic Zone, M-1, Nowshera, China Special Economic Zone Dhabeji, Bostan Industrial Zone, Allama Iqbal Industrial City (M3), Faisalabad, ICT Model Industrial Zone, Islamabad, and Development of Industrial Park on Pakistan Steel Mills Land at Port Qasim near Karachi, Special Economic Zone at Mirpur AJK, Mohmand Marble City and Moqpondass SEZ Gilgit-Baltistan. Work on all the SEZs is in progress as Allama Iqbal Industrial City was inaugurated by Premier Imran Khan in January 2020 while Rashakai Economic Zone is expected to be inaugurated during the visit of Chinese President later this year. If Pakistan can maintain a sustainable and business friendly environment while bringing ease in its prevailing laws, these special economic zones will attract a tremendous foreign direct investment (FDI) not only from China, but European and Gulf states as well. Investors all across the globe are looking for opportunities where they can multiply their wealth and growing economies like Pakistan, if project a sustainable environment can easily attract their attention. Pakistan needs to devise a framework for international investors and industrialists in which its local population also benefits alongside state. Countries like the UAE and Saudi Arabia that have Iqama system, direct benefits of international investment to its locals alongside state. In addition, proactive diplomacy is also need of the time from Pakistan's Foreign Office and Ambassadors/ High Commissioners across the globe. An opportunistic view of CPEC projects needs to be presented so that proposals for relevant industries may be received. While SEZ is the solution for the country's economic progress, it also presents job market for a major chunk of unemployed youth of Pakistan. Only four economic zones will create 575,000 direct while over one million indirect jobs which includes 290,000 jobs in Allama Iqbal SEZ, 150,000 jobs in KP's Rashakai SEZ, 55,000 jobs in Baluchistan's Bostan SEZ and 80,000 jobs in Sindh's Dhabeji SEZ. However, Government of Pakistan needs to focus on training local youth so that skilled workers can seize the economic opportunities as soon as the industries in SEZ's are operational.

Moreover, each SEZs present opportunity for federal government to increase its revenue generation, provincial governments will also receive their share in the form of non-tax revenues. However, it needs to be decided well in time by all the relevant federal and provincial departments regarding distribution of revenues. Pakistan needs to focus on key structural reforms in the system as the country needs it today more than ever. Developing industrialization and

bringing FDI in the country will not help the cause if transparency and reforms will not be introduced in the system as it is the only solution for the country to kick start as well as sustain economic growth on more permanent basis. While SEZs of CPEC present a great opportunity for country's economic growth, challenges attached to its sustainable development cannot be neglected. Extremist organizations working in South Asia present a major threat to CPEC and with US-Indo nexus; efforts also need to be put in to counter anti-CPEC activities across the region.

Pakistan needs to put its all-inclusive efforts for the success of Special Economic Zones of CPEC as it is not only the key to all the major challenges it faces, but also a pathway to be a developed country. We have reached a juncture from terrorism to tourism, yet the milestone is still a long way to be achieved. CPEC presents an incredible opportunity for the country; however, political maturity is much needed in the leadership to envision a prosperous and developed Pakistan.

<https://pakobserver.net/assessing-special-economic-zones-of-cpec-prospects-for-pakistan/>

April 09, 2020

Business Recorder

China says position on Kashmir remains unchanged

UNITED NATIONS: A spokesman of the Chinese Mission to the UN has rejected Indian media reports that China, during its presidency of the Security Council in March, had ignored Pakistan's call for urgent consideration of the situation in Indian occupied Kashmir at the 15-member body, saying Beijing's position on the decades-old dispute remains unchanged.

"The question of Kashmir remains high on the Council's agenda," the spokesman said in a statement on Tuesday. "China pays close attention to the current situation, and China's position on the Kashmir issue remains unchanged," he added.

"The Kashmir issue," the spokesman said, "is a dispute left from history, and should be properly and peacefully resolved based on the Charter of the United Nations, Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements. "China opposes any unilateral actions that complicate the situation," he declared.

On China's part, the spokesman said that Ambassador Zhang, as the Security Council president, immediately circulated a letter from Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi highlighting India's "grave violations" in Indian occupied Kashmir as an official document of the Council.

The letter was delivered to him by Pakistan's UN Ambassador Munir Akram on March 10. "Under its duties as President of the Council, China immediately responded to and processed the letter," the spokesman said.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/09/14-page/833053-news.html>

Dawn News

Chinese experts say social distancing, massive testing key to fight Covid-19

KARACHI: Chinese health and medical experts, who personally played a key role in Beijing's battle against the outbreak of Covid-19, have expressed serious concerns over the pace of spread of coronavirus in Pakistan, suggesting social distancing as well as massive testing as the only way out of the crisis.

Talking to reporters at a local hotel here, the Chinese experts appreciated the efforts so far against the virus but said the provincial government still needed to increase its testing capacity while imposing harsher lockdown measures to maintain social distancing.

Otherwise, they feared, the situation could worsen beyond the capacity of the provincial health system.

The delegation was led by Ma Minghui of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Medical Products Administration; Li Fengsen, deputy head of the medical team, Lu Dongmei; Song Yunlin, Enwer Nasiroula, Zhang Li, Meng Cunren and Liu Wanli.

Maximum use of masks suggested

The foreign experts believed that only massive testing could help determine the exact number of positive coronavirus cases in the country. They suggested that the Sindh government should set up special clinics across the province so that they could test the suspected cases at a faster pace.

They said that the government should "forcefully" implement the lockdown as social distancing could only help when it was followed strictly and for a longer period.

They also urged the masses to opt for maximum use of face masks and appealed to them not to pay any heed to different unproven theories about the pandemic.

About the impact of rise in temperature on the virus, they called it just an assumption as it had not yet been proven.

They said that the countries with hot weather were also experiencing a rise in the number of Covid-19 positive cases.

They suggested the government to set up groups of experts from different walks of life so other challenges emerging due to the pandemic could be handled collectively.

Dedicated wards for Covid-19 patients

Meanwhile, Sindh Health Minister Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho held a meeting with heads of all public sector hospitals of the province via a video link and called for setting up dedicated wards in their respective facilities for coronavirus patients.

A statement issued by the health department said that Dr. Pechuho asked all the hospitals to train their doctors, paramedics and other staff for handling the positive cases with all due precaution and care.

"All hospitals would make sure the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) to their staff serving in emergencies, isolation wards and ICU," she said, adding "the staff serving in isolation wards would offer duties for six hours only and they would be provided separate rooms for stay. The medical superintendent of the hospitals would keep updating the ministry about the progress every week."

The minister also asked the hospitals to open their outpatient departments (OPDs) and those which were unable to do so would initiate a telemedicine programme for their regular patients, according to the statement.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1547660/chinese-experts-say-social-distancing-massive-testing-key-to-fight-covid-19>

Pakistan Observer

Chinese companies donate Rs5m to PM's coronavirus fund

ISLAMABAD Two Chinese companies on Wednesday donated five million rupees to the Prime Minister's Coronavirus Relief Fund after their heads called on the premier Imran Khan Tuesday. The companies also handed over supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) worth three million rupees to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Chairman Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal. The prime minister expressed his gratitude towards the Chinese delegation for supporting the country in fight against coronavirus. The head of the Chinese engineering company also shared an insight into producing cotton crop through modern techniques during the meeting. "The company also offered its technical assistance in improving cotton production in the country," the handout shedding light on the meeting details said. The head of the Chinese power company also offered to contribute and invest in country's renewable energy projects. The prime minister appreciated the companies over showing interest towards investment prospects in the country.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-companies-donate-rs5m-to-pms-coronavirus-fund/>

Asim Bajwa denies slowdown in CPEC projects

ISLAMABAD Chairman China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority General (Retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Wednesday rejected baseless rumors regarding the slowing down of the CPEC projects amid coronavirus pandemic. In a message posted on his Twitter account, Asim Saleem Bajwa while rejecting the baseless propaganda articles said that the CPEC project was making steady progress as they were in position to launch the phase-II of the multi-billion project with enhanced scope.

<https://pakobserver.net/asim-bajwa-denies-slowdown-in-cpec-projects/>

Pakistan, China experts hold videoconference, discuss joint strategy against virus

Zubair Qureshi

Military and health officials from China and Pakistan on Wednesday discussed strategies to prevent coronavirus from further spread and ways and means to devise a joint action plan against the virus. Taking part in a videoconference, officials from both sides expressed satisfaction at the pace and level of cooperation between the two sides particularly on the situation in the wake of the coronavirus spread in the two countries. China has successfully controlled the coronavirus spread despite having the virus originated from one of its cities, Wuhan. According to China's

Ministry of Defense the video conference was attended by around 20 health officials and military experts. The officials shared views on the overall situation and the progress on prevention and control. The latest coronavirus detection technology and treatment plans were also discussed in the meeting. Pakistani officials thanked their Chinese counterparts for their assistance in control and prevention of the spread of the disease, said the report. According to an official who attended the video conference, there was no other thing that could ease the string of the Chinese nation than the alleviation of the encroachment of the novel coronavirus pneumonia (Covid-19) now. More than 20,000 patients contracting the Covid-19 have been discharged from hospitals in China up to April 5, with new cured cases increasing for 6 days. The new confirmed cases outside Hubei Province, the epicenter of the epidemic, have been in continued decline for 16 days in straight since February 3. A Pakistani participant said there are lessons for Pakistan to learn from the epic battle China waged against coronavirus and won it. Only a nation by making collective efforts and adopting a united strategy could overcome such a mounting challenge, he further said.

Earlier this week, Chinese health experts, who are visiting Pakistan, underlined the need of continuation of lockdown for at least twenty eight days to halt the spread of coronavirus. “Social distancing is the key to stop the spread of the virus and authorities should ensure lockdown for 28 days,” the experts recommended Punjab CM Usman Buzdar. Briefing on the passive immunization method for Covid-19 treatment, they said in critical circumstances plasma treatment is proved useful.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-china-experts-hold-videoconference-discuss-joint-strategy-against-virus/>

Covid-19: Chinese doctors asked to provide protective, testing kits

Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah and provincial Health Minister Azra Fazal Pechuho on Wednesday met a nine-member delegation of Chinese Health Sector. During the meeting the CM Sindh lauded efforts of China to curb the spread of virus and expressed grief over loss of lives in China. Murad Ali Shah said, “We need your guidance to control coronavirus and we are increasing our testing capacity as we can perform 2040 tests per day despite our limited resources.” He also requested Chinese doctors to provide rapid testing machinery and testing kits.

On the occasion, Chinese delegation said that Government of China wants to help Sindh government in every possible way. They also advised people to open their windows and breathe fresh and natural air. Delegation from China also advised CM Sindh to also keep asymptomatic patients in isolation and avoid formation of crowds during ration distribution. Sharing their experience with regard to the coronavirus pandemic, the Chinese experts were of the view that at least an eight-week lockdown was crucial to halt the spread of Covid-19. According to a health department statement, the experts while appreciating the steps taken by the provincial government said that social distancing was the key to stop the spread of the virus and the authorities should ensure the lockdown for a longer period. “For effective results, it’s crucial to extend the lockdown. In many areas of China, the lockdown continued for two months which

proved fruitful,” said the Chinese experts. “The Chinese experts reiterated their support to the Sindh government in terms of expertise, medical equipment and sharing experience in its fight against global pandemic.”

<https://pakobserver.net/covid-19-chinese-doctors-asked-to-provide-protective-testing-kits/>

The Express Tribune

China pledges more help to Pakistan in fight against corona pandemic

China on Thursday reiterated its willingness to continue supporting Pakistan in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, as life in the birthplace of coronavirus began to return to normal with most departments, including transport, becoming functional again.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi extended his wishes to the Chinese people for getting through the adversity with resilience, stressing that countries around the world were following China’s model of recovery.

Qureshi met Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing, who called on Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in Islamabad and reviewed the latest situation arising out of the coronavirus. Yao said in the wake of the quickly spreading virus cases in Pakistan, China would continue its support for its “iron brother”.

Qureshi congratulated the Chinese Ambassador and his government for successfully dealing with the pandemic. He thanked China for the assistance in this time of need, saying that the equipment given by China would build Pakistan’s capacity to fight against the virus.

“It is most heartening to note that life in China has started to return to normal with most departments including transport becoming functional again,” he said. “China’s model of recovery is now being followed by countries all over the world.”

“Pakistan is learning from the experiences of Chinese doctors and paramedical staff, who have successfully treated their coronavirus-hit population,” the foreign minister said. He also extended his wishes to the Chinese public for getting through the adversity with resilience.

Earlier, the foreign minister telephoned his Australian counterpart Marise Payne on Thursday and discussed with her the situation arising out of global pandemic and matters of mutual interests, Radio Pakistan reported.

Qureshi apprised his Australian counterpart of the steps taken by Pakistan to contain the spread of the contagion. He pointed out that the developing countries were facing difficulties due to limited economic resources to cope with the challenge.

Payne said that the Australian government had allocated \$130 billion for a job keepers programme, to save the country’s businesses from losses from the global pandemic. Qureshi appreciated the steps taken by Australia in the fight against Covid-19.

He also lauded the steps taken by the Australian government for the wellbeing of Pakistani nationals, especially the students. He highlighted Prime Minister Imran Khan’s call for restructuring of the debt of the developing countries so that they could divert their resources to meet this challenge and save precious human lives.

Drawing attention towards the plight of innocent Kashmiri people, Qureshi said the Indian government had confined the people of occupied Kashmir to their homes since August 5 last year. He added India was trying to change demography of the disputed territory in violation of all international laws.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2194377/1-china-pledges-help-pakistan-corona-fight/>

The Nation

Pakistan, China to minimize negative impact of COVID-19

The spread of COVID-19 World over posing severe challenges to economic development, and it might affect to China-Pakistan Economy Corridor (CPEC) as well.

A report published in China Economic Net on Thursday says after arduous efforts, the Chinese people have just come out of the most difficult period and are accelerating the restoration of normal production and daily life.

What kind of impact will this pandemic have on China's economy and Pakistan's economy yet to be determined? This to be examined, to what extent the CPEC, will suffer from these effects? What are the implications and what may be the consequences?

It is important to pay attention to this as CPEC is of extraordinary importance not only for China but for Pakistan.

From 2015 till now, there has been a unanimous opinion in Pakistan that CPEC is very useful to Pakistan. Therefore, any adverse impact on such a proven project would be of great concern to both countries. When the Corona virus outbreak began to spread in China, it was also linked to the operation of CPEC in Pakistan.

As many Chinese citizens working in different places of CPEC traveled to Wuhan, China to celebrate their New Year's celebrations, after Wuhan's lockdown, it was impossible for these Chinese engineers, experts and management people to return to Pakistan on time.

So it was difficult for many enterprises, business centers and factories to run smoothly. This situation was seen by both China and Pakistan with great concern, as 100,000 to 15,000 Chinese engineers, experts and management staff were concerned with the CPEC.

It was necessary to fill this gap as soon as possible. At that time, it was only the beginning of the outbreak in Pakistan, but measures had been introduced to prevent it.

China and Pakistan decided that the Chinese engineers and management staff should be sent to Pakistan and the policy of double quarantine should be adopted. People who were to send to Pakistan first were kept in quarantine for 14 days in China and then again in Pakistan.

Later they went to do their jobs, but despite all of this, these Chinese people should not have any connection with the locals to ensure that they are kept from the danger of the corona virus. China and Pakistan succeeded in this strategy.

The Chinese people's arrival in Pakistan won the hearts of the Pakistanis as they saw that the Chinese were returning to their jobs faster and playing their role in advancing the CPEC projects.

In the meantime, the lockdown was announced in Pakistan to keep the citizens away from this deadly disease. The effects will inevitably fall onto the CPEC. An eight-week delay can be tolerated, but if this delay is exceeded, the disadvantages will be even greater.

It is learnt that the lockdown has stopped the steel tube factory construction in Gawadar port. All business zones and business centers are completely closed in Gawadar port and the impact of all these issues is on CPEC and its affiliates. But it is hopeful news that Gawadar port is still working under strict policies.

There can be no other opinion that China and Pakistan should begin preparing for a strategy to minimize the negative impact on the CPEC.

The devastation of epidemic has been kept in mind, but as the world gets rid of this deadly epidemic, the two countries must also jointly study the damage done to the CPEC and reduce its severity.

The effects can last for months if the effective policy is not adopted and the effects can extend beyond the months to years, which is very regrettable.

This should not be limited to academic study, and the suggestions to solve these problems should be implemented, the report added.

<https://nation.com.pk/09-Apr-2020/pakistan-china-to-minimize-negative-impact-of-covid-19>

The News

Pak green project in wake of COVID-19 productive

BEIJING: Chinese scholar Prof Cheng Xizhong hoped Pakistan's government decision launching a three-month plantation campaign to create new jobs for daily income group affected by the countrywide lockdown will prove very productive. In an article carried by Gawadar Pro App on Thursday, he noted that the Forestry Department of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province was going to launch the campaign, employing thousands of daily income workers.

He expressed his confidence that the campaign will achieve the effect of "one arrow aiming at three eagles", which means doing one thing to achieve three goals at the same time.

First, it will solve the livelihood problem of daily income workers who are unemployed due to the epidemic. It is noted that the federal government and provincial governments have formulated afforestation plans to plant 10 billion trees all over the country. Pakistan has a population of more than 200 million, which means an average of 50 trees per person. Therefore, this is a very big project. If other provinces all follow the example of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province and immediately launch the planting campaign, hundreds of thousands or even millions of jobs will be created.

Second, there are a large number of poor daily income workers in big cities. A large-scale tree planting campaign will lead a large number of daily income workers to leave the big cities.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/641557-pak-green-project-in-wake-of-covid-19-productive>

April 10, 2020

Daily Times

Bajwa-Imran visit to China and rumours about CPEC

Irfan Mahar

It has been a rumour for a long period that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would be stopped because of various reasons, including the negligence of the present government. In this regard, there are two popular narratives about the CPEC and Pakistan-China relations. One perspective which has been doing the rounds in the Pakistani society for a long is that because of American and Indian pressure regarding CPEC and Chinese involvement within the country, Islamabad has stopped the work on the projects that come under the CPEC. Besides, Pakistan has been pressurized through International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Financial Action Task Force to withdraw from Chinese investment in the country; therefore, it faces various difficulties in continuation of projects. While another perspective portrays an optimistic picture of the whole scenario where work on CPEC projects is in process and 13 projects worth \$11 billion have completed. The projects such as M-5 (Multan to Sukkur Motorway), 2×660MW Port Qasim Coal-Fired Power Plant, 50MW Dawood Wind Farm, and 100MW Jhimpir Wind Farm have been completed which show the progress and success of CPEC. Also, the visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Army Chief Qamar Javed Bajwa and their talks about CPEC as well as point of view regarding CPEC show that both the army and government are on the same page to continue the projects under CPEC.

Moreover, the formation of the CPEC Authority which keeps the surveillance upon CPEC related works is also the evidence of the seriousness of government regarding the projects. Furthermore, both representatives have shown the intention of making relations between China and Pakistan even stronger through engagement in multiple businesses and trade-related activities. Though American pressure creates many difficulties for Pakistan to continue the project still there is much progress in many projects related to CPEC. Moreover, America does not want China to rise at regional as well as global level. In this regard, the United States has tried to counter Beijing actively on various grounds. Likewise, the American “Pivot to Asia” or “Rebalancing” policy aims to counter and restrict Chinese influence in the Asian continent including countering its engagement in the Asia-Pacific. Despite Washington’s efforts to contain Beijing, China’s economic growth shows its success. Therefore, it is considered the right time for Pakistan to shift its tilt towards China rather than an unbelievable, unpredictable, and weak alliance with America. Furthermore, Islamabad has been testing and observing the friendship of America which mostly remained seasonal and based on a specific issue after the fulfillment of objectives, Washington uses to ignore Islamabad even in its difficult times.

Pakistan through proper utilization of the CPEC initiative can boost its economy.

Pakistan through proper utilization of the CPEC initiative can boost its economy and get rid of American bloc which has a great share in the destruction, deaths, terrorism, underdevelopment

and backwardness within the country. Many of the writers dub the CPEC and Chinese involvement in Pakistan as game changer which would take Islamabad towards the path of peace, prosperity, development, progress, and innovation within multiple fields. It is said that Pakistan could serve as the “Israel of China” because of various reasons it may be economic, political or financial which can be useful for the development of Beijing as well as Islamabad. Israel keeps much importance for the US and it cannot compromise on its interests even at the cost of opposition and criticism from many states. In the same manner, the South Asian region, particularly Pakistan, carries great importance for China which could connect Beijing with various natural rich resource nations of the Middle East and Central Asia. Moreover, it connects Beijing with many other important countries of various continents of the world. Therefore, China has been struggling to create peace in the region. Furthermore, Afghanistan is the major nation which suffers from instability and security problems that also left effects on regional stability. Therefore, China wants to solve the Afghanistan problem for making it stable which will pave the way for the completion of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Concerning the Afghan issue, Beijing sees Islamabad as an important state which can play a decisive role in solving the Afghan problem as well as bringing peace in the region. Peace and stability in Afghanistan could serve multiple interests of China because Kabul provides the land route for China to reach the Central Asian states that ultimately connects it with Europe. Therefore, China has been struggling hard to secure its national interest. That can easily be achieved if China will be successful in generating the dominance and influence over the South Asia region. Furthermore, this region is considered the testing grounds for the success of the Chinese initiated project namely BRI. As for American bloc and the other entities which are not happy with the rise of China are concerned, they also know the importance of this region for Beijing. It is mostly agreed that the success of BRI depends upon the successful completion of projects within this region. Therefore it is observed that if Beijing would be successful in the completion of projects all over South Asia, no one can beat and resist China becoming the dominant or global power. In this regard, Washington will not allow Beijing to take its place easily. So it uses multiple strategies to contain China such as pressurizing Pakistan to withdraw from BRI, Strengthening relations with India and prolonging Afghan issue, and putting new sanctions on Iran.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/592761/bajwa-imran-visit-to-china-and-rumours-about-cpec/>

Pakistan Observer

Chinese doctors, experts meet President Alvi

ISLAMABAD An eight-member team of Chinese doctors and medical experts called on President Dr. Arif Alvi today. The team was led by Dr. Ma Minghui, an expert in infectious diseases. President Alvi thanked the medical team for visiting Pakistan when it was relentlessly engaged in containing the spread of Coronavirus. President particularly thanked the Chinese government for dispatching the team to Pakistan at such a critical and momentous time. Dr. Alvi underscored that coronavirus had become a threat to global health system and massive efforts

were required to deal with the dangers posed by the virus. It was reiterated by the President that both Pakistan and China, two iron brothers, needed to deepen their cooperation in battling the infectious diseases. Dr. Alvi underlined that there should be more exchanges between medical and health professionals of both countries to chalk out strategies to effectively contain the spread of such epidemics in future. President Alvi fondly recalled his recent solidarity visit to China that helped deepen his understanding of China's far reaching and effective efforts to control the spread of coronavirus. He particularly noted that Chinese leadership had undertaken massive and incredible efforts to control the epidemic and expressed delight that the lockdown from Wuhan city had now been lifted. President Alvi underlined the need to invest more in research and medicine to protect people from insidious and treacherous pandemics like COVID-19. The medical experts thanked government of Pakistan for inviting them and helping them share their experiences in dealing with the aftermath of coronavirus. The team lauded the swift efforts of the government of Pakistan that led to the containment of the virus and hoped that, with continuing measures, Pakistan will overcome the spread of coronavirus. The team arrived in Islamabad on 28th March and is visiting Pakistan for two weeks. The team visited medical institutions and hospitals in Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore. It also held a videoconference with the medical experts, public health officials and civil servants from AJK, KPK, Baluchistan, and Gilgit Baltistan. The team shared its expertise on ways to effectively combat the coronavirus. The visit of Chinese medical experts, while Pakistan was in the midst of battling coronavirus, testified that both the people and the government of Pakistan and China stood by each other through thick and thin. It also reaffirmed the vitality of Pakistan-China All Weather Strategic Co-operative Partnership.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-doctors-experts-meet-president-alvi/>

April 11, 2020

Business Recorder

Impact of Covid-19 on CPEC

COVID-19 pandemic has spread to more than 200 countries and regions causing severe shocks in the whole world. Even though the situation in Pakistan is not that worse as in some countries for the time being, as the confirmed cases are on the rise, the social and economic uncertainties caused by the pandemic, especially the lockdown across the country, have been increasing.

Along with the growing worries across the board, people from all walks of life have been asking questions about the likely impact of COVID-19 on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). As this writer mentioned in his previous articles, the COVID-19 pandemic is a common threat and enemy of human beings and its effect is multidimensional. Because there is no vaccine and effective medicine till now, the only and most effective way to deal with it is cutting off the transmission channels by practicing social distance isolation. This practice has so far brought a vast majority of the world to a standstill. The effects are obvious in manufacturing, service and foreign trade sectors. Worldwide, the production chains, supply chains and value chains are all

incurring a severe damage. Furthermore, labor supply has been also witnessing a worsening situation.

There is the need to shed some light on the achievements of CPEC. The cooperation and implementation of CPEC enjoys the support of Pakistani people, serves their well-being and has won high respect of our two countries. CPEC construction has achieved fruitful results over the past years with a score of projects completed already, and another score under construction. It's worthy to mention energy sector here especially. Nine energy projects have been put into commercial operation with a total installed capacity of 5320MW. The actual power generation of CPEC projects was 17.728 billion kWh during Pakistan's fiscal year 2018-19, accounting for 14.5% of the total power generation of Pakistan's national power grid. In the meantime, CPEC has created 75,000 jobs directly and 200,000 jobs indirectly for Pakistani people, enabling Pakistan's per capita income to increase by 23%. More than 100 small and medium-sized enterprises have been involved in construction of CPEC projects creating over 100,000 jobs. According to Pakistan government's analysis, CPEC is expected to create 2.3 million jobs in Pakistan from 2015 to 2030, and fuel the average annual economic growth rate up by 2~2.5%. In a word, the signal project has brought huge changes, benefits and well being to Pakistan and her people. There are some synonyms for CPEC - change maker, fortune maker, king maker, etc.

Under the current circumstance of fighting a war against COVID-19 worldwide, frankly speaking, no sector can escape from the effects, so does CPEC. The main possible effects are as follows.

Firstly, the risk of contraction of the virus may impact negatively on the steady supply of the work force for CPEC projects. Shielding the work force at every CPEC project from contraction of the virus forms the top priority at present. Along with the rise of confirmed cases, in case some cities or regions become the epicenter and large numbers of people are infected, these will surely add more pressures to the management of each project. If there occurs infection, tough measures of isolation as well as prevention will be applied which will impact in varying degree on the implementation of the projects based on how many people will be affected. This may lead to the risk of reduction of work force. Some replacements may not materialize and some expired visas and passports may not be renewed in due course. On the other hand, the local employees form the bulk of the work force of the projects, there is a high risk that the current status quo may not be maintained and replacements may be delayed. These will more or less impact the operation and implementation of the projects.

Ever since the outbreak of the epidemic early this year every project has been taking stringent preventive measures with strong support rendered by the Pakistan Federal and Provincial governments together with the Special Protection Forces. The Chinese side has been taking strictest measures to screen and check the inbound personnel from China, and so far there is not a single imported case from China. And Zero contraction target has occurred and maintained in all projects till now. And all the projects are operating smoothly according to schedule.

Secondly, the import and shipment of the equipment, spare parts, materials, etc., may not be made on time and may affect the smooth operation, and cause delays in implementation of some

projects. The lock-down of the cities and provinces, and closure of government and business offices may cause delays in clearance by the customs, handling and transporting of the relevant goods.

Thirdly, the pandemic may cause many legal issues based on force majeure. This may add more burdens to the relevant companies. In short, the less the pandemic prolongs the smaller the effect on CPEC. If the pandemic prolongs a longer period of time, the bigger the effect will be. But one thing is clear and that is also the advantage Pakistan has the quick recovery of China after her winning the preliminary battle against the pandemic. According to the latest statistics, China's PMI in March hit 52% after it nosedived to 37% for the first two months. This indicates that China's economy has returned to the fast track of development. China has been the biggest trading partner of Pakistan for five years in a row and the biggest investor in Pakistan for six consecutive years. Pakistan and CPEC projects will surely benefit a lot. Ever since the outbreak of the pandemic, China has been giving a big hand to Pakistan and we firmly believe that together we can win the battle against COVID-19. And the effects by COVID19 on CPEC will be manageable.

(The writer is China's consul-general based in Karachi)

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/11/12-page/833299-news.html>

Daily Times

Special PIA flight brings in more medical supplies from China

A special plane of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) came back from China carrying medical supplies for the coronavirus pandemic on Friday. The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) airplane brought medical supplies including testing kits, N-95 masks, gloves, PPE kits and ventilators. PIA has announced an increase in its relief flights bringing in and taking out essential medical equipment and passengers to and from the world. The spokesperson for the national aircraft carrier said that a PIA aircraft will bring in Pakistanis stranded in Denmark back home on April 10. Another flight due for April 11 will bring back 175 Pakistanis from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, while it will also take Malaysian and Singaporean embassy staff and passengers along. Another flight scheduled for April 11 will take French passengers back to France. On April 12, a special flight will take Japanese passengers along with essential and medical supplies to Tokyo, Japan. Pakistanis stranded in Thailand will also be brought back on April 13, 200 Pakistanis stranded in Thailand will hopefully return by Monday.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/593443/special-pia-flight-brings-in-more-medical-supplies-from-china/>

Dawn News

First consignment of protection gear arrives from China

ISLAMABAD: The first consignment of protection gears against coronavirus, such testing kits and medical masks, has arrived in the country, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam told a press conference on Friday.

The necessary gears were purchased with funds provided by the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) to the National Disaster Risk Management Authority (NDMA), he said.

“Given the emergency facing us, Rs8 billion were released within 24 hours. We were running short of items and immediately ordered [the gears] from China,” Mr. Aslam said.

The first consignment included 50 mobile x-ray machines, 100,000 polymerase chain reaction (PCR) kits to check coronavirus, 100,000 N95 masks and 500,000 ordinary medical masks.

“The total order is much higher. The government has ordered two million medical masks besides the much needed 196 ICU ventilators. The second consignment will also include more testing kits and N95 masks,” he said.

Kits include 50 mobile x-ray machines, 100,000 polymerase chain reaction machines and 100,000 N95 masks, says PM’s adviser

Pakistan has also received the second funding from World Bank of Rs9.5 billion, he said.

“This amount will be utilized in the coronavirus aftermath, to inject into the economy, initiate projects to provide employment to those rendered jobless during the Covid-19 outbreak,” said Mr. Aslam.

He gave the example of the government’s spring plantation drive which was forced shutdown during the outbreak.

“Soon after the launch of the drive, 65,000 daily-wage staff were hired in nurseries and fields as caretakers of the planted saplings. The green jobs will be doubled in near future to provide sources of income,” he said.

Although economic activity has come to a standstill the world over, at the same time nature has been allowed time to heal.

“During the lockdown, even the air over Lahore, one of the most polluted cities, is ten times cleaner within a few weeks only because vehicular emissions are lower. It only goes to show that if we want air pollution can be reduced. Not only many deaths around the world are attributed to air pollution, unhealthy air gives birth to new viruses such as the coronavirus. Poor air quality carriers for Covid-19 droplets, according to a new study by Howard University,” he said.

NDRMF chief retired Lt Gen Nadeem Ahmad added: “We are likely to receive further funding of Rs100 million from Asian Development Bank to respond to the Covid-19 outbreak. This will take up NDRMF contribution towards Covid-19 response to Rs210 million.”

He said NDRMF was funding various projects related to clean air, biodiversity and water recharge initiatives of the government besides saving endangered species.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1548248/first-consignment-of-protection-gear-arrives-from-china>

Pakistan Observer

NDMA receives medical relief goods, equipment from China PCR testing kits, Mobile X-ray machines, Chinese KN-95 masks

Zubair Qureshi

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Friday procured medical relief equipment with financial assistance from National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) amid pandemic outbreak in the country. In this regard, the first consignment procured from China, carrying medical equipment including PCR Testing Kits, Mobile X-ray machines, Chinese KN 95 masks, disposable medical masks and water impermeable surgical gowns arrived at Islamabad International Airport. NDMA is procuring health products in phased manner. To date, NDMA has procured, including but not limited to, 36,000 Screening Kits, 14 X-Ray Machines, 196 Clinical ICU Ventilators, 150,000 KN 95 Masks, 2.0 million Disposable medical masks, 40 Bio Safety Cabinet (Large), 30,000 Water Impermeable Surgical Gowns, besides PPE, under the grant financing of NDRMF. Out of which phase the first consignment has reached the Country today via PIA cargo flight while other health products are in pipeline. Considering the availability of limited health management resources in the country to manage growing number of cases every day, the government had requested the International Development Partners (Donors) to help in bridging the financial gap to procure medical and health equipment to respond efficiently to control the spread of the virus. NDRMF was the first donor to approve grant financing to NDMA in less than 24 hours to support Government's response. It approved project aimed to 'Enhance Pakistan's Capacity for Preparedness and Response for Covid-19' with total project cost of PKR 7,899.999 Million (US \$ 50.0 million), submitted by NDMA with the assistance of M/o NHRS&C. Out of the said financial commitment NDRMF deposited PKR.3, 200,002,916 (US \$ 20 Million) in the Consolidated (Non-Food) Account No. 1 of the GoP through Federal Treasury Office, (within 24 hours), from the profits that had been accrued from its Endowment Fund, which facilitated in timely procurements of necessary medical & health equipment from abroad. Asian Development Bank also re-appropriated additional 30M US\$ from the loan granted to NDRMF, by putting on hold its third batch of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) projects. Furthermore, NDMA being the lead operational agency to coordinate Covid-19 response will be responsible for the overall management of project, including procurement, quality assurance, inventory & supply chain management and Financial & Audit arrangements. To ensure the technical and other requirements NDMA will work in close coordination with M/o NHSRC and other stakeholders.

The challenge at present is to ensure containment of virus from spreading. Government is making all possible efforts to mobilize resources to cater for the situation. In this regard, NDRMF has offered all out support to GoP to cope with the pandemic situation. In addition to US\$50 million NDRMF has been able to arrange an additional US\$ 60million under its Pakistan Hydro Met and Ecosystem Restoration Services Project (PHERSP) with a new component of 'Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change Impacts and Health Shocks'. This will allow NDRMF

to make cumulative contribution of US\$110million from its project resources. Additionally NDRMF is preparing another project worth 100 MN USD to be funded by ADB.

<https://pakobserver.net/ndma-receives-medical-relief-goods-equipment-from-china-pcr-testing-kits-mobile-x-ray-machines-chinese-kn-95-masks/>

The Nation

China will provide Rs2 billion for smart university project in Pakistan

China will provide Pakistan with an unrequited assistance of Rs 2.048 billion for completion of a smart university transformation project.

The project belongs to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework to promote Pakistan's economic and social development. The first phase of the pilot program includes 50 public universities, according to qq.com, a Chinese news website.

The project aims to create a more attractive university environment by introducing advanced digital technologies in universities. The project will also focus on developing distance education and promoting cultural progress, thereby expanding the influence and coverage of university education.

According to the agreement signed by China and Pakistan, the project covers a total of 124 public universities, and 400 smart classrooms need to be prepared, including 200 classrooms in the first phase of the pilot.

<https://nation.com.pk/11-Apr-2020/china-will-provide-rs2-billion-for-smart-university-project-in-pakistan>

The News

China firmly stands with Pakistan in fight against COVID-19

BEIJING: Pakistan and China's friendship examples are given all over the globe and it is the fact that Pakistan is not fighting alone against the novel coronavirus; China is firmly standing with its "all-weather friend".

This was stated in a report carried by Gwadar Pro App on Friday. Pakistan and China have proven that they would not abandon each other in these testing times and perhaps that is why President of Pakistan Dr Arif Alvi visited China last month conveying strong support and solidarity of Pakistan towards the government and the people of China in their battle against Covid-19. When China was hard-hit by the coronavirus, it was Pakistan from President to Prime Minister Imran Khan to the common people which provided a large amount of support of solidarity and unity to China. Delighted by the support, the Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Yao Jing not only appreciated the gesture but also offered to reciprocate it with even more in 'Chinese style'. "A drop of water received will be reciprocated with a well of spring. China stands with Pakistan on fighting COVID-19," Ambassador Yao Jing said in a video message while assuring Pakistani people that "Chinese people, as always, will stand here, stay here and

work with you. We have a firm belief and firm confidence that the Pakistani government and people will finally win this battle against the coronavirus.”

These were not mere words to impress people and nations across the world as China immediately increased the supplies of medical personnel and equipment to help one of the most populous nations in the world Pakistan to fight the spread of the coronavirus. Even before Yao Jing’s statement, China had helped Pakistan in every possible way ranging from taking care of Pakistani students in Wuhan to providing tones of medical goods.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/642702-china-firmly-stands-with-pakistan-in-fight-against-covid-19>

April 12, 2020

Business Recorder

CPEC

Unit price of Chinese, Pakistani laborers needs to be rationalized: PC

KARACHI: The Planning Commission of Pakistan has identified huge disparity in unit prices of Chinese skilled laborers and that of Pakistani laborers in ML-I project in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). According to comments of the Employment & Research Section of the Commission, the unit price has been calculated at the rate of US\$59.65 and US\$4.50 per man per day for Chinese and Pakistani laborers respectively. The unit price of Chinese skilled laborer is more than 1,300 percent higher as compared with the Pakistani laborer which needs to be rationalized, the Commission proposed.

Moreover, the ratio of Chinese laborers to Pakistani laborers for different categories of work is 1:9, but in case of equipment installation and tunnel work, this ratio has been shown as 3:7 which needs to be reduced to an appropriate level for the purpose of cost rationalization, the Commission suggested. It has been mentioned in PC-I that all the raw material will be procured from local markets except steel which will be imported, for which it proposed that steel may be purchased from local market apparently on BOT.

The project may be outsourced to the private sector instead of being operated and executed by the Pakistan Railways because the expenditure-revenue gap of the PR is on the rise and subsidy of over Rs30 billion have been given every year by the federal government, which is expected to increase with the passage of time as mentioned in PC-I. It noted that the private sector has the capacity to revive the dying public sector projects, and it has been mentioned in PC-I under Employment Generation that 16,000 local laborers/tech experts will be hired and 2,000 Chinese technical experts will be employed as well as 150,000 indirect jobs will be created.

However, their bifurcation in the allied industries also needs to be provided, and the cost of the project needs to be mentioned in local currency terms as indicated in the instructions of PC-I form. Moreover, cost of local items/expenditure may be mentioned as local component and only imported items need to be mentioned as FEC keeping in view the exchange rate volatility, it proposed. The Commission also suggested that the cost of generating cheap electricity through

generators (25 percent of total capacity) needs to be rationalized to not more than the level of Rs15/unit.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2020/04/12/2-page/833320-news.html>

The News

China-Pakistan Business Forum donates 2m ton of medical equipment

ISLAMABAD: A special plane of Pakistan International Airline (PIA) carrying 2 million tons of medical equipment from China arrived here on Saturday, said Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

It was the second plane in two days from China. The supplies include 132000 masks, 15 breathing machines, 11000 protection clothing sets, 200 forehead thermometers, and 21000 detection kits. According to details, couple of days back, the Sichuan liaison office of the China-Pakistan Business Council handed over a batch of anti-epidemic materials to Chinese irons brother Pakistan, through the consulate-general of Pakistan in Chengdu. The council has collected donations from enterprises and individuals, who were eager to help Pakistan in its hour of need. Acting consul-general Mahmood Akhtar of the Pakistani consulate general in chengdu expressed sincere thanks for this, saying that "we can see real friends coming forward in difficult times."

After the outbreak of the new epidemic in China, Pakistan actively raised money in the absence of medical supplies and donated urgently needed epidemic prevention supplies to China.

On February 20th, the Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistani Prime Minister Imran khan, stressed that China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic partners, praised Pakistan for the first time for China to express support and arrange the precious material donations, said China always put Pakistan foreign priority, call made China-Pakistan relations a model to promote the construction of a community of human destiny.

Sichuan liaison office of the china-Pakistan business council actively serves the friendship between China and Pakistan, and has received donations of urgently needed medical supplies from enterprises and individuals in Sichuan, Chongqing, Guizhou and other parts of the country. It is learned that in January 2020, China chamber of international commerce authorized Sichuan provincial council for the promotion of international trade to establish the Sichuan liaison office of china-Pakistan business council to lead the work of the china-Pakistan business council and take charge of the economic, trade and cultural exchanges between China and Pakistan. At the donation ceremony, acting consul general Mahmood Akhtar of the Pakistan consulate general in Chengdu expressed his gratitude to the Sichuan association for the promotion of international trade and people who have always cared about Pakistan for their efforts at this time. Ma Zhijun , member of china-Pakistan business liaison office in Sichuan province, boss of fan fang food co., LTD, said that"" this is the power of the contribution you can, but also want to call support for Pakistan's enterprises and individuals' ."Two Pakistani students from Sichuan university witnessed the donation ceremony. Noshervan Khaliq, one of the students, said that knowing the

lack of medical supplies in the country, "I am really happy to see the donation from China. I will never forget the help from China for the rest of my life.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/643217-china-pakistan-business-forum-donates-2m-ton-of-medical-equipment>

April 13, 2020

Daily Times

Will CPEC be affected by coronavirus?

Muhammad Mehdi

The world is full of expected and unexpected events, accidents and disasters. In many cases, this abnormal change leads to a disaster. The world is facing latest situations. Among them is the coronavirus, an outbreak that has shaken the world and is causing extraordinary effects on the economy.

China was the first country to suffer from such an outbreak of abnormal effects. China was overcome by its strategy, hard work and high enthusiasm, but meanwhile the experts of the global economy are analyzing that what kind of impact this global outbreak of the coronavirus will have on the Chinese economy and the impact it will have on the Chinese economy will inevitably have an impact on the global economy and the economy of Pakistan.

In economic terms also, Pakistan has been linked to China since 2015 in such a way that Pakistan will also have to face the extraordinary effects of the situation. Just have to see to what extent the China Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC) suffers from these effects? What are the effects of this epidemic on CPEC? What are the implications and what may be the consequences? It is also important to pay attention to this as CPEC is of extraordinary importance not only for China but for Pakistan. China's Belt and Road Initiative is linked to its plan. However, Pakistan's poor economic condition also recognizes its status.

From 2015 till now, there has been a unanimous opinion in Pakistan that CPEC is very useful to Pakistan. Its routes were disputed in the eyes of some Pakistani circles, but its usefulness is proven by all. Therefore, any adverse impact on such a proven project would be of great concern to both countries. So when the coronavirus outbreak began to spread in China, it was also linked with the operating of China Pakistan economic corridor in Pakistan.

Chinese citizens working in different places of CPEC traveled to China to celebrate their New Year's celebrations. A significant number of them belong to Wuhan. Unfortunately, this epidemic in Wuhan actually took the form of worst picture, so it was appropriate for China to shut down everything in the province and restrict the mobilization of the citizens. An inevitable consequence of the restriction of the movement of citizens was that it was impossible for Chinese engineers, experts and management people who belonged to the lock-down areas to return to Pakistan on time when it was time for them to return.

When it became impossible to reach the company or factory that was running because of them, so it was difficult for those business centers and factories to do the routine work and it became very difficult and those enterprises started to suffer. This situation was seen by both China and Pakistan with great concern as 100,000 to 15,000 Chinese engineers, experts and management staff were concerned with the CPEC. It was necessary to fill this gap as soon as possible. In the beginning, the situation in China was so worrisome that it was not possible for China to ease sanctions. It was only the beginning time of the outbreak in Pakistan, but work had begun to prevent it.

Now it was important to run the CPEC, China and Pakistan decided that the Chinese engineers and management staff should start to be sent to Pakistan. But prevention of the epidemic should also be taken. The countries decided that the policy of double quarantine should be adopted. The people who were to send Pakistan first were kept in quarantine for 14 days in China. Then when they arrived in Pakistan, they were again housed in quarantine and they stayed in quarantine again for 14 days. A Chinese company acquired the four houses in F-6 sector in Islamabad for this purpose. The first group of Chinese engineers, experts and management staff of the company arrived in Pakistan and stayed again in the double quarantine. Later they went on to do their jobs, but despite all of this, it is being taken care of that these Chinese people should not have any connection with the locals to ensure that these Chinese people should be safe from the danger of the coronavirus.

The Chinese people arrival in Pakistan won the hearts of the Pakistanis as they saw that the Chinese were returning to their jobs faster and playing their part in advancing the CPEC projects. China and Pakistan succeeded in this strategy. Thanks to the double quarantine, everyone from China was protected from the coronavirus attack and recorded 100% protection.

In the meantime the Lockdown was announced in Pakistan to keep the citizens away from this deadly disease and to keep Pakistan safe from its devastation. It should be in mind that Pakistan's health system does not have the capacity to cope with this kind of outbreak. When locked down, in such a case business centers, factories and other routines has to be closed or severely affected by life, so the CPEC can't protected from the lock down . The effects will inevitably fall into the CPEC and it will take at least eight weeks delay for the various projects to be completed. An eight-week delay can be tolerated, but if this delay is exceeded, the disadvantages will be even greater.

It is important to know that the lock down has stopped the steel tube factory construction in Gwadar port. All business zones and business centers are completely closed in Gwadar port and the impact of all these issues is on CPEC and its affiliates. But it is hopeful news that Gwadar port is still working under strict policies. Un-necessary person can't enter in the Gwadar port now days.

There can be no other opinion that China and Pakistan should begin preparing for a strategy to minimize the negative impact of the CPEC. The devastation of epidemic has been kept in mind, but as the world gets rid of this deadly epidemic, the two countries must also jointly study the

damage done to the CPEC and reduce its severity. The effects can last for months if the effective policy is not adopted, the effects can extend beyond the months to years which is very regrettable. This should not be limited to academic study, How to implement the suggestions for how to solve these problems should be implemented. It is an important question. It would be appropriate to set up a committee consisting of government officials to implement the suggestions of the academic study in Pakistan. And it is very important that a committee consisting of the members of the government benches and the members of the opposition side should be constituted to oversee the performance of the government officers committee and the parliamentary committee should be supervisor for their work. To be monitored at all times. If not effectively dealt with by the impact of the outbreak, severe problems will be encountered.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/594281/will-cpec-be-affected-by-coronavirus/>

COVID-19 and Expansion of CPEC

Shakeel Ahmad Ramay

The propaganda outlets always paint a very scary and dismal picture of CPEC. They always look for opportunity to criticize CPEC even they are not hesitating to use COVID-19 for their purpose. Although COVID-19 and CPEC has no link but they are hell bent to exploit the situation. First it was propagated that CPEC workers are in danger due to COVID-19, which proved wrong. There was not a single case. Chinese government took extra measures to make sure that COVID-19 does not affect any worker. It had placed double quarantine measure. Now a campaign has been launched to spread fake news about the progress of second phase of CPEC in the context of COVID-19. It has been continuously fed to media and social media that progress has been slow down due to COVID-19. But the reality is different.

Rather, Pakistan and China are working to expand the scope and areas of work under CPEC. During the recent visit of President of Pakistan to China, both countries signed two forward looking memorandum of understanding (MoUs) to establish two new working groups. Although, the visit was a solidarity, but two countries used this opportunity to further strengthen the CPEC. The new working groups, agriculture working group and Science and technology working groups are designed to cater for present and future needs of Pakistan. Agriculture group will help to solve present day issues of agriculture and provide guidelines for rapid development of sector. The science and technology group will help Pakistan to look for its share in fourth industrial revolution.

Moreover, second phase of CPEC is also getting acceleration with every passing day. The progress can be observed in multiple areas. Currently, 40000 Pakistani and 7000 Chinese workers are performing their duties with dedication. The number of workers indicate the volume of work, which is going on. It clearly depicts that there is no break and work is going on, on all CPEC projects. Besides, it has been calculated that CPEC would produce almost 2.3 million jobs till 2030, which are direly needed in case of Pakistan, as Pakistan has huge youth bulge.

Both governments have also enhanced the speed to launch different social development projects. Currently, governments have finalized the 12 social economic development programs out of 17,

under second phase of CPEC. These programs are ready to be launched anytime. These programs will give a huge impetus to income generation activities and curb poverty in Pakistan. The major beneficiaries would be skill development and agriculture sectors.

Although, China is going through testing times, but China is putting efforts to expand CPEC. The efforts of both governments give confidence that the CPEC will be implemented on time and there will be no delay as it is being propagated

The social and economic development programs also give a special importance to marginalized areas. For example, Gwadar, which is one of most backward area of Pakistan has been given special focus. A model school is under construction here and it has been predicted it will be completed before the deadline. A special vocation training institute is also under construction. It has been designed to create more job opportunities for local communities by providing them better skills. The institute will be functional before August 2021. Mr. Zhang Baozhong, Chairman, Chinese Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) pointed out that this institution is direly needed here in Gwadar. He is confident, this institution will help local communities to find decent jobs in coming years. Moreover, it will also help to attractive foreign investors in Gwadar and special economic zone. Besides, work on desalination plant is also going on with full speed. It will be completed soon and will provide 1.2 million gallons of water on daily basis. China also envisioned to help to establish a nursing school and medical college in Gwadar

Mr. Zhang further added that private companies and SOEs like COPHC are also contributing to uplift the lives of locals through jobs, education, environment development and health etc. According to him, presently, there are 600 permanent employees of COPHC of which 588 are Pakistani. COPHC is also contributing in education sector. It has built a school in one of the most backward area of the country. By keeping in mind, the development status, school's capacity was kept 150. However, it was pleasant surprise that during the second year the total number of students were 720. Now COPHC is expanding the capacity and new building will entertain 1000 students.

Mr. Zhang also highlighted that COPHC is also investing on environment. The company has joined the official "Clean and Green" campaign of Pakistan. Last year COPHC has planted 400000 plants across the port and Gwadar city. We have committed to plant 1 million plants in next five years. We are putting efforts to keep port and city clean. Although our efforts cannot fulfill the demand of area, but we are determined to play our part and contribute what we can. This is story of one company, we can find similar examples from other companies under the CPEC. He concluded by saying that CPEC work is getting momentum with every passing day. It is priority and commitment of all companies to complete work even before the deadline, even during the COVID-19 we are not compromising on speed of work.

Chinese government is also extremely committed to help Pakistan to implement CPEC. The commitment can be seen from the efforts of China, even during the spread of COVID-19, China spared time to invite President of Pakistan and signed two extremely important MoUs. Although, China is going through testing times, but China is putting efforts to expand CPEC. The efforts of both governments give confidence that the CPEC will be implemented on time and there will be

no delay as it is being propagated. The commitment of Pakistan has also improved, and it is evident from the establishment of CPEC Authority. Pakistan is trying to imply all required instruments to make CPEC a success story.

In this backdrop we can say, negative propaganda seems unfair and based on malicious intents. The purpose of which is to undermine the importance of CPEC and create hurdles for the development of Pakistan. However, it will never be successful because CPEC is not joint venture between governments, it is joint venture among the people of China and Pakistan.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/594519/covid-19-and-expansion-of-cpec/>

Pakistan Observer

China helps Pakistan in every difficult situation

PESHAWAR Adviser to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information, Ajmal Khan Wazir here Sunday said that the brotherly country of China has always helped Pakistan in every difficult situation and that is why people of both countries had an everlasting bonds of friendship besides deep-rooted and time tested relations. He was talking to media persons after distributing food ration and masks on behalf of the Chinese Government among the poor people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Chinese Embassy at Islamabad have dispatched 100,000 flour bags and over 10,000 masks for needy people. The Adviser distributed these goods among a large number of people on this occasion.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-helps-pakistan-in-every-difficult-situation/>

The Nation

Virus likely to affect supply of workforce for CPEC, says China's counsel general

ISLAMABAD - The risk of contraction of COVID-19 is likely to leave a negative impact on the supply of workforce for the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, said Gwadar Pro App while quoting Li Bi Jian, China's Consul-General in Karachi.

He further said no sector could escape the effects of the deadly virus.

“Shielding the workforce at every CPEC project from contraction of the virus forms the top priority at present,” he said, and added, “Along with rise in confirmed cases, in case some cities or regions become the epicenter and a large number of people are infected, these will surely add more pressure to the management of each project.”

He said if there occurred infection, tough measures of isolation as well as prevention would be applied which will impact, in varying degrees, the execution of these projects, based on how many people were affected. This may lead to the risk of reduction in workforce. Some replacements may not materialize and some expired visas and passports may not be renewed in due course.

“On the other hand, the local employees form the bulk of the workforce of the projects. There is a high risk that the current status quo may not be maintained and replacements may be delayed. These will more or less impact the operation and implementation of the projects,” he feared.

He further said ever since the outbreak of the epidemic early this year, every project manager had been taking stringent preventive measures with a strong support provided by the Pakistan’s federal and provincial governments together with the special protection forces.

“The Chinese side is taking strictest measures to screen and check the inbound personnel from China, and so far there is not a single imported case from China. And Zero contraction target has occurred and maintained in all projects up till now. And all the projects are operating smoothly according to schedule,” China’s counsel general said, and added, “Secondly, the import and shipment of the equipment, spare parts, materials, may not be made on time and may affect the smooth operation, and cause delays in implementation of some of these projects. The lockdown of cities and provinces, and closure of government and business offices may cause delays in clearance by the customs, handling and transporting of the relevant goods.”

The less the pandemic prolonged, the smaller the effects on CPEC. If the pandemic prolonged for a longer period of time, the bigger the effects would be. But one thing was clear and that was also the advantage Pakistan had, the quick recovery of China after her winning the preliminary battle against the pandemic, Li BiJian concluded.

<https://nation.com.pk/13-Apr-2020/virus-likely-to-affect-supply-of-workforce-for-cpec-says-china-s-counsel-general>

April 14, 2020

Dunya News

China to send more doctors to Pakistan for fight against coronavirus

LAHORE: The Chinese government has decided to send more doctors to Pakistan to help overcome the coronavirus in the country.

According to sources, a special plane carrying the Chinese doctors will arrive in Pakistan on April 17. The plane will be carrying eight Chinese doctors from Urumqi to Islamabad.

On its way back, the plane will transport cargo from Islamabad to Urumqi. Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has granted special landing permission to the flight.

It is to be noted that previously, a team of Chinese doctors had returned to China from Pakistan on April 10.

<https://dunyaNews.tv/en/Pakistan/541174-China-to-send-more-doctors-to-Pakistan-for-fight-against-coronavirus>

April 15, 2020

Dawn News

Pakistan urges China to soften terms for power deals

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has requested China for ease in payment obligations of over \$30 billion worth of about 12,000-megawatt power projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to minimize its financial and economic difficulties.

This is part of the ongoing government efforts to secure discounts and savings on power purchases from independent power producers (IPPs) as circular debt liabilities cross Rs2 trillion. A cabinet member told Dawn that Pakistan had formally taken up its difficulties with China for relief in power purchase prices at the highest level during the recent visit of President Arif Alvi to Beijing, as Pakistan's capacity payments alone were estimated to be closer to Rs600bn this year.

According to Prime Minister Imran Khan, the capacity payments could go beyond Rs1.5 trillion in a few years, which would be beyond repayment capacity of the people.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar, who also heads the Cabinet Committee on Energy, were part of the presidential delegation to China on March 17.

Seeks to bring down mark-up on debt to Libor+2pc, extension in debt repayment in tariff to 20 years

The cabinet member said the Chinese leadership had advised the National Development and Reforms Commission (NDRC) of China to discuss the matter with the financial institutions (mostly owned by the government). He said the matter could move forward under the aegis of CPEC's Joint Working Group (JWG) on Energy before taking clear shape.

However, Pakistan has requested two basic relaxations in the existing agreements given the emerging challenges amid economic meltdown across the world in the wake of Covid-19. First, Pakistan desires to bring down mark-up on debt to London Interbank Offer Rate plus two (Libor+2) per cent from the existing average of about Libor+4.5pc.

Second, Pakistan has sought an extension in debt repayment period in the tariff to 20 years from the existing repayment period of 10 years. Almost all the power sector projects in the country have upfront 10-year debt repayment in their tariff structure. The two discounts are estimated to save about \$500-550 million (more than Rs85bn) annual cash outflows.

Meanwhile, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing met Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh on Tuesday. "Pakistan looks forward to Chinese support in dealing with this unprecedented situation arising out of this pandemic," an official statement quoted Dr. Shaikh as telling the ambassador.

The finance adviser also discussed with the Chinese ambassador the effect of the coronavirus pandemic on the overall growth of Pakistan economy as exports and remittances shall both suffer as economies around the world enter recession.

He said different economies had different levels of strength to deal with the losses and developing countries would be the worst hit by the impact of this slowdown.

Keeping in view the current circumstances, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and G-20 countries are also talking about debt relief for developing countries.

The adviser expressed the hope that these forums would also be able to come up with a plan to enable developing countries like Pakistan to not only meet their international obligations but also to provide relief to their populations adversely affected by the pandemic.

The adviser thanked the Chinese government for all the assistance it had provided to Pakistan in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1549299/pakistan-urges-china-to-soften-terms-for-power-deals>

Dunya News

NCOC commends timely assistance by China to Pakistan to cope with COVID-19 challenge

ISLAMABAD. The National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) has commended the timely assistance provided by China to Pakistan to cope with the coronavirus challenge.

According to a statement released by the National Command and Operation Center, a Chinese medical team visited Pakistan and held meetings in different cities with health professionals and others to help Pakistan cope with the situation.

The command center noted that the Chinese side provided Pakistan with important medical equipment and medicines on war footing. It immediately provided five hundred, twenty nine thousand and nine hundred and twenty four N-95 masks.

The Chinese assistance also included thirty three thousand, seven hundred and forty four protective equipment and ten thousand testing kits.

Over 1.5 million medical masks, thirty six ventilators, 180 thermometer, 100 thermal scanners, 24900 gloves and 59,376 protective goggles are also part of the Chinese assistance.

In addition, China provided ten thousand liter sanitizer and 1442 kilogram unstitched cloth for protective gear.

National Command and Operation Center said that the Chinese government also provided special assistance to fight coronavirus in Gilgit Baltistan.

It provided timely assistance to the region through Khunjerab and this included five ventilators, two hundred thousand masks and two thousand N-95 masks.

China also provided two thousand each testing kits and protective gear for Gilgit Baltistan. Pakistan Army dispatched this medical equipment through helicopters to different parts of Gilgit Baltistan.

<http://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/541224-NCOC-commends-timely-assistance-China-Pakistan-cope-COVID-19>

Pakistan Observer

PRCS playing vital role to cope with Covid-19: Yao Jing

Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Yao Jing Tuesday appreciated the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) for setting up a 120-bed Corona Care Hospital in Rawalpindi and creating awareness among the masses about the COVID-19 by mobilizing its trained volunteers. He was addressing a joint press conference with Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Abrarul Haq at the National Headquarters Auditorium here. Secretary General PRCS Khalid Bin Majeed and PRCS officers and volunteers were present on the occasion. Ambassador Yao Jing said Pakistan and China were partners against the Coronavirus adding that the Chinese embassy on a daily basis was striving to provide whatever assistance and expertise Pakistan needed. He expressed the hope that the brave brotherly people of Pakistan will finally overcome the epidemic through national unity, discipline, and awareness in the society. Chairman PRCS Abrar ul Haq thanked the Chinese government and the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) on behalf of the PRCS and the people of Pakistan for the great support they have always been extending to Pakistan particularly at a time when the country is locked in a tough fight with the COVID-19. He particularly thanked the Chinese ambassador for supplying 200,000 9N-95 masks and reusable hoodies to the PRCS for their onward distribution to doctors and paramedics busy treating the COVID-19 patients at the government hospitals and other health facilities. He said the PRCS together with the Chinese ambassador was planning something big for Pakistan to come to grips with the unfortunate situation arising from the Covid-19 outbreak. Abrar said the people of Pakistan had learnt a lot from the Chinese government and people about how to fight the COVID-19 and expressed the hope that the bond between the peoples of China and Pakistan would strengthen further. He said the 10-bed purpose-built hospital was equipped with nine ventilators adding that one ventilator could cater to two patients because of coupling. He said 27 patients could be treated at hospital's ICU. Abrar told the media that the PRCS was facing acute blood shortage due to the lockdown creating a serious situation for the patients, especially the cancer and Thalassemia patients. He requested the non-remunerated voluntary blood donors to visit PRCS Regional Blood Donor Centre or any other facility for donation. Secretary General Khalid Bin Majeed said the N-95 masks donated by Red Cross Society of China were being provided to the hospitals. He said on request of Punjab government PRCS was also setting up eight field hospitals to handle patients, if God forbid, situation worsened. Khalid Bin Majeed said the educational institutions were a big source of blood donation but unfortunately, after their closure in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak the Regional Blood Donor Centre of the PRCS was facing shortage of blood.

<https://pakobserver.net/prcs-playing-vital-role-to-cope-with-covid-19-yao-jing/>

Dr. Iqbal Choudhry gets highest Chinese award

Chinese Academic of Sciences (CAS) President's International Fellowship Initiative (PIFI Fellowship) has conferred the prominent Pakistani scientist Prof. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary with the "Distinguished Scientist" award. A press statement, issued by the

International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi, said on Tuesday said that Prof. Choudhary was awarded with this prestigious scientific award of People's Republic of China in recognition of his outstanding contributions in the field of bioorganic chemistry and very strong collaborations with Chinese universities and higher education institutions. Prof. Choudhary, who is currently serving as ICCBS director, has 1355 publications in the fields of organic and bioorganic chemistry, including 67 international/ US patents, and 73 books, and 40 chapters in books, published by major U.S. and European publishers. Currently his h-index is 68 and has 27,394 citations. As many as 94 students have completed their Ph.D. degrees under his supervision.

<https://pakobserver.net/dr-iqbal-choudhry-gets-highest-chinese-award/>

China's overwhelming support for Pakistan symbol of brotherhood:

Ambassador Hashmi

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Naghmana Hashmi Tuesday said that China's over whelming support to help Pakistan fight novel coronavirus pandemic was in fact a symbol of the brotherhood of the two peoples. "We thank Chinese people for their enthusiasm and support for Pakistan and look forward to strengthening cooperation with Pakistan to continue the fight against the epidemic," she said in an interview with xuexi.cn, a Chinese news website. Ambassador Hashmi, in the interview, spoke on mutual assistance in the prevention and control of the outbreak between China and Pakistan, friendly exchanges in various fields and the future development of bilateral relations. To meet this challenge, she said that Pakistan had mobilized its institutional, capital and human resources to coordinate disease prevention and control. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, the government was at the forefront of the fight against the epidemic and a COVID-19 National Coordinating Committee was established to review the changing situation. Pakistan had announced the closure of educational institutions, the cancellation of mass rallies and restrictions on the movement of international flights. Provinces and districts had also taken effective measures to contain the further spread of the epidemic in accordance with local conditions, she added. Prime Minister Imran Khan, she said, called on the entire population to remain united, to avoid fear and panic and to focus on compliance with the necessary protection measures in order to achieve a comprehensive and unified national response. "In the face of this terrible global epidemic, the people of Pakistan are confident and look forward to overcoming this challenge with the help of our friends and in our innate capacity," she added. While commenting on Pakistan and China's mutual assistance in epidemic prevention, she said that Pakistan and China always stood together when they need it. The COVID-19 epidemic had also tested the interconnectedness of the two countries. In the early days of the virus epidemic, China was in the throes of a rapid rise in infection rates and rising deaths, and Pakistan provided the greatest material and moral support to it Iron Brothers. "In a show of unwavering support and solidarity with the Chinese people and government, Pakistan has donated the necessary epidemic prevention equipment to China to help it fight the epidemic, and both houses of the Pakistani Parliament have adopted a resolution expressing firm solidarity and confidence in China's efforts to control and eliminate the epidemic," she added. Ambassador

Hashmi said that now that China was the only country to fully control the outbreak. The Chinese people and the government have responded in the same way, fully supporting Pakistan in stepping up preventive measures against the COVID-19. The Chinese government had sent a special plane to Pakistan with medical professionals and rescue workers to fight the outbreak. By the end of March, China's aid included 12,000 test kits, 300,000 masks and 10,000 protective clothing. In addition to official assistance, Pakistan had received large donations from leading Chinese entrepreneurs and individuals, she added. On President Arif Alvi's recent visit to China, she said that Pakistan and China had a tradition of frequent high-level exchanges, which was a special and recurring feature of bilateral relations. Prime Minister Imran Khan visited China three times in 2018 and 2019. Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan also visited Pakistan in May 2019. "These high-level exchanges have injected new impetus into bilateral relations and reaffirmed our firm commitment to work together in the new era to achieve mutual benefit and win-win results and maintain regional peace and stability." President Arif Alvi's recent visit to China was aimed at upholding this long tradition and maintaining the momentum of the leadership exchanges between the two countries. However, the visit took place in different contexts. This was a very special moment, the Chinese government and people were engaged in a people's war against the deadly COVID-19 outbreak. Ambassador Hashmi said that the purpose of the visit was to reaffirm Pakistan's firm solidarity and firm support for China at this challenging time, to express its condolences to the families of the deceased and to pay tribute to the courage and determination of the Chinese people to fight the epidemic. During his visit, the president met with President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Keqiang and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Mr. Li Zhishu. These exchanges had traditional warmth and cordiality, which had been a hallmark of bilateral relations at all levels, she added. Ambassador Hashmi said during the visit, the two sides also reviewed bilateral relations in various areas of cooperation, including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). They discussed important regional and multilateral issues and decided to further deepen strategic communication and coordination at all levels. Pakistan and China expressed satisfaction with the healthy development of bilateral relations and agreed to further consolidate all-weather relations in the future, especially in the economic and trade fields. She said that the president's visit sent a very strong signal that the relationship between Pakistan and China was unique, powerful and unprecedented. This was a reaffirmation of the firm commitment to Pakistan-China relations, the strength of Pakistan-China relations would not be affected by domestic challenges or adverse global turmoil. The president's visit attracted the attention of the Chinese public and the media, and strengthened and revitalized the fraternal friendship and friendship that had always existed between the two peoples. "In conclusion, I would like to say that this visit has added a new chapter to the glorious history of bilateral relations and provided a strong impetus for the future development of bilateral relations," she added. While commenting on cooperation agreements in the fields of energy, trade and industry between the two countries, she said that in recent years, all-weather cooperation between Pakistan and China had been deepening, bilateral cooperation had been expanding and mutual benefit and win-win results had been deepened. "During the

president's visit, the two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing two joint working groups on agriculture and science and technology. The two countries had also signed agreements to deepen cooperation in pest control and the fight against coronavirus outbreaks," she added. Ambassador Hashmi said that in the past, the two countries had concluded agreements to strengthen bilateral trade, infrastructure, industrial cooperation and cultural cooperation, and have developed various implementation mechanisms. "I am pleased to see that our cooperation has achieved positive results of mutual benefit and win-win results. Thanks to our bilateral cooperation, Pakistan has succeeded in establishing a strong and solid network of facilities to support its growing economy and overcome the worsening energy shortage that has hampered our growth," she added.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinas-overwhelming-support-for-pakistan-symbol-of-brotherhood-ambassador-hashmi/>

Chinese experts share expertise for coronavirus treatment Chinese hospital, LRH linked live for updates

PESHAWAR The Chinese experts have shared their expertise about treatment of coronavirus in a live session with doctors of Peshawar. The Intensive Care Units of Chinese hospital and Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar were linked live for direct updates, questions and answers. During the session, the experts on both sides exchanged views on containment and treatment of the epidemic. The Chinese experts also shared their expertise about ICU care. The doctors thanked the Chinese experts and expressed the hope that such key sessions would be organized in future also. Meanwhile, it is reported that Medical Teaching Institution (MTI) Khyber Teaching Hospital (KTH) has issued COVID-19 performance report according to which it has received first COVID19 suspected patient on February 22, and since date it screened and sampled 102 patients including 14 positive and remaining were negative. As many as 49 patients were admitted in the hospital and successfully treated and recovered. Only one patient has expired. The remaining 53 patients were treated as outdoor patients. As many as 20 private rooms have already been declared isolation for KTH staff. A 17 bedded fully equipped high dependency isolation unit is already functioned and for backup another 46 bedded unit for coronavirus patients is also reserved. All the basic needs, which include breakfast, lunch, evening tea, dinner.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-experts-share-expertise-for-coronavirus-treatment-chinese-hospital-lrh-linked-live-for-updates/>

Belt and Road Initiative and its impact on Central Asia

Shah Fahad

Once bitter rivals turned economic and military partners, the Sino-Russia relationship has been through many phases. There was a time when the fear of a nuclear war between Moscow and Beijing looked inevitable. There were border disputes between the two countries. In the early 1950s, both nations saw a dream of communism but by the late 60s, Sino-Russian relations were troubled. With the fall of the (erstwhile) Soviet Union, the then Russian President Boris Yeltsin

visited China later in 1992 and relations began to normalize. Since then Sino-Russian relations have achieved many milestones and Belt and Road Initiative will be the most important one.

Russia has always played a dominant role in Central Asia but its geopolitical outlook is continuously evolving with time. The primary objective of Moscow's foreign policy is to ensure little or no western influence in Central Asia. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Moscow has invested \$20 billion in Central Asian Republics, around \$37 billion worth of remittance flow from Russia to Central Asian states and 150,000 students are studying in Russia, most of them on scholarships. Moscow has granted \$6 billion in bilateral and multilateral aid coupled with debt write-off worth \$488 million to Kyrgyzstan and \$865 million to Uzbekistan. With these efforts, the Putin Administration has deep ties with Central Asian countries, hence successfully keeping the western influence at bay.

Sino-Russian relations make the capitalist powers very uncomfortable. While the relations between the Kremlin and the White House got tense, Mr. Trump started a trade war with China. These diplomatic failures of the US created an opportunity for the Russian and Chinese counterparts to come close to each other. The warm diplomatic relations that started in 1992 transformed into cooperation and the giant powers have converted this cooperation into a sort of a friendly alliance. China's vision of the One Belt One Road Initiative (BRI) has provided an opportunity for the two powers to establish a Duopoly in Central Asia. According to some experts Russia controls the defense and political stability, whereas China controls the economic front. That does not only keep the Western influence out but also serves the greater good for the region since countries like Mongolia and Uzbekistan still lack basic infrastructure yet they are rich with huge natural reserves.

The most common criticism on Belt and Road Initiative is that China will have a very strong hold and all the partner countries will fall victim to the debt overburden but the point this criticism doesn't address is: how all these Central Asian countries that are willing to develop themselves are going to achieve their targets, what options do they have to find a market for their exports. Under the BRI, Uzbekistan has signed \$15 billion worth of investment deals with China for the development of the extraction of their resources. Every month 3000 tons of cotton gets exported to China from Uzbekistan. Because of the BRI, international brands have started coming to the country since their cotton industry has a huge potential. In 2017 the administration announced a 5-year plan to transform its economy that is brimming with natural resources like uranium, gas and oil. Uzbekistan is a double landlocked country, which means that to reach the port you need to cross the borders of two countries. The BRI will give Uzbekistan access to reach other markets and attract more tourism which has already witnessed a boom in the past few years. This led to a phenomenal rise in the country's economic activity, contributing not only towards the development of the State but ensuring a stable income for the household as well.

Mongolia shares borders with the two powers, Russia and China but has been cut off from the world because the country lacks basic infrastructure. Tavan Tolgoi has the world's largest coal reserves in the Gobi desert, estimated to be around 6.4 billion tons. This is the biggest earning source for Mongolia but the country is landlocked. Mongolia exported this coal to China for

about \$169.2 million in January 2019 alone but due to poor roads, transportation transit is a major issue. Under the BRI, the infrastructure of the country will improve to better connect it with the world and once again it will make the Mongolians benefit from the Silk Route of the modern era.

So far we have discussed how the BRI can benefit the economically weaker countries but what does this project mean for Russia. After sanctions, the Russian government broke all ties with the EU from where they used to purchase vegetable and fruit. To meet its requirements, Moscow imports vegetable and fruit from Beijing to fulfill its needs worth \$1 billion and \$300 million respectively. In response to that Russia has Cherkizovo Group, they export 3,000 tons of chicken meat monthly to China and have plans to expand its capacity to 48,000 tons this year. With the construction of roads, the time to reach the market has been cut in half as compared to a few years ago. The Sino-Russian contract of exporting gas to China for 30 years' worth \$400 billion has already been launched as part of Polar Silk Road.

China has invested \$500 million in Russia, establishing Great Wall Motors (GWM) which is the biggest SUV manufacturer in China. The project has an estimated yield of \$2.6 billion. This is Beijing's biggest investment in the manufacturing sector of Russia. Both countries have also agreed to trade in domestic currencies instead of US dollar. Criticism of BRI from those Western nations that invaded weaker countries and exploited their resources does not sound fair when we realize the output potential of these projects on which economically weaker countries depend. It encourages the host nations to fulfill each other's demands. China is already the biggest buyer for many Central Asian countries and with improved connectivity, the chances to grow together will be even higher. Depending on one country for your exports is the first step for these nations and this should not be seen as a weakness or vulnerability. BRI is a ray of hope after prolonged years of darkness.

<https://pakobserver.net/belt-and-road-initiative-and-its-impact-on-central-asia/>

CPEC in changing political landscape of the world

Mohammad Jamil

In the whole world, Coronavirus has killed more than hundred thousand of peoples so far, and the world economy is collapsing. Two months ago, China was the most affected country, and analysts and pundits presaged that its projects especially One-Belt One-Road and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would be adversely impacted. However, the epidemic situation in China has now been effectively controlled. So even if there was a little impact, it proved temporary. There is every possibility that the construction of the CPEC will continue to advance smoothly as planned; rather it will be resumed with renewed vigor after the victory over Coronavirus. The first phase of the construction of the CPEC had been very successful. After 22 major energy and transportation infrastructure projects having been put into operation, Pakistan's socio-economic development was on trajectory of rapid development. Prime Minister Imran Khan is keen to see implementation of CPEC on a priority basis.

With the successful experience in the first stage, China and Pakistan are jointly working, and promoting the construction of the second stage. Recently, Pakistan government approved the

establishment of 10 Special Economic Zones in the four provinces. The working on the ongoing project under CPEC in South Punjab had been stopped in January in the wake of Coronavirus fear. Anyhow, the world is watching the changing political landscape of the world, and many analysts see America losing the sole super power status. UK's daily 'The Independent' carried an article written by Patrick Cockburn who stated: "The US is losing its world superpower status due to its failure to lead on the Covid-19 crisis – and this time, it might not recover. The US may be reaching its "Chernobyl Moment" as it fails to lead in combating the Coronavirus epidemic". The fall in US influence was visible at virtual meetings of world leaders where the main US diplomatic effort was devoted to an abortive attempt to persuade the others to sign a statement referring to the "Wuhan virus", as part of a campaign to blame China for the Coronavirus epidemic. The author went on to state that the decline of the US is usually seen as the counterpart to the rise of China and China has, at least for the moment, successfully got a grip on its own epidemic. It is the Chinese who are sending ventilators and medical teams to Italy and face masks to Africa. Italians note that the other EU states all ignored Italy's desperate appeal for medical equipment and only China responded. A Chinese charity sent 300,000 face masks to Belgium in a container with the slogan "Unity Makes Strength" in three languages French, Flemish and Chinese.

Although the Chinese government was heavily criticized for its failure to slow the spread of the virus in December and January, yet it came out of it much faster. Beijing has extended its aid campaign to overwhelmed European governments. In March, China sent masks, gloves, ventilators and medical experts to help Italy, Spain, France, Greece, the Czech Republic and other countries to help them deal with the outbreak. As supplies were unloaded from a Chinese plane in Italy, Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio noted that "we are not alone; there are people in the world who want to help Italy." Experts from across Europe and the United States react to China's growing Coronavirus outreach in Europe and the implications for Chinese-EU relations. However, they are likely to fail.

Dimitar Bechev, non-resident Senior Fellow in the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Centre; Research Fellow, Centre of Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill stated: "Never let good crisis go to waste. There is no better illustration than the medical supplies and crews of doctors China has been supplying to Italy and other European countries battling COVID-19. Ian Brzezinski, resident Senior Fellow in the Atlantic Council's Future Europe Initiative and Scowcroft Centre for Strategy and Security stated: "China's global Coronavirus rescue campaign is well underway. A key focus is Europe. Last week, Beijing sent millions of surgical masks (including 200,000 advanced masks) and 50,000 testing kits to Europe. Chinese medical experts have been sent to Italy. Alibaba and the Jack Ma Foundation airlifted shipments of medical gear to Belgium, Ukraine and Spain. And the list goes on.

Since the US is facing the killer Novel Coronavirus, it is too much absorbed and has hardly anything to offer to the European countries that are wary of American attitude. The Trump Administration has been trying to mobilize Europe against China's geopolitical strategies, and

pressured European states not to partner with Chinese firms in developing 5G telecommunications networks, and called for NATO to play a greater role in meeting the rise of Beijing's power. After initially resisting entreaties from Brussels, the Administration now seeks to enlist the EU and Japan in a common front against, what it says, Beijing's unfair economic practices. Yet many European countries remain worried about aligning too closely with Trump against China, because he will eventually cut a bilateral deal with Beijing. Just as important, any US-European cooperation against China is occurring in a broader context in which the US has often worked against a united Europe.

Trump has his reasons for this approach. He believes that the US can get a better bilateral trade deal with a post-Brexit UK, and seems to think that America can maximize its influence with individual European countries by weakening the EU. The leaderships in EU countries understand the Trump's machinations, and would not like to be used in his plans against China. It appears that the political landscape of the world will drastically change. It is possible that the focus will be on the human beings that were neglected and exploited by the capitalists and erstwhile colonialists.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-in-changing-political-landscape-of-the-world/>

The Nation

Inauguration of CPEC project Thakot-Havelian gets delayed due to corona

ISLAMABAD-The inauguration of Thakot-Havelian Expressway of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been delayed due to the ongoing corona pandemic.

An 80 kilometre long portion from Mansehra to Thakot was set to be completed in the last week of February 2020.

However, when contacted the project director Ashfaq Ahmed Khan informed that the construction work has almost been completed and project is ready for handing over and taking over a formal transfer of any road by contractor to the custodian.

He, however, informed that the same process could not be initiated due to the ongoing corona pandemic because movement is curtailed due to lockdown in the country.

The said portion is a part of 120 kilometre long expressway being constructed by M/s China Communications Construction Company Ltd under CPEC that is divided into two sections, a 40 kilometre long Havelian to Manshera section and 80 kilometre long Manshera to Thakot section.

The first 40km long six lane access controlled section had been completed last year and inaugurated by the Prime Minister Imran Khan while rest of the 80km was to be completed in the last week of February 2020 that is a Class-II Highway. The said 120km Havelian-Thakot expressway project is linked with Islamabad-Peshawar Motorway (M-1) at Burhan Interchange via 65km long Hazara Expressway completed with the funding of Asian Development Bank.

The project is a part of the northern alignment of CPEC known as KKH Phase II and it is an integral part of said multibillion bilateral initiative, which was started by the last government of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz under the leadership of former premier Nawaz Sharif.

Meanwhile, sources at different projects of NHA informed reliably that most of the ongoing projects slowed down due to ongoing pandemic as the respective provincial governments announced lockdowns to avoid the spread of corona virus.

“Besides delay in the projects, there is a possibility of huge revenue loss as well due to this pandemic,” a senior officer of finance wing explained; “The toll plazas and rest areas operators would submit their claims for compensations and NHA will have to entertain them according to rules.” When contacted, NHA’s spokesperson Capitan (R) Mushtaq Ahmed said that everything is disturbed due to ongoing situation but the road authority is trying to do maximum possible progress on its projects.

Regarding revenue loss, he said the claims if received would be settled according to respective law after rationalizing them.

<https://nation.com.pk/15-Apr-2020/inauguration-of-cpec-project-thakot-havelian-gets-delayed-due-to-corona>

The News

Chinese varsity donates 3,000 face masks to UoS

SARGODHA: The University of Sargodha on Tuesday received 3,000 face masks from China’s Henan Normal University (HNU) to fight against coronavirus.

The representative of HNU Salena Wang handed over the face masks to Vice Chancellor Dr Ishtiaq Ahmad while Pakistan Institute of China Studies Director Dr Fazal ur Rahman and Chinese Language teachers were also present.

Speaking on the moment, Dr Ishtiaq Ahmad said that China had always offered its unflinching support to the people of Pakistan in the time of need. The University of Sargodha had organised a solidarity walk along with the Chinese teachers in February to express solidarity and support to China in its struggle against the coronavirus. Dr Ahmad added.

He informed that the University of Sargodha and he China’s Henan Normal University (HNU) had a MoU, which guides the activities of SU’s Confucius Institute as well as other areas of mutual cooperation. Therefore, as Pakistan faced a surge in corona cases in late March, Prof Li Xuezhi, the HNU vice president, assured full support to the University of Sargodha, in the fight against corona virus through a condolence letter on April 1, he told.

In the letter, Prof Li shared the fact that China had overcome the disease with united efforts and continued its academic activities through online teaching, he added.

Salena Wang said that China and Pakistan were enjoying cordial relations and we would continue to support Pakistan in the battle against coronavirus outbreak.

Dr Fazal ur Rahman expressed heartfelt thanks on face masks donation for epidemic prevention.

He said this proves once again that China and Pakistan were true friends and good brothers.