



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

---

February 16-28, 2021

A pilot project of PICS

## Table of Contents

1: February 16, 2021.....	03
2: February 17, 2021.....	10
3: February 18, 2021.....	17
4: February 19, 2021.....	21
5: February 20, 2021.....	24
6: February 21, 2021.....	26
7: February 22, 2021.....	29
8: February 23, 2021.....	33
9: February 24, 2021.....	40
10: February 25, 2021.....	46
11: February 26, 2021.....	48
12: February 27, 2021.....	50
13: February 28, 2021.....	52

*Data collected and compiled by Rabeeha Safdar, Marosha Sarfaraz and Zohaib Sultan*

*Disclaimer: PICS reproduce the original text, facts and figures as appear in the newspapers and is not responsible for its accuracy.*

**February 16, 2021**

**Daily Times**

### **CPEC Authority to undertake more projects in Faisalabad: Bajwa**

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Chairman Lt Gen (r) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Monday said that CPEC Authority would undertake more projects in Faisalabad after successful launch of Special Economic Zone, Allama Iqbal Industrial City.

He was addressing a meeting during his visit to Allama Iqbal Industrial City. The meeting was also attended by Chairman Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development & Management Company (FIEDMC) Mian Kashif Ashfaq, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed, and officers of various departments.

Asim Saleem Bajwa said that Allama Iqbal Industrial City was a flagship project of CPEC Authority which would facilitate Chinese investors to shift their high tech industrial units under second phase of CPEC.

About industrial, commercial and business importance of Faisalabad, he said it was more suitable for local as well as foreign investment. He said the authority would try its best to improve basic infrastructure to facilitate investors.

Responding to a question of President FCCI, he said that more projects would be launched under CPEC Authority in Faisalabad. In this connection, up-gradation of Faisalabad International Airport was also under consideration while a technical institute to provide skilled manpower would also be established under CPEC Authority. He assured to visit FCCI during next month to discuss issues and take final decision to launch new development projects. He also visited M-3 Industrial City, Business Zone and Site office and expressed satisfaction over the facilities provided in this mega project. He stressed the need to further improve the infrastructure in order to facilitate the local as well as foreign investors.

Chairman FIEDMC Mian Kashif Ashfaq said that construction work of boundary wall, main gate and double carriage road had been completed in Allama Iqbal Industrial City while consultants were being hired for preparation of master plan for this industrial city. He said that special one-window cell was also operational in Allama Iqbal City which would provide facilities to Chinese investors.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/724381/cpec-authority-to-undertake-more-projects-in-faisalabad-bajwa/>

### **Xinjiang: 23 lies & fact-checks (Part 1)**

*Yasir Habib Khan*

After “white paper of fact checks” that exposed 23 lies as reprehensibly engineered and fake, China’s Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region has come clean on the face of earth.

This development has strengthened Xinjiang's soft image of good ethics, rule of law, freedom of impression, human rights and level-playing field to all disregarding all forms of prejudices based on ethnicity, minority, religion, class, affiliation and creed. Lies may mislead people for a while, but cannot win the trust of the world. Facts and truthfulness eventually bust all lies.

Xinjiang-related issues are not about human rights, ethnicity or religion at all, but about combating violent terrorism and separatism. The Chinese government has launched anti-terrorism and de-radicalization efforts in Xinjiang in accordance with the law to protect people's lives, which has garnered ardent support of people from all ethnic groups. People in the region continue to embrace peace and prosperity and Xinjiang society continues to develop steadily. These facts are the most powerful tool to debunk lies surrounding Xinjiang.

Out of 23 lies propagated viciously, one lie is that US former secretary of state Mike Pompeo claimed that the Chinese government had committed "genocide" against Uygurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. Fact check is that in recent years, the Uygur population in Xinjiang has been growing steadily. From 2010 to 2018, the Uygur population in Xinjiang rose from 10.17 million to 12.72 million, an increase of 2.55 million or 25.04 percent. The growth rate of the Uygur population is not only higher than that of Xinjiang's total population, which is 13.99 percent, but also higher than that of all ethnic minority groups, which is 22.14 percent, let alone the Han population's 2 percent.

Xinjiang enjoys social stability, with the people living and working in peace and contentment. The region has made unprecedented achievements in economic and social development and improvement of people's livelihood. From 2014 to 2019, the GDP of Xinjiang increased from 919.59 billion yuan to 1.36 trillion yuan, with an average annual growth rate of 7.2 percent. The per capita disposable income in Xinjiang increased by an average annual rate of 9.1 percent. Remarkable achievements have been made in poverty alleviation. All 3.09 million impoverished people in Xinjiang have been lifted out of poverty. The absolute poverty problem in Xinjiang has been resolved historically.

In reply to fifth lie that Xinjiang sets up "re-education camps" to detain millions of Uygur Muslims, fact check is that Xinjiang has never had any so-called "re-education camps."

The legitimate rights and interests of the people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang have been protected. All ethnic groups, regardless of their population, have the same legal status and enjoy various rights in accordance with the law, including participation in the management of state affairs, freedom of religious belief, receiving education, using their own languages, and preserving their traditional culture.

Second lie is that Adrian Zenz released reports claiming Xinjiang has carried out "forced sterilization" on the Uygur women, resulting in a sharp decline in the Uygur population. Fact check is that Adrian Zenz's "reports" are full of fabrications and data manipulation. The so-called evidence of "forced sterilization" in the "reports" claims that 80 percent of the new intrauterine device (IUD) insertion procedures in China for 2018 were performed in Xinjiang and

that the natural population growth rate in Hotan and Kashgar of Xinjiang in 2018 was only 2.58 per 1,000 people. The “evidence” is extremely inconsistent with the facts.

BBC Newsnight once reported that Zumrat Dawut (Zamira Dawut) was “forced to go through sterilization” in a vocational education and training center. 3rd fact check is that Zamira Dawut has never studied in any vocational education and training center. Her elder brother Abduhelil Dawut has previously clarified that.

As per 4th lie in interviews with foreign media, Mihrigul Tursun said that she was forced to take unknown medications in a vocational education and training center and was diagnosed as infertile by American doctors. And truth is that On April 21, 2017, Mihrigul Tursun was taken into custody by the public security bureau of Qiemo County on suspicion of inciting ethnic hatred and discrimination. During this period, she was found to have infectious diseases such as syphilis. Out of humanitarian consideration, the county public security bureau terminated the measures against her on May 10, 2017. Except the 20 days of criminal detention, Mihrigul was totally free while in China. She was never sentenced, nor did she study in any vocational education and training center, let alone being forced to take medications. There are no records of her undergoing a sterilization procedure in China.

In reply to fifth lie that Xinjiang sets up “re-education camps” to detain millions of Uygur Muslims, fact check is that Xinjiang has never had any so-called “re-education camps.”

The vocational education and training centers established in Xinjiang in accordance with the law are education and training institutions in nature and are preventive counter-terrorism and deradicalization measures taken by Xinjiang. The vocational education and training centers offered a curriculum that included standard spoken and written Chinese, understanding of the law and training in vocational skills to achieve the goal of deradicalisation. By October 2019, all the trainees in such centers had completed their studies and graduated, and most of them have found stable jobs and lived a peaceful life.

Lie six says that Xinjiang vocational education and training centers exercised “religious control,” political indoctrination, intimidation and torture over the trainees. Contrary to this, fact is that the vocational education and training centers fully respected and protected trainees’ freedom of religious belief, ethnic customs and habits, and the right to use their own ethnic spoken and written languages. In the face of some overseas Uygur people’s claim that “their relatives or friends in Xinjiang cannot be contacted and have gone missing” on overseas media and social media platforms, fact check is that Xinjiang protects the freedom of travel of people of all ethnic groups, including the Uygurs, and their communication with overseas relatives according to law. Verification with relevant departments shows that some allegedly “missing” people, mentioned by the “East Turkistan” separatists overseas, are living a normal life, while other “missing” incident reports are pure fabrications.

Eight lie is that Xinjiang uses the coronavirus to wipe out Uygurs, with many tragic deaths after infection. Fact check reveals that since the COVID-19 outbreak, Xinjiang has resolutely fought

against the virus and effectively contained the epidemic within a short period. With the support of the expert team from the State Council joint prevention and control mechanism, the local government made all-out efforts to treat patients. The regional government adopted a targeted prevention and control approach with differentiated, scientific measures. It also strengthened epidemic prevention and control in places such as crowded and key venues to minimize the risk of virus spread. Thanks to concerted efforts, all 826 confirmed COVID-19 cases in Xinjiang have been discharged from hospital after treatment, without even a single death.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/724251/xinjiang-23-lies-fact-checks-part-1/>

### **Dawn News**

#### **SITUATIONER: Delay in Chinese financing leaves Railways in limbo**

*Nasir Jamal*

- During PML-N's term Railways earning increased to Rs50bn from Rs18bn
- Railways pension bill has ballooned to Rs38bn against its regular salary bill of Rs27bn
- Decline began with the rise of NLC in the late 1970s

RECENTLY, new Railways Minister Azam Khan Swati revealed that the Pakistan Railways had suffered accumulated losses of Rs1.2 trillion in the last 50 years. "The company has incurred 90 per cent of these losses in last two decades alone," he told journalists in Peshawar weeks ago.

"The average loss is between Rs35-40 billion a year," he said, adding the government planned to revive the collapsing organisation sooner than later. But how? He didn't elaborate.

Official rhetoric aside, the cash-strapped PTI administration seems as clueless about its strategy for the railway's revival as any previous administration. It has, apparently, put all its eggs in the Chinese basket, hoping that the investment of \$6.8bn on upgrade of the Main Line-1 (ML-1) connecting Peshawar with Karachi would resuscitate the dying company.

That may do the miracle. But for now the project has already hit snags on terms of Chinese financing for the project, delaying work on it.

#### **Restoring profitability**

The project was billed to be launched from January this year. Lack of money to outside the ML-1 is keeping it from rehabilitating old, rundown tracks, bridges, signal system and other infrastructure to improve passenger safety and service, and, more importantly, increase freight business, the main revenue earner for any railway in the world. "Efforts have been made to restore the railway's profitability in different periods but those fell through in midway because of lack of their continuity," Nisar Memon, railway's CEO, told Dawn, blaming decades of underinvestment in infrastructure, corruption, mismanagement, political interference, over-employment and loss of freight business to competing road transportation owing to lack of a

national transportation policy as major factors for deteriorating railway infrastructure and service and loss of freight business.

An audit conducted on the Supreme Court's order in 2018 showed the company had incurred losses to the tune of Rs155bn in five years to FY17 despite its earnings of Rs147bn. The previous government of PML-N took some drastic decisions to raise the railway's earnings from its freight and passenger operations from Rs18bn to nearly Rs50bn during its tenure. The revenues grew by 10pc to Rs55bn in FY19 under the PTI, according to the available information.

In September last year, the government informed a Senate panel the railway had inflicted losses of Rs187bn on the national exchequer in last five years. The railway posted the highest ever deficit of Rs50.1bn in FY20, up from Rs32.8bn a year before. In FY18 it reported losses to the tune of Rs36.6bn.

“The company has for years been receiving money from the government to pay its pension bill, which has ballooned to Rs38bn against its regular salary bill (of 80,000-odd employees) of Rs27bn,” Mr Memon said, adding the government had injected Rs42bn to make up for its FY20 losses.

### **Bureaucracy key hurdle**

According to the 2019-20 Economic Survey, the railway owns 474 locomotives (458 diesel engines and 12 steam engines) for 7,791km length of the track. During the first eight months of FY20 (July-February), the number of passengers decreased to 39.4 million against 39.9m from the previous year.

Do the railway authorities have a plan to make the company profitable? “We are hopeful that the ML-1 project will help revive the company. Additionally, the government is also investing Rs16bn this year in infrastructure and purchase of coaches and wagons. Our near-term goal is to focus on revenue growth through an increase in the freight business, which we plan to raise to 30pc of our total revenues,” the CEO said.

A small but similar experiment was implemented under the last PPP administration when a private consortium was allowed to run a passenger train from Lahore to Karachi. But the experiment failed because of snags created by the railway bureaucracy as well as continuous payment defaults by the private operator. The PML-N administration cancelled the contract.

Pakistan's railway industry was at its pinnacle until the mid 1970s when its decline began mainly due to under investment in infrastructure, lack of long-term planning, political interference, mismanagement, corruption, and the rise of the same-sector competitor, the National Logistics Cell (NLC), says a 2015 research report.

“The company went into the red in the 1970s from being a profitable organisation after the government deregulated road sector and started investments in highways, totally ignoring the railway infrastructure,” a retired railway official said.

### **Competition in freight business**

“The entry of NLC and private transport owners in freight business broke railway’s monopoly. It’s share in freight was reduced from 70pc to negligible because the bureaucracy-heavy railway failed to compete with new rivals or adapt to emerging business environment.”

Ever since, successive administrations have done many experiments to revive the railway starting from induction of private sector people on its board, he said. In the early 1990s, the government decided to privatise it as advised by the World Bank. Later it decided to privatise only the freight business.

A senior serving official, who has been associated with the railway freight service for the last two decades, was of the view that the government would have to swallow many bitter pills before it could put the railway back on track.

“The most popular model practiced around the world today is the state controlling the railway infrastructure and private companies operating freight business and passenger trains in exchange for a fee for using the tracks and other facilities. But this shift is going to be hugely painful and the government must be ready to face strong resistance from within.”

However, everyone agrees on one thing: you can’t make railway profitable without increasing freight business revenues to at least 65pc of its total earnings. The other important thing is automation of railway operations and giving it complete monopoly over dirty cargo movement in the country.

Another official, who also requested anonymity, pointed out 80-85pc of the total railway costs are fixed expenditure. The remaining 15pc are variable. “In other words, we need to ensure the use of the capacity to the full to recover the costs. For example, only one train runs on the Quetta-Taftan route every 15 days. How can the fixed expenditure of that route be met without increasing traffic on this route? Only those passenger routes like Lahore-Karachi should be focused where people have fewer alternatives rather than launching trains on loss-making branch lines.”

“There is no dearth of revival strategies to pull the company out its troubles. What we do not have is political will and professionals to implement any of them,” the serving official remarked.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1607637/situationer-delay-in-chinese-financing-leaves-railways-in-limbo>

## **The Nation**

### **Pak-China ties strengthened during Covid-19: KU VC**

KARACHI - The Confucius Institute of the University of Karachi organized a function to celebrate the ‘Happy Spring Festival’ to mark the Chinese New Year, Gwa-dar Pro reported on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor (VC) of the Karachi University Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi said without any doubt, China was one of the most trust-ed friends of Pakistan and it had once again proved its time tested friendship during the Covid-19 pandemic.



He said the whole nation has witnessed that the Chi-nese government has come forward to help the federal and the provincial governments of Pakistan and provided protecting gears, necessary equipment, and vaccines to tackle coronavirus pandemic, adding that was why people of Pakistan believe that China was their sincere and reliable friend.

During the last 70 years, China stood by Pakistan in every difficult time. China has become a great economic power, largely due to far-reaching national decisions in the economic sector, he added.

The China-Pak Economic Corridor project was a mile-stone for Pak-China friendship and improvement of the Pakistani economy. The Pak-China relations are an in-spiring beacon for the nations of the two countries.

Professor Dr Khalid Iraqi said the Chinese language has now become an international language and over time, the number of Chinese language learners is increasing.

Earlier, Chinese Director Confucius Institute University of Karachi Professor Zhang Xiaoping said that a four-year degree programme was being launched in collaboration with the University of Karachi and the Sichuan Normal University of China, and the Centre for Language Education and Cooperation (China).

He mentioned that the Chinese language and culture would be introduced at the campus this year.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-02-16/page-10/detail-5>

### **Express News**

#### **سی پیک کی تکمیل سے پورا خطہ معاشی و تجارتی سرگرمیوں کا مرکز بنے گا، گورنر بلوچستان**

گورنر بلوچستان امان اللہ خان یاسین زئی نے کہا ہے کہ چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری کی تکمیل سے نہ صرف دنیا بھر میں معاشی جمود کا خاتمہ ہو گا بلکہ یہ پورا خطہ معاشی و تجارتی سرگرمیوں کا مرکز بھی بنے گا۔

گورنر ہاؤس کوئٹہ میں چیئرمین آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری کے نائب صدر اختر کاڑکی کی قیادت میں وفد نے گورنر بلوچستان سے ملاقات کی جس میں خطے میں رونما ہونے والی معاشی تبدیلیوں، ہمسایہ ممالک کے ساتھ سرحدی تجارت کے نئے امکانات اور حکومت کی جانب سے فراہم کردہ سہولیات سے بھرپور استفادہ کرنے پر تبادلہ خیال کیا گیا۔

گورنر بلوچستان نے کہا ہے ہمیں سی پیک کے پیش نظر اپنی نئی نسل کو جدید فنی اور ٹیکنیکی مہارتیں سکھانے پر توجہ مرکوز رکھنی ہوگی، اس ضمن میں ضروری ہے کہ حکومت موجودہ اور مستقبل کی ضروریات کو مد نظر رکھ کر صوبے میں تمام فنی و ٹیکنیکی اداروں کی مکمل فعالیت کیلئے بھرپور اقدامات اٹھائیں اور جدید مہارتیں سکھانے کے نئے مراکز کے قیام کیلئے بھی جامع حکمت عملی وضع کریں۔

انہوں نے کہا کہ ملک و صوبے میں معاشی سرگرمیوں کو فروغ دینے، لوگوں کو روزگار کے وسیع مواقع فراہم کرنے اور قومی معاشی نظام کو استحکام بخشنے میں تاجروں اور صنعتکاروں کا کلیدی کردار ہے۔

وفا نے گورنر بلوچستان کو صوبہ کے تاجروں کو ایمپورٹ اینڈ ایکسپورٹ، بوسٹاں صنعتی زون کی جلد تکمیل، ایگریکلچر اکٹو ٹیکس، بینک قرضوں اور سرحدی تجارت کے حوالے سے درپیش مسائل و مشکلات سے آگاہ کیا۔

گورنر یاسین زئی نے اپنے ہر تعاون کا یقین دلاتے ہوئے کہا کہ صوبے بھر کے تاجروں کو درپیش مسائل و مشکلات کا ہمیں احساس ہے، جان لیوا کرونا وائرس کی وجہ سے کاروباری اور تجارتی مراکز کی بندش سے زندگی کے تمام شعبے بالخصوص تاجر برادری بہت زیادہ متاثر ہو چکی ہے تاہم حکومت تمام تجارتی و کاروباری سرگرمیوں کی بحالی اور معاشی استحکام کیلئے سنجیدہ اقدامات اٹھا رہی ہے۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2144137/1/>

**February 17, 2021**

**Daily Times**

**CPEC, debt trap or debt relief**

*Shakeel Ahmad Ramay*

Before, delving into, either CPEC is a debt trap or not, let's try to understand the debt trap concept and how it works. In lay man language or simplest way to explain is, a debt which borrower cannot pay without taking new loans. It initiates a vicious cycle of borrowing, which goes on. Subsequently, the nation become hostage to lender which leads to desired goal of policy trap by lender. It is common practices of many financial institutions. The argument can be proven by analyzing the data of global debt, which has gone beyond the paying capacity. Institute of International Finance revealed that world debt in 2018 was US\$ 234 trillion, which is 317 percent of global GDP. It is expected that the situation must have bene deteriorated due to COVID-19. However, the important thing to note here that the majority of loans are from IMF, World Bank, ADB, commercial banks of West and many other Western institutions. It is impacting the countries across the world and we can find examples from everywhere including developed (Greece), developing (Argentina) and least developed (African countries) countries.

The deep dive and analysis of historical data also reveals that debt trap mostly originates from the non-productive or consumptive loans. A debt, which does not enhance the production capacity or increase the size of economy, directly, is considered a non-productive debt.

Unfortunately, Pakistan falls in this category of countries which borrowed heavily for non-productive or consumptive use. Pakistan tries to control the fiscal deficit by borrowing. It also subsidize non-performing sectors of economy or subsidize services which do not add to economy directly etc. by borrowing. In addition to that Pakistan also falls in categories of countries which relies on consumption led growth, without having good base of production. By artificially maintaining currency exchange rate by Pakistan, the imports were subsidized, and trade gap was filled with borrowing.

The cumulative impact was that Pakistan became home to multifaceted problems on economic front in addition to debt repayment crisis. The investor lost the confidence and FDI went down sharply. Although, Pakistan needed the investment in infrastructure, energy and industry but

Pakistan was unable to convince the investors. It resulted in energy crisis (loss to economy, US\$ 4-5 billion dollars, annually), poverty (MPI, 40 percent, 2014), food insecurity (58.8 percent) and many others. Pakistan was unable to create employment opportunities for youth bulge. Pakistan had to launch Benazir Income Support Program to combat the disparate situation. Pakistan was looking for investment and no one was ready to help Pakistan. In this dire situation our time-tested friend came forward and launched CPEC.

It is all about the industrial development, modernization of agriculture and scientific and technological cooperation to facilitate Pakistan to enter in Fourth Industrial Revolution

Regrettably, CPEC became victim of propaganda at different names but the most consistent element of propaganda is to portray CPEC as debt trap. The campaign of debt trap against CPEC is part of global campaign against the rise of China, which has been launched by Western countries and assisted by developing countries like India. They are trying to make Chinese investment synonymous with the debt trap. An Indian also coined the terminology of debt diplomacy to undermine Chinese investment and relation with world. The interesting fact to note here that the opponents are opposing Chinese investment but themselves are launching different investment programs like BUILD by USA, AAGC, by Japan and India and AIFFP by Australia etc.

First, the campaign was launched in Africa. China was criticized for its investment and opponents of China tried their best to prove Chinese investment as a debt trap. The campaign was run without considering the needs of African countries. African countries were in need of huge investment in infrastructure, to build industrial base and modernize agriculture etc. China tried to fill this gap. The next target was investment in Sri Lanka. A wide-ranging campaign was run to malign Chinese investment and damage the image of China. The port of Hambantota became poster boy for running the propaganda drive.

In reality, the debt crisis of Sri Lanka was due to two prominent reasons, 1) borrowing from western institution, especially from private institutes and 2) sudden change in the interest rate of USA due to easing program, created problems for Sri Lanka and cost of borrowing increased. Sri Lanka was in dire need of financial resources. In these circumstances, Sri Lanka had to convince the Chinese firm to accept the lease of Hambantota against the amount of US\$ 1.1 billion. Sri Lanka used this money to repay the other loans. The most important thing to note here that, it was not debt to assets swap, rather it was done to manage the urgent needs of Sri Lanka on the request of Sri Lanka.

Now CPEC is hot target and we can find everyday a new story or allegation by Western outlets. The campaign is being run at multiple fronts and different countries are being engaged in this. In reality, CPEC program defy the theory of debt trap. All investment programs and loans under the CPEC are productive in nature. They are enhancing the production capacity or facilitating connectivity for domestic and international trade. For example, energy sector investment is helping Pakistan to revive the economy by providing electricity to industry. Gwadar port will turn Pakistan into transit trade hub, and it has started to generate economic activities and

Afghanistan is already using it. Road infrastructure has improved connectivity, which is generating economic activities through domestic and international trade.

The projects of CPEC have also created 83000 jobs for Pakistanis. It means 83000 families have benefited from the projects. Most of the employed people were in dire need of jobs to support their families to secure food security and fight poverty. Besides, many countries are also looking to join the CPEC and benefit from it. Second phase of CPEC will enhance production capacity and economic size of Pakistan. As, it is all about the industrial development, modernization of agriculture and scientific and technological cooperation to facilitate Pakistan to enter in Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The other element which negate the notion of debt trap is that the CPEC related investments constitute only 5.6 percent of Pakistan's total debt. The majority of the debt is from Paris Club (US\$ 10.924 billion), IMF (US\$ 7.68), bilateral donors (US\$ 24.352 billion), Multilateral donors (US\$ 39.392 billion), International Bonds (US\$ 5.3 billion) etc.

Hence, we can deduce two important results by analyzing the facts provided above. First, CPEC investment is helping Pakistan to revive economy, build production capacity and generate resources. The resources can be used to repay the debt from other sources. In this context, CPEC is a relief not debt trap. Second, the campaign has no rational or fact, it is only built on the self-assumed perceptions with the goal to sabotage the CPEC and Pakistan-China relationship. The hard data does not support the debt trap assumption. Thus, the people of Pakistan should not give any heed to the campaign and concentrate on successful implementation of CPEC.

The writer is Director, Asia Study Center SDPI

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/724625/cpec-debt-trap-or-debt-relief/>

## **Xinjiang: 23 lies & fact-checks (Part 11)**

*Yasir Habib Khan*

Nineteenth lie is that China systematically transferred 80,000 Uygurs out of Xinjiang and assigned them as “forced labor” to factories in other provinces. Fact check is that local governments at all levels have taken active measures to help those in need of secure employment. The measures include creating job opportunities nearby, facilitating work in other areas in Xinjiang, or transferring work forces to other provinces and cities paired up to assist Xinjiang. Such measures have helped residents rise above poverty through employment and lead fulfilling lives, while guaranteeing various ethnic groups' right to labor and employment.

Since 2018, 151,000 people in poverty-stricken families in southern Xinjiang have secured jobs away from their homes. Most of them worked in other parts of Xinjiang, while about 14,700 worked outside the region with the help of fellow villagers and relatives, or through human resources agencies.

Regarding 10th lie that Xinjiang forced a large number of Uygurs to pick cotton, contaminating the global supply chain, fact check is that earlier cotton picking mechanism was manual now it is done through machines. Rest of things are merely concocted story.

In reply to 11th lie that Xinjiang adopts an assimilation policy towards ethnic minorities in an attempt to systematically eliminate the Uygur culture, truth is that all ethnic groups in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region enjoy full freedom to preserve or reform their own customs and habits. The cultural heritage of all ethnic groups has been protected in Xinjiang.

Mosques in Xinjiang meet the regular religious demands of followers in terms of quantity. Governments at various levels in Xinjiang have consistently improved the public services of mosques.

Twelfth lie is that some places in Xinjiang destroyed graveyards of ethnic minority groups and Fact check is that with the economic and social development and the improvement of people's living standards in Xinjiang, governments at all levels have stepped up the planning and construction of public welfare cemeteries. Cemetery facilities and their environment are continuously improving. People of different ethnic groups in some places have relocated graveyards of their own free will.

13th lie is that the Chinese government sends children of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang to boarding schools and "forces" them to be separated from their parents. In contrast, fact check is that the Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China that also prevails in Xinjiang stipulates: "Where necessary, the people's government at the county level may set up boarding schools to ensure that school-age children and adolescents who are dwelling in scattered areas receive compulsory education."

As per 14 lie that Schools in Xinjiang replace ethnic languages with Chinese to "brainwash" the students. Xinjiang has banned ethnic minority students from using their own languages and closed schools of the Uygur language. Realty check is that while promoting education in the Chinese language, Xinjiang also offers courses in the spoken and written languages of ethnic minority groups in accordance with the national curriculum plan for primary and secondary schools.

Lie No. 15 is that Xinjiang suppresses ethnic minorities under the pretext of fighting terrorism. Truth is that Fact check in the face of a complicated counter-terrorism situation and the demands from people of all ethnic groups to stop terrorism, China's Xinjiang region has taken a series of active measures. Responding to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and other counter-terrorism resolutions, Xinjiang has upheld the principle of not linking terrorism with any particular region, ethnic group, or religion. Xinjiang has reported no violent terrorist cases for more than four consecutive years.

Lie No. 16 is that The "fanghuiju" campaign, in which civil servants are dispatched to grassroots communities to offer help to people of various ethnic groups, as well as the "ethnic unity campaign" and solidarity activities among cadres and people of different ethnic groups, are all

adopted by Xinjiang with the aim of intervening in and monitoring Uygur families. Fact check is that Xinjiang has been carrying out the “ethnic unity campaign” and solidarity activities among cadres and people of different ethnic groups since 2016. More than 1.1 million cadres and workers of different ethnic groups have paired up with 1.6 million people of different ethnic groups as “relatives” and made friends with each other.

Another seventeen lie is that Xinjiang monitors Uygur Muslims through ubiquitous cameras, mobile phone apps, the internet and other high-tech means. Reality is that in accordance with the law, Xinjiang has installed cameras in urban and rural public areas, major roads, transportation hubs and other public places in order to improve social governance and effectively prevent and crack down on crime. According to the South China Morning Post, a new study found that Britain, Germany, France and the Netherlands are among the top 10 countries in terms of the number of surveillance cameras in the world.

Besides lie No. 18 is that Chinese embassies and consulates have refused to renew the passports of overseas Uygur people, forcing them to return home to face extrajudicial detention or imprisonment. Fact check is that Chinese citizens’ personal freedom and rights of exit and entry are protected by law. As long as they are Chinese nationals and admit themselves that they are Chinese citizens, and do not violate Chinese laws and regulations, they can apply to the Chinese embassy or consulate where they live for the renewal or replacement of passports.

Lie No. 19 is that the Chinese government bans foreign journalists from going to Xinjiang for reporting. Fact check is that Xinjiang is an open place. Foreign journalists are allowed to report in Xinjiang on condition that they abide by Chinese laws and go through relevant procedures, according to the Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on News Coverage by Permanent Offices of Foreign Media Organizations and Foreign Journalists. Lie No. 20 is that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will be restricted from visiting Xinjiang. Fact check is that China welcomes the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet to visit China and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and has always maintained close communication with the United Nations.

In reply to 21th lie that Xinjiang suppresses Islam and freedom of religious belief. And reality is that Xinjiang has translated and published religious classics and books, such as the Koran and Selections from Al-Sahih Muhammad Ibn-Isma'il al-Bukhari, in Mandarin Chinese, the Uygur, Kazak and Kirgiz languages, providing convenience for religious believers of all ethnic groups to acquire religious knowledge.

Lie No. 22 is that Xinjiang demolishes many mosques. Fact check is that Mosques in Xinjiang meet the regular religious demands of followers in terms of quantity. Governments at various levels in Xinjiang have consistently improved the public services of mosques.

Lie No. 23 is that Xinjiang “persecutes” religious personnel. Fact check is that the cultivation and training of clerical personnel have been strengthened in Xinjiang. The region has ten religious colleges and schools, including the Xinjiang Islamic Institute, its eight branches in

places like Kashgar, Hotan and Ili, and the Xinjiang Islamic School. Lie No. 24 is that Xinjiang bans fasting of Muslims. Fact check is that Muslims of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang, in accordance with their teachings, canons, and traditional customs, practice regular religious activities such as fasting and Islamic festivals in mosques and their own homes.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/724623/xinjiang-23-lies-fact-checks-part-11/>

### **TME organises Chinese New Year celebration**

The Millennium Education (TME) and the Millennium Confucius Classroom (MCC) marked the virtual Chinese New Year celebration “The Year of Ox” and 70th anniversary of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations together with the Ambassador of China Nong Rong and Cultural Counsellor Zhang Heqing at The Millennium Education, One World Campus E-11/4, Islamabad.

Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq, Founder & CEO Millennium Confucius Classroom, Sabina Zakir Director Schools, Community & Outreach and Mona Kanwal, Manager Chinese Language Department, formally greeted the ambassador and the cultural counsellor. The ceremony started with the national anthems of both countries followed by a speech by Millennial Sukhen Fatima who expressed the steadfast relationship of Pakistan and China through a letter. Millennials from One World Campus dressed up in alluring Chinese cultural attire embellished with gold ornaments danced on the Chinese song. Later the Millennials presented Chinese folk song performance on jasmine flower which mesmerized the audience with their melodious voice.

Speaking on the occasion, Nong Rong highlighted the importance of Chinese New Year commonly known as Spring Festival. The year of ‘Ox’ which ranks second amongst the 12 animals of Chinese Lunar calendar, represents diligence, dedication, strength, and courage and is a symbol of vitality and prosperity. He appreciated the positive contribution of Millennium Confucius classroom and The Millennium Education over the past three decades to strengthen cultural exchanges for mutual learning amongst different civilizations. He extended his warm wishes on Chinese New year “The Year of Ox” and extended his support to Millennium Confucius Classroom to promote in depth cultural exchanges between China and Pakistan so that the friendship between the two countries can go further from generation to generation.

Chaudhary Faisal Mushtaq said that Chinese Cultural exchange programs and people-to-people exchange is the key to strengthening the deep-rooted friendship between Pakistan and China. “Over the past 70 years, our two countries have developed all weather friendship and conducted multi-dimensional cooperation. Pak-China friendship has remained as strong as a rock standing firm despite the passage of time. To deliver World class education where the rest of the World is increasingly Multilingual a well-rounded education includes high quality language learning. Understanding and proficiency of any foreign language needs time and Chinese is no exception,” he said.

“To indisputably understand the significance of Chinese Language Millennium Confucius Classroom offers Chinese language classes across the Roots Millennium Schools, in the private sector, with the aim of allowing the students to get linguistically literate and culturally

competent,” he said. “Millennium Chinese Language Department has 18 full time teachers and nearly 8500 students learning Chinese Language. This has promoted cultural, social, business and educational opportunities among China and Pakistan for the benefit of our future generations,” he added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/724661/tme-organises-chinese-new-year-celebration/>

### **The Nation**

#### **‘Punjab to set up model economic zone under CPEC’**

Lahore - A model economic zone will be set up under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to attract investment from the overseas Pakistanis and the Chinese investors who are keen to invest in Pakistan.

This was decided in the second meeting of the Cabinet Committee on CPEC Projects held at the Planning and Development Board here Tuesday.

Punjab Finance Minister Makhdoom Hashim Jawan Bakht presided over the meeting which was also attended by Chairman CPEC Authority Asim Saleem Bajwa.

Bajwa informed the meeting that Chinese companies were ready to invest in economic zones and the agriculture sector through government partnership under CPEC in the second phase. “In order to increase the interest of Chinese investors, it is necessary for us to introduce business models according to the needs of investors in our industrial zones”, he suggested.

He further stated that the livestock and irrigation projects would also be included in the second phase of the CPEC. He told the meeting that the second phase of CPEC was a bigger challenge than the first phase as investment in it was the most important.

Addressing the meeting, the Finance Minister instructed imparting the technical training for local labour in accordance with the needs and demand of the Chinese partner companies for employment generation.

Further, he instructed that services of TEVTA institutions should be used for training of the local human resource instead of relying on Chinese investment for technical training. He asked that all the TEVTA institutions affiliated with NEVTAC should be used.

This will also increase the TEVTA capacity, he added.

The Minister asked for reviewing the rules and regulations in accordance with the recommendations of the CPEC Joint Working Groups for starting business in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

The federal government will address issues related to gas and electricity supply in economic zones on a priority basis.



“There is an increase in investment and consumption of local labour in the province. In order to increase investment, it is necessary to ensure the provision of facilities as per the needs of the partners”, he averred.

The Provincial Minister directed the Secretary Industry to compile a complete record of all TEVTA institutions with a detailed briefing on irrigation and agriculture projects at the next meeting to identify land for the special model economic zone under the CPEC.

Apart from agricultural lands, Auqaf Department lands should also be identified for creation of the special model economic zones. The Provincial Minister thanked the chairman for coming to Lahore to attend the meeting of CPEC Authority and termed it beneficial for CPEC projects.

Other participants in the meeting included Provincial Minister for Agriculture Hussain Jahanian Gardezi, Chief Secretary Punjab, Chairman Planning and Development Board and Secretaries of all concerned departments.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-02-17/page-10/detail-4>

### **Nawaiwaqt News**

#### **چین کا اڈاکاڑہ کے سکول کو واٹر فلٹر کا عطیہ قائم مقام تو نصل جنرل نے افتتاح کیا**

لاہور + اڈاکاڑہ (نوائے وقت رپورٹ + نامہ نگار) لاہور میں چین کے قائم مقام تو نصل جنرل مسٹر پینگ زنگو نے گزشتہ روز اڈاکاڑہ کا دورہ کیا اور چین کی طرف سے اڈاکاڑہ کے مسرت پبلک سکول اور کالج کو عطیہ کئے گئے واٹر فلٹر تنصیبات کی افتتاحی تقریب میں شرکت کی۔ یہ واٹر فلٹر رکن پنجاب اسمبلی چودھری منیب الحق کی درخواست پر دیا گیا ہے۔ مسٹر پینگ نے چینی تو نصل خانے کی جانب سے سکول کو کتابوں اور وبا کی روک تھام سے متعلق کھپ کا عطیہ بھی پیش کیا۔ جبکہ چودھری منیب الحق اور مسٹر پینگ نے پاکستان چین دوستی سے متعلق پودا بھی لگا یا۔ نامہ نگار کے مطابق 20 رکنی چینی وفد کے اڈاکاڑہ آنے پر سیاسی، سماجی شخصیات اور بچوں نے ان کا بھرپور استقبال کیا۔ بچوں نے پاکستان اور چین کے پرچم تھامے ہوئے پاک چین دوستی زندہ باد کے نعرے لگائے۔ سابق صوبائی وزیر رانا اکرام ربانی نے چینی تو نصل جنرل کو پاک چین دوستی کے حوالے سے مازے ننگ کی تصویر پیش کی۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2021-02-17/page-6/detail-41>

### **February 18, 2021**

#### **Pakistan Observer**

#### **Chairman Railways visits China Creek bridge, Heritage Park**

Chairman Pakistan Railways Habib ur Rehman Gillani has called for the stern implementation of directives passed by the Supreme Court of Pakistan on 29 December last year pertaining to complete elimination of encroachments and retrieving every inch of the railways' encroached land anywhere in letter and spirit.

He directed that during a meeting conducted under his chair at the DS Office Karachi that was attended by CEO PR Nisar Ahmad Memon, AGM Traffic Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, AGM

Infrastructure Asif Mateen Zaidi, DS Karachi Muhammad Hanif Gul, PD KCR Ameer Mohammad Daudpota and divisional officers.

The Chairman was briefed, at length, about the three-month income, expenditure and occupancy statistics of KCR since revival of its operations from 19 November last year. Project Director KCR Mr. Ameer Mohammad Daudpota apprised the Chairman of survey and other exercises carried out on the revival of remaining 16 kilometers of KCR loop line from Orangi to Drigh Road.

Followed by his meeting with divisional officers, the Chairman held a meeting with the consortium of consultants for KCR revival at the DS office.

Chairman Railways, along with the officers, visited the recently rehabilitated China Creek Bridge. He also did the footplate inspection of Old Kaemari track that was in continual use during the rehabilitation period of China Creek Bridge.

The Chairman also inspected the 11 acre under-construction site for Railways Heritage and Theme Park near Kala Pul. The relevant engineers briefed him regarding the ongoing construction work. He directed for concluding the project at the earliest.

<https://pakobserver.net/chairman-railways-visits-china-creek-bridge-heritage-park/>

### **China's help could boost Pak GDP in next three years: PBF**

Pakistan with the assistance of China should grow non-traditional products, under the agricultural and industrial cooperation information platform (AICP) between two countries, as China's progress in the agriculture sector was worth emulating for developing countries in a official statement on Wednesday.

Pakistan Businesses Forum, Vice President Ahmad Jawad said despite several attempts to invest in the drip irrigation system, we still lagged behind. "Now is the time to analyze why has the system become a success throughout the world and not in Pakistan.

Similarly there are six main areas of concern that require critical attention through AICP. In each area, seeking foreign funds and foreign expertise is a must.

First, our food crop yields are low and food processing industries lag behind in value addition. Second, livestock productivity is low and meat processing industry is at a nascent stage.

Third, fields, farms and orchards producing vegetables, pulses, oilseeds and fruits are yet to be organized and maintained in line with the national requirement. Fourth, fisheries and poultry sectors suffer from lack of modern farming and processing practices.

Fifth, there is a need to ensure food security for a large and growing population. And sixth, country may increase the export of agricultural commodities to earn foreign exchange after taking care of growing local demand.

In this regard PBF official recommended the finance and revenue division to provide fiscal incentives to the farmers and amendments in the banking companies' ordinance to facilitate payments of loans to the farmers by the banks including ZTBL.

Further, Jawad has also urged the Pakistan Customs and Commerce Ministry officials to arrange special arrangements for the exports of kinnows to China in the celebrations of Chinese New Year.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinas-help-could-boost-pak-gdp-in-next-three-years-pbf/>

### **The Express Tribune**

#### **Army chief lauds unwavering Chinese support for defense, security**

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa has appreciated unwavering Chinese support at multiple international fora and capacity enhancement in defense and security domains, a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday.

The military's media wing said that the COAS expressed these sentiments during a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

Matters of mutual interest including regional security issues were discussed during the meeting, the statement added.

The COAS thanked the dignitary for China's assistance in the provision of Covid-19 vaccine to Pakistan and appreciated Chinese support at multiple international fora and capacity enhancement in defense and security domains.

General Qamar also said that successful completion of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will bring more benefits and prosperity to the people of both countries.

The visiting dignitary acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan's contributions for regional peace and stability.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2284823/army-chief-lauds-unwavering-chinese-support-for-defence-security>

### **The Nation**

#### **Work on Gwadar Fencing Project temporarily halted, CPEC body informed**

ISLAMABAD-Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was Wednesday informed that work on Gwadar Fencing Project had been temporarily halted owing to reservations expressed by various segments of the society. The 32nd (in-camera) meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was held under the chairmanship of Sher Ali Arbab.

The Committee was briefed by Secretary, M/o Defense, Secretary, Aviation Division, Secretary, Board of Investment, Secretary, M/o Petroleum Division, Secretary, M/o Communications,

Additional Secretary, M/o Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Additional Secretary, M/o Interior, Joint Secretary, Power Division, Chairman, National Highways Authority, Secretary, M/o Industries, Government of KP, Secretary, Industries, Government of Balochistan, CEO KPEZDMC, CEO, FIEDMC, CEO, PESCO, Managing Director, SSGC, Managing Director, SNGPL regarding Sust Border management framework, progress on New Gwadar International Airport, the updated progress on infrastructure development of 4 prioritized Special Economic Zones under CPEC (Rashakai KP, Allama Iqbal Industrial City Faisalabad, Dhabeji, Sindh and Bostan, Quetta) and Gwadar Fencing Project.

During briefing on Sust Border management framework, the Committee remarked that the world is increasingly moving towards complex economic interdependence. In 21st century trade, commerce, investment and connectivity are Pakistan's strategic interests. The Committee recommended to the quarters concerned to decide about the lead ministry which will regulate border's management framework, come up with viable proposals to open Sust border for whole year and shrug off all the odds and challenges faced at the border so that seamless regulation of trade and economic activities could take place there.

The Committee expressed dissatisfaction over snail's pace progress on New Gwadar International Airport. Pakistan cannot have prosperous Gwadar without having fully functional international airport there. It is, therefore, vital to take up the issue of its delay at the highest forum and expedite the process of its completion. Secretary, Ministry of Defense briefed the Committee on Gwadar Fencing Project. He apprised that the project is primarily aimed at making Gwadar city a "weapon free zone" and to create enabling environment for trade and business. The project started on 4th December, 2020. However, owing to reservations expressed by various segments of the society, it was temporarily halted on 29th December, 2020. Government of Balochistan has also constituted a Committee comprising local notables, elected representatives and civil administration for suggesting a way forward for the project. As soon as the consensus is evolved, the work on the project would be resumed at high speed. The Committee recommended that MNA/Senator from Gwadar may also be included in that Committee and apprehensions and reservations of local people pertaining to Gwadar Fencing Project should also be allayed to stave off the alienation of locals from the development of Gwadar under CPEC framework. A pragmatic and holistic approach should be pursued with regard to the security measures being taken at Gwadar to beget a conducive environment for facilitating trade and investment there.

The Committee sought the compliance on its previous recommendation regarding implementation of Axle Load Policy and expressed the concern that inability to implement Axle Load Policy in true letter and spirit is causing massive financial loss in billions of rupees in terms of road maintenance and repairing. The overloaded vehicles are causing exponential damages to road infrastructure in Pakistan. The Committee observed that there was an exigency of establishing the strongest coordination among all the quarters concerned and directed Ministry of Communications to ensure the implementation of axle load limit after consulting with all major

stakeholders so that the trade could be regulated smoothly and damages to road infrastructure could be prevented.

The Committee expressed satisfaction over the pace of work on infrastructure development of Rashakai KP and Allama Iqbal Industrial City Faisalabad and noted that securing investment of billions of rupees in these SEZs is a landmark development. The Committee remarked that CPEC has potential prospects of ushering new era of economic development and lasting prosperity for the people of Pakistan and its success hinges upon the effective and timely operation of all SEZs. Provision of utilities to all SEZs has been top priority of the Committee therefore no compromise will be tolerated on the part of undue delay in provision of utilities to the SEZs. The Committee directed to take all the measures to catch maximum investment in SEZs and further expedite the process of provision of all ancillary facilities to SEZs. The Committee deferred briefing on Dhabeji SEZ due to absence of CEO, Dhabeji, Sindh and after observing slow progress on Bostan SEZ decided to convene special meeting on updated progress on infrastructure development of Bostan special economic zone by coming Wednesday.

<https://nation.com.pk/18-Feb-2021/work-on-gwadar-fencing-project-temporarily-halted-cpec-body-informed>

**February 19, 2021**

**Business Recorder**

### **COAS thanks Chinese envoy for vaccine assistance**

*NUZHAT NAZAR*

Islamabad: Chief of Army staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Thursday said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)'s successful completion "will bring more benefits and prosperity to the people of both the countries."

According to military media wing, the army chief expressed his gratitude to China as Nong Rong, the ambassador of Pakistan's "iron brother", visited the General Headquarters (GHQ).

In its statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) noted that the two leaders — Gen Bajwa and the Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan discussed "matters of mutual interest, including regional security issues" during their meeting.

The army chief also "appreciated the unwavering Chinese support at multiple international fora and capacity enhancement in defence and security domains", the ISPR mentioned. He also said the CPEC's successful completion "will bring more benefits and prosperity to the people of both countries", according to the statement.

Nong "acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan's contributions towards regional peace and stability", the ISPR added.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2021/02/19/3-page/870333-news.html>

## Daily Times

### **China to import dairy products from Pakistan**

China will import dairy products from Pakistan, says a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Thursday.

The quarantine and SPS agreement process is about to complete, and there is a vital requirement for dairy products in western China provinces, according to Badar uz Zaman, Commercial Counselor at Pakistan Embassy in Beijing.

Talking to CEN, Badar said that in Pakistan, livestock plays an important role and Pakistan is the fourth largest milk producer globally. Within the livestock sector, milk is the largest single commodity.

“In Pakistan, the production of fresh milk is about 50 million tones. We have a strong livestock history that many multinational and the local companies are processing milk. And the additional cream that is extracting is a great exportable product”, he mentioned.

He further said that Chinese Huiyu group has taken up the process and signed an MOU with Nestle Pakistan.

They are about to complete the process of getting permission to import into China. They have a solid distribution base in China.

“Chinese customers are very eager to use that cream. The samples distributed among the Chinese buyers, and they liked it very much, and there is great potential as Pakistani dairy products prices are low.

The quality is exceptionally high as per the taste of the Chinese consumers”, Badar told CEN.

He added that the collaboration in value-added and food-related products is increasing. We will see more and more products from Pakistan, like biscuits and confectionery items.

Pakistan is also a good producer of sugar. Nowadays, there is a strong trend of increasing the value and making the high value-added products and Chinese appetite for the Pakistani food items are on the rise.

“So in the backdrop of this significant demand from the Chinese consumer, various companies’ collaboration increases what we have seen that there are national pavilions in Yiwu, Qingdao and Shanghai.

The Chinese enterprises are permanently placing the Pakistani food products in those pavilions”, Badar stated. The Commercial Counselor expressed that we can see the Pakistani food packaged products on JD.com and Taobao.

We discussed with the entrepreneurs who have posted Pakistani products on these Chinese platforms they are also receiving big orders.

Duan Xiaoyu, CEO of Huiyu group, told CEN that they would promote their Pakistani products in China's major cities after getting the license.

At present, our estimated sales volume is 100 containers of creams per year because Nestle Group has other products that can enter in Chinese market So the opportunity for future cooperation will be great.

“In starting, we would import ten containers every month because we think the Pakistani Nestle Cream quality is very good, and the price is also low.

We are trying to get a permit to enter China. The Pakistani Embassy in China also provides a lot of support”, she added she said that the opening of Pakistan's dairy code license is good for the trade between the two countries, and after that, all Pakistani dairy products can enter the Chinese market. It is estimated that China will overtake USA as the largest dairy market globally by 2022.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/725558/china-to-import-dairy-products-from-pakistan/>

### Express News

#### پاکستان چین سے ڈالر اور چینی کرنسی میں قرض لینے پر آمادہ

پاکستان نے چین سے ایم ایل ون منصوبے کے لیے 6 ارب ڈالر کا قرضہ چینی اور امریکی کرنسیوں میں لینے پر رضامندی ظاہر کر دی ہے۔

اس کے ساتھ ساتھ پاکستان قرض پر شرح سود کے حوالے سے بھی اپنے ابتدائی موقف سے پیچھے ہٹنے پر تیار ہو گیا ہے۔ واضح رہے کہ ایم ایل ون منصوبہ چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری (سی پیک) کا سب سے بڑا حصہ ہے جس کے تحت کراچی تا پشاور ریلوے ٹریک دورویہ اور اپ گریڈ کیا جائے گا۔ اعلیٰ حکام کے مطابق پاکستان نے چین سے 6 ارب ڈالر کے مساوی قرض امریکی کرنسی ہی میں دینے کی درخواست کی تھی تاہم چین اپنی کرنسی رین من بی (آر ایم بی) میں قرض دینے کا خواہش مند تھا۔ تاہم اب فریقین چینی اور امریکی دونوں کرنسیوں میں قرض کے لین دین پر راضی ہو گئے ہیں۔

تاہم دونوں جانب سے یہ ظاہر نہیں کیا گیا کہ قرض کا کتنا حصہ ڈالر اور آر ایم پر منحصر ہو گا۔ ایم ایل ون منصوبے کے لیے قرض کے حصول کی خاطر ایک سال سے زائد عرصے سے مذاکرات ہو رہے ہیں تاہم ابھی تک مذاکرات کا حتمی نتیجہ برآمد نہیں ہو سکا ہے۔ وفاقی وزیر منصوبہ بندی اور چیئر مین سی پیک کمیٹی اسد عمر نے ایکسپریس ٹریبیون سے گفتگو کرتے ہوئے کہا کہ دفتر خارجہ کو ایم ایل ون کی فنانشنگ کی ترجیحات سے آگاہ کر دیا گیا ہے اور یہ معاملہ چینی حکام کے سامنے اٹھانے کی درخواست کی گئی ہے۔ اسد عمر نے کہا کہ سی پیک جو اینٹ کو آپریشن کمیٹی کے اگلے اجلاس میں ایم ایل ون پروجیکٹ حکومت کی پہلی ترجیح ہے۔ تاہم ان کا کہنا تھا کہ اجلاس کے انعقاد کی تاریخ کا تعین ابھی نہیں کیا گیا ہے۔

واضح رہے کہ ایٹک نے اگست 2020ء میں اسٹریٹجک اہمیت کے حامل ایم ایل ون منصوبے کی منظوری دی تھی جس کی کل لاگت 6.8 ارب ڈالر ہے۔ پاکستان نے چین سے درخواست کی تھی کہ وہ اس منصوبے کے لیے پیکیج و ن کے تحت 2.44 ارب ڈالر فراہم کرے۔ پاکستان نے چین سے 6 ارب ڈالر کا قرضہ 1 فیصد شرح سود پر لینے کی تجویز دی تھی جسے چین نے منظور نہیں کیا تھا۔ ذرائع کا کہنا ہے کہ پاکستان نے چین کو آگاہ کر دیا ہے کہ وہ سابقہ سی پیک منصوبوں کے مقابلے میں فنانشنگ کی زیادہ فائدہ مند شرائط قبول کرنے کے لیے تیار ہے۔

حکومت نے چین کی منصوبے کل لاگت کا 85 فیصد کے مساوی قرض لینے کی شرط بھی قبول کر لی ہے۔ تاہم دونوں ممالک کے درمیان قرض کی واپسی کی مدت پر اتفاق رائے نہیں ہو سکا۔ چین نے 15 سے 20 سال میں قرض کی واپسی چاہتا ہے، جس میں مزید 5 سال کا اضافہ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ پاکستان قرض کی واپسی کی مدت 25 سال کروانا چاہتا ہے جس میں 10 سال کی مزید رعایتی مدت شامل ہو۔ سیکریٹری ریلوے حبیب الرحمان گیلانی نے ایکسپریس ٹریبیون سے گفتگو کرتے ہوئے کہا کہ چین اس منصوبے کو فنانس کرنے کے لیے باضابطہ طور پر تیار ہو گیا ہے۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2145206/1/>

## Jang News

### چینی کمپنیاں معاہدے کے مطابق کچرا نہیں اٹھارہیں، زیر چنہ

کراچی (اسٹاف رپورٹر) بیجنگ ڈائریکٹر سندھ سالڈ ویسٹ مینجمنٹ بورڈ زیر چنہ نے چینی کمپنیز کو ہدایت دیتے ہوئے کہا ہے کہ چائینیز کمپنی معاہدے کے مطابق کراچی میں کچرا نہیں اٹھا رہی، عوام کی شکایات موصول ہو رہی ہیں چائینیز کمپنی کچرا اٹھانے کا طریقہ کار تبدیل کرے اور جہاں کچرا پیدا ہو رہا ہے اسے وہاں سے اٹھائے یہی بین الاقوامی طریقہ کار ہے جس کے تحت تمام کچرا کنڈیوں کا خاتمہ ہو گا اور کچرا کھلی جگہ یا سڑکوں پر آنے کی نوبت نہیں آئے گی۔

<https://jang.com.pk/news/887617>

## February 20, 2021

### Daily Times

#### **Pak-China ties to continue growing: Moeed**

Special Assistant to the PM on National Security Dr. Moeed Yusuf has said that China and Pakistan enjoy special relations and these ties will continue to grow.

He said this while talking to Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong who called on him on Friday.

Dr Moeed Yusuf said, “Pakistan will continue to build bilateral cooperation in various areas under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.”

Talking about cooperation in different areas, Dr Moeed Yusuf said that collaboration between the think tanks in the two countries should be improved to promote dialogue among them.

On which, the Chinese ambassador said that the Pakistan-China relations should not be limited to government level but should be expanded to interaction among the citizens of the two countries. Think-tank can play a role in commemorating the 70 years of Pak-China friendship this year, he said.

Chinese Ambassador H.E. Nong Rong hoped to take Pakistan-China relations to new heights by improving collaboration, cooperation and partnership in various fields.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/725847/pak-china-ties-to-continue-growing-moeed/>



## Dawn News

### **CM wants motorway canal project included in CPEC**

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mahmood Khan has said the proposed projects of Peshawar-DI Khan Motorway, Chashma Right Bank Canal (CRBC) and Tank Zam Dam are of vital importance for agricultural and industrial development in the province, so they should be included in the CPEC portfolio.

“The inclusion of these projects in the CPEC framework is the top most priority of the provincial government,” the chief minister told a meeting regarding CPEC projects here on Friday. Besides CPEC Authority chairman retired Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa, the meeting was also attended by additional chief secretary Shakeel Qadir, administrative secretaries and other high-ups of the relevant provincial departments.

The participants reviewed progress on the projects under way in the province under CPEC framework and discussed proposals to include new mega projects in the CPEC portfolio, according to a statement issued here.

The chief minister said Peshawar-DI Khan Motorway project would not only boost trade activities at local level but would also play an important role to promote international trade with Afghanistan and Central Asian countries.

He said the CRBC on completion would prove to be a milestone stone to make the province self-sufficient in agricultural products. The meeting was briefed about the progress on the establishment of Rashakai Economic Zone and it was informed that work is in progress on basic infrastructure including gas and electricity supply and construction of access roads adding that six kilometers long pipelines had been laid to provide gas to the Economic zone whereas work on the construction of access road is near to completion.

Reviews progress on corridor-related work

The meeting was further informed that so far 1800 application had been received from local and foreign investors for setting up industries in the economic zone. CPEC Authority chairman retired Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa termed the progress on Rashakai Economic Zone satisfactory and stressed the need to further expedite it.

Matters related to the inclusion of the proposed Daraban Special Economic Zone in CPEC portfolio also came under discussion in the meeting and the meeting was informed that feasibility of the project would be completed in next three weeks time period.

The chief minister directed the authorities concerned to prepare the business plan of the project in the minimum possible time and share with CPEC authority for further process.

The participants agreed to establish a model agri farm in the province under CPEC project with the authorities told to identify suitable area for the purpose.

The chief minister also proposed a project for setting up pharmaceutical industry in Tirah of district Khyber under CPEC project and directed the relevant quarters to prepare a proposal for it.

The meeting also discussed the possibilities of inclusion of various other projects of tourism, communications and health sector in CPEC project.

Mr. Mahmood highlighted the need to include the proposed projects of four big regional level hospitals in the CPEC framework.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1608301>

**February 21, 2021**

**Daily Times**

### **CPEC projects bring more than electricity to Pakistan**

CPEC projects not only bring electricity to us, but also train professionals, and contribute to the well-being of local people for Pakistan, said Muhammad Muneeb, a senior official of Sahiwal Coal-fired Power Station, who awarded the Outstanding Pakistani Employee of CPEC Project by the Chinese Embassy, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Saturday.

The Sahiwal project, initiated in 2015, plays a crucial role in domestic electricity supply. Muneeb introduced to Gwadar Pro that Sahiwal lies in the industrial hub region between Lahore, Multan and Faisalabad. Its location was chosen as an electric load center. “As the CPEC power projects entered the system, the country’s load shedding reduced from an average of 18 hours to almost negligible. The Sahiwal project is directly influencing the lives of local communities through continuous supplying power,” he said.

In addition to electricity, CPEC projects also bring more invisible value to Pakistan. Muneeb said, “More importantly, this project gave job opportunities to locals. Most of the engineers, managers and workers are from nearby areas. This project is changing people’s life standard.” “This type of project was totally new and with advanced super-critical technology. It was a golden chance for me to work in a multinational company which could be predicted to be a great deal of learning,” he recalls, “I went to China for technical training for 9 months. During this trip, we accepted on-site training, which is the best way to learn about power plant physics and gain professional knowledge. Our Chinese masters first gave us theoretical knowledge and then we were taken to the site on a daily basis and we were prepared for work well before completion of the project.”

Muneeb believed that the experience of working in Sahiwal promoted his career, so that he could get more opportunities to have a better life and a rosier future. “I learned coal power plant knowledge from here and learned a lot from advanced thinking and management experiences of China. Talking about future plans, along with my professional career, I am already doing M.Sc. in Thermal Power Engineering.”

Meanwhile, Muneeb and his colleagues in Sahiwal are working on making coal power clean by using advanced technology. “Coal power can be cleaner, and a huge part of produced energy can be saved. We will find out ways to improve thermal coal power plant efficiency, so as to make it more environments friendly.”

In the exclusive interview, Muneeb appealed, “As CPEC has entered its second phase, I encourage people of different sectors to take part in its projects and request Pakistani authorities to keep in view the importance of CPEC, give further support to increase its speed to harvest its fruit.”

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/726415/cpec-projects-bring-more-than-electricity-to-pakistan/>

### **Dawn News**

#### **Chinese firm plans \$150m industrial park in Lahore to lift exports**

LAHORE: A Chinese company is investing \$150 million in an industrial park on Lahore’s border with Kasur, which will house state-of-the-art fabric units, dyeing facilities and garment manufacturing units for exporting sportswear from Pakistan to the Americas, Europe, Asia-Pacific and other regions of the world.

The project by the Shanghai-based Challenge is probably the first foreign direct investment (FDI) in an export industry in Pakistan. The firm is already operating as Challenge Apparel since 2017 with its garment manufacturing unit on Multan Road near Lahore fetching nearly \$44m in export revenue during the last fiscal year, according to its managing director Chen Yan, who is known in the government and business circles as Karen.

She expects exports from her existing facility to grow to \$54m this fiscal year. Once the Challenge Fashion Industrial Park becomes functional from July next year, its sportswear exports from Pakistan are projected to grow to \$120m in the first year and to \$400m in the next few.

The largest Pakistani textile exporting company’s exports stood at less than \$300m last year.

“Our total production is meant for export,” Chen told DAWN in an interview. “We’re bringing modern, most-efficient and environment-friendly technology to Pakistan from across the world besides introducing new ways of management at our new flagship industrial park. Our plan is to make Pakistan the hub for our polyester-based sportswear exports. Our Chinese operations in Shanghai and Hubei have customers like Adidas and Reebok who’re willing to come to Pakistan if we’ve capacity here. We’ll bring Pakistan new business. We’re a different breed and our product line is new for Pakistan.”

Currently, the company employs around 3,000 workers, including 28 Chinese nationals. Once the industrial park becomes fully functional, the company would have created nearly 10,000-11,000 new jobs.

Challenge’s exports from China stand at \$150m. Its garments manufactured in China are sold at an average price of \$20. Compared to that, its Lahore operation fetches an average unit price of

\$8-9, which is double the average unit price of around \$4 fetched by Pakistani garment companies.

“This difference in unit price isn’t about value-addition; this is all about the quality of the fabric. Fabric is the key to higher unit prices. You can charge customer whatever you want if you can give them high-end product,” Chen said. The Pakistani cotton-based garments attract lower unit prices because of poor quality of short-staple local cotton, she said. “Even a cotton product can sell for \$100-200 if made from finer cloth produced from long staple fibre.”

Challenge entered the Pakistan market in 2014 when it invested \$47m in a joint venture with Masood Textiles, a major exporter from Faisalabad. But the venture couldn’t last long as the company bled money profusely and the Chinese investor decided to relocate to Lahore as an independent company.

Chen said Weiguo Huang, chairman of the company, had evaluated Vietnam, Bangladesh, India and Myanmar for moving garment operations out of China. “Vietnam is too crowded already and moved into automobiles and electronics. There is no space for investment in Vietnam. Myanmar doesn’t have infrastructure. India is terrible. In Bangladesh you don’t have right conditions for setting up fabric units. So Pakistan is the ideal location for such garment manufacturing because of abundance of cheaper labor. The investment and tax policies for SEZs and new projects are also good. We’ve confidence to be at here.”

#### Red tape key hurdle to relocation

Answering a question why no other Chinese companies are relocating to Pakistan, she says Chinese textile industry is trying to relocate out of the country because of shortage of labor and rising wages and many firms want to come to Pakistan. But they don’t find a place to set up shop here. When you buy land you don’t get electricity or gas and other utilities.

“Chinese want to shift their business to a place where they can set up their operations in 3-6 months. You know when you go overseas to invest even in Africa they have industrial parks ready. You just go there and enjoy the ‘plug-and-play’ facility. No firm wants to waste two years in acquiring land and another couple of years in securing utilities to start operations. By the time you get utilities the opportunity is gone and you are already out of business. This is the biggest problem in Pakistan.”

Chen also spoke in detail about the bureaucratic difficulties her company has faced in acquiring land for the industrial park. “The bureaucracy uses different tactics to discourage foreign investors to extort money from them. The bureaucrats are working at cross-purposes with the government. There is no use of a good policy unless it is executed in letter and spirit.”

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1608516#:~:text=LAHORE%3A%20A%20Chinese%20company%20is,other%20regions%20of%20the%20world>

## Nawaiwaqt News

سی پیک منصوبہ پاک چین کی لازوال دوستی کا منہ بولتا ثبوت ہے فوکل پرسن وزارت اور سیز چائنا

لاہور (نیوز پورٹ) فوکل پرسن وزارت اور سیز چائنا شوکت علی صافی نے کہا کہ سی پیک منصوبہ پاک چین کی لازوال دوستی کا منہ بولتا ثبوت ہے، اور سیز پاکستانی ملک کا قیمتی اثاثہ ہیں، ملک درست سمت پر چل رہا ہے، سٹاک ایکسچینج میں بہتری آنا حکومت کی کامیاب حکمت عملی کا منہ بولتا ثبوت ہے، اور سیز پاکستانی ملک کی ترقی اور خوشحالی میں بھرپور کردار ادا کر رہے ہیں، اور سیز پاکستانی ملک میں دھڑا دھڑا اپنا سرمایہ بھیج رہے ہیں جو کہ اور سیز پاکستانیوں کا حکومت کی پالیسیوں پر اعتماد کا اظہار ہے، وہ اپنے آفس میں اور سیز پاکستانیوں کے وفد سے ملاقات کے موقع پر گفتگو کر رہے تھے۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2021-02-21/page-3/detail-5>

**February 22, 2021**

**Pakistan Observer**

### **CPEC's success crucial for China: Talat Shabbir India hatching conspiracies to sabotage CPEC project**

The Director of China-Pakistan Study Center, Institute of Strategic Studies, Dr Talat Shabbir, stressing the need of alleviating misconceptions among the people about China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has said that the success of the project is vital for China and its failure will adversely affect it.

He was addressing an awareness program on "CPEC Opportunities and Challenges" organized by the Institute of Engineers Pakistan (Rawalpindi, Islamabad Centre).

Dr. Attaullah Shah, Vice Chancellor of Karakoram International University, Gilgit-Baltistan, Chairman IEP-RIC Hafiz M. Ehsanul Haq Qazi, Secretary, IEP-RIC Engineer Najamuddin, Convener CPD Engineer Ahmed Shamim, Dr Sharif Bhatti, senior engineers Mahmood Khan, Qudratullah and Hafiz Yousaf were also present on the occasion.

Dr Talat Shabbir said CPEC still faces many challenges as many countries could not digest Pakistan's prosperity

He said the project has brought China and Pakistan much closer than ever. He further said some political players in the region fear that China-Pakistan cooperation could hurt India's influence that is why conspiracies are being hatched by India to sabotage the CPEC's mega project. Some people, accused China of self-directed interests behind CPEC but it was entirely their misconception.

He said when the project was launched, no one was ready to invest in Pakistan as it was in the grip of terrorism and other security related issues and it was China which extended helping hand at that crucial time.

Dr Talat Shabbir said, CPEC is a key project for Pakistan's economy and development and a historic opportunity that needs to take advantage of it.

Work has been done on energy and infrastructure in the first phase. Since the start of the projects, energy production has increased by more than 90 percent, benefiting millions of Pakistanis. A network of more than 3,000 km of roads has been completed.

Yes, 80 percent of the first two phases of the project have been completed while 20 percent of the work is left on the 22 under progress projects, he added.

He maintained that there was a need of generating employment opportunities for the people in the country and the timely completion of CPEC would eliminate the menace of unemployment.

The current pace of work on CPEC is not the same as it should be. He added CPEC is not the only plan to solve economic problems; we also need to focus on other problems and issues confronting the country.

He said that political stability in the country was a big challenge; there was a lot of scope for CPEC in Gilgit-Baltistan.

“We have to be alert till CPEC is completed as challenges will remain till the completion of this project.

Talat Shabbir said that the government should improve the capacity of its people so that Pakistanis could get maximum employment opportunities in Chinese projects.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpecs-success-crucial-for-china-talat-shabbir-india-hatching-conspiracies-to-sabotage-cpec-project/>

### **FPCCI invites Sweden to invest in CPEC, SEZs**

Federation of Pakistan Chambers and Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Chairman Qurban Ali on Wednesday urged for increasing the bilateral economic and trade relation between Pakistan and Sweden and also to increase the business to business connectivity among the business communities of the two sides.

The Chairman FPCCI also invited Swedish investors to join the grand mega project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and CPEC related Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in different regions of the country.

<https://pakobserver.net/fpcci-invites-sweden-to-invest-in-cpec-sezs/>

### **The News**

### **First-ever All-Virtual LLF 2021 ends: Pakistan won't side with any US 'China Containment Policy', says Dr Maleeha**

LAHORE: The first-ever All-Virtual LLF 2021 took place from February 18 to 21st featuring some of the best writers, authors, historians and journalists from Pakistan and around the world.

Former ambassador to the US and UK Dr Maleeha Lodhi said Pakistan has already made its strategic choice and that is China, therefore it will not side with any US ‘China Containment Policy’.

Dr Maleeha Lodhi said this at the book launching session of Fareed Zakria’s book ‘Ten lessons for the post-pandemic world’. In an highly absorbing book launching session participated by the author of the book who is also CNN’s renowned host and moderated by Razi Ahmed proved to be a highly learning experience for the Pakistanis, specifically the public sector.

“I am sure that President Joe Biden will give a mature response to China as a competitor but not as an adversary. She further added that what Pakistan seeks is a stable relation which is actually beneficial to the two countries. She concluded that Biden administrations review of the relations between the two countries will also determine the nature of the future ties. “If the US continues to support the peace process between the US and the Taliban, which has made progress, then we can see a very strong basis of cooperation between the two countries.

Razi Ahmed, the founder & chief organizer of the Lahore Literary Festival (LLF), asked Fareed Zakria that with all this hurly burly world of the post-pandemic times, where do you see in terms of our lives, work patterns and the functioning of the state?

While answering this very significant and most pertinent question by Razi Ahmed, Fareed Zakria, who is a household name with strong grip on politics and economy has been hosting the renowned CNN’s Fareed Zakaria GPS and a columnist for Newsweek, thanked Razi Ahmed and added that he wished he could be in Lahore physically, it’s one of the most beautiful cities in the world for attending this grand happening.

Fareed said this may be the most significant global event of our lifetime. He said the most recent big events like 9/11 and the world financial crisis had an impact on certain countries. Pakistan had a great impact of 9/11. However, this pandemic, in some way or the other has affected the lives of every human being on the planet. And it’s going to be longer than what people think.

He pointed out that making vaccine for COVID-19 in nine months was a miracle and it’s going to be a herculean task to provide it to the people through a systematic health system. He added that vaccinating the people is an unprecedented experience and it’s not the length but the breath of the experience is going to be unusual. With regard to the changes in the post-pandemic world, the fundamental shift is the ‘acceleration’ which he has mentioned in his book.

Explaining the ‘acceleration’, Fareed said we have moved into ‘digitalised economy’ much faster than otherwise anticipated. He added that in the pre-pandemic world, physical presence was essential at work, business and other activities of life, but now we have this virtual alternative, so result will be hybrid.

To a question by Razi Ahmed about Dis-functionalities in the USA & UK, they were not able to timely address this pandemic issue? Fareed replied that America is great in the realm of its private sector, but its government has been burdened by an anti-status mentality which outside

the Pentagon kept the government under constraint, delimited, under-funded, demeaned, and that anti-status mentality has gained tremendous energy in the last 40 years. The problem is that you have not built a capacity to quickly and elaborately and speedily fulfill certain public functions. He also touched the immigration issue and said in European countries they have tried to address this issue on humanitarian grounds. He further added that there is tension in Europe with regard to integrating the immigrants in their system, but the American system does it much better since Americans are more socially integrated.

To a question about a call made for a new social contract in FT which is known as the bastion for the New Liberal Order, Dr Maleeha Lodhi replied that she would first deliberate on the issue that why certain countries have addressed the pandemic issue better than others. She said it's not the type of political system that has enabled some states to manage the pandemic well, but it's the competent and effective state that Fareed also focuses on. I find it fascinating in his book the discussion on governance. In the South Asian countries there are no democracies in the classic sense of the word. But what they do have is two or three crucial elements which are 'competent state, a trust in government and thirdly a national resilience.

Replying to the question that where does the markets go from here in the post-pandemic scenario, Fareed replied that governments are going to be much more involved in doing something very simple which is providing cash to the people.

Maleeha Lodhi said the paradox of the present era is the growing multi-polarity but we have seen in recent decades an undermining of multilateralism. She pointed out that people are defying the multilaterals by promoting unilateralism which included Trump and Modi's examples in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K).

To another question by the moderator, Fareed said President Biden is going to be very ambitious and he is not going to make the same mistakes as Obama. He said Biden will take big steps regarding inflation in the United States.

He said there is healthy competition and the US will invest in various public-oriented projects. On the question of an open-based international system with a special focus on the United States and China in the emerging post-pandemic world, Fareed said he agreed with Dr Maleeha Lodhi on this count that we need to find zones for competition and ways to compete within this larger system. And this will be a win-win situation for the US and China eventually. He maintained a rules-based liberal international order can survive if there is a very intense geo-strategic competition between the two largest players in the game.

He added that as China rises, it causes a great anxiety in its neighbouring countries like Japan etc. He concluded his discussion by saying "we do not change in good times but we change in the times of crisis".

At the end of this wonderful session, Razi posed a question to Dr Maleeha Lodhi that how to bolster the cooperation between Pakistan and the new US administration, the seasoned and senior



diplomat replied that China-US relations are going to have a big impact on where Pak-American relations are going to go.

In the last minutes of the virtual session, Fareed Zakria said the pandemic has also given us an opportunity to look into our priorities as well.

The other highly informative and absorbing sessions on the last day of this much-awaited and the most prestigious event in the literary world of the sub-continent included, ‘The Survivor’ president of the Bank of Punjab and sole survivor of the PK-8303 PIA plane crash Zafar Masud in conversation with former CNN correspondent Saima Mohsin, Hinglaj: homage to recovered heritage narratives of identity and change at an ancient temple in Pakistan introduction by HE Bernhard Schlagheck, ambassador of Germany to Pakistan, German anthropologist Jürgen Schaflechner in conversation with development economist Sikander Bizenjo. British columnist, screenwriter and author Nimesh Shukla, whose most recent work is Brown Baby, and Huma Qureshi, winner of the 2020 Harper’s Bazaar short story prize for ‘The Jam Maker’ and author of “How we met”, with moderator Amna Rizvan Ali. The Past is another country introduction by HE Marc Baréty, ambassador of France to Pakistan, ‘Samarkand’ author Amin Maalouf in conversation with Ahmed Rashid.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/793932-first-ever-all-virtual-llf-2021-ends-pakistan-won-t-side-with-any-us-china-containment-policy-says-dr-maleeha>

## **February 23, 2021**

### **Business Recorder**

#### **CPEC western route alignment on final stage**

ISLAMABAD: The National Logistics Cell (NLC) is giving final touches to one of the most important component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor’s (CPEC) western route alignment as more than 95 percent of work has been completed so far.

The 285-kilometers long Hakla–Dera Ismail Khan Motorway project has been divided into five different packages which were awarded to various construction firms.

The NLC is working on Package-1 of the project and will be the first to complete its assigned section of motorway.

Package-1 comprises 4-lane carriageway having total length of 55 kilometers that originates from Yarik near DI Khan and culminates at Rehmani Khel area.

The NLC has completed all major infrastructure development works including construction of carriageway, two interchanges (one each at Yarik and Abdulkhel), six underpasses, four bridges and other structures such as accommodation buildings and toll plazas etc.

Ancillary work on a couple of weigh stations is currently underway which is expected to be concluded ahead of its scheduled completion date of 31st March.

As the motorway passes through sandy and rugged terrain with little or no forest cover, the NLC has planted 154,000 saplings on right of way along the road.

The plantation is part of ‘Sar Sabz-o-Shadab Pakistan’ Afforestation campaign launched by the Pakistan Army across the country.

The motorway will not only drastically cut travel distance between Islamabad and DI Khan but also link major highways i.e. N-50 and N-55 at Dera Ismail Khan Junction, which will open up new vistas of socio-economic development in the hitherto underdeveloped areas of the country. After completion of this improved connectivity project, vast expanses of North Punjab, South KP, and North West Balochistan will be opened for all kinds of trade activities leading to phenomenal improvement in the living standards of the people in the entire region.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2021/02/23/11-page/870881-news.html>

### **Daily Times**

#### **China debt relief diplomacy and shared prosperity**

*Shakeel Ahmad Ramay*

To understand the term “debt relief diplomacy” we first need to understand the ontology of Chinese international relation and its comparison with Western ontology. Zhao Ting yang, 2006 defined the major difference as Chinese ontology is “ontology of relation” while the Western is “ontology of things”. According to him Chinese model strive for transformation of relation, enemy to friend or friendship to brotherhood. The notion of relation suggests that relationship is determined by shared interests and benefit instead of self-interest. Thus, China’s international relation policy is guided by the principles of “order, harmony, respect, ethics and fraternity”, as, defined by Confucius.

Where as, Western philosophy of international relation revolves around the concept of “self-interest”. It gave birth to famous quote in international relation, “there are no permanent friends or enemies, only interests are permanent” John Henry Temple. It negates the concept of relation, as strategic focus is self-interest. West applied this concept to develop bilateral relation and erect the multilateral institutes. The decisive victory in World War-II provided the ample space and time to practice this philosophy. They created a good number of financial and political institutions including Bretton wood institutes e.g. IMF, World Bank and United Nations.

The international organizations were erected at the name of humanity, but the decision-making process and mechanisms were drawn in a way that all ways were leading to serve the interest of powerful, which was west. The interest of Western countries was to achieve two specific goals, 1) promote liberal democracy and 2) promote capitalism as ultimate solution to world economy. The capitalism was promoted as west had no competition. All institutions actively persuaded the agenda and used all means of influence (military, economy, loans etc.) according to the needs of the circumstances. Financial institutions lend money with the tag of development and countries were encouraged to use the facilities. First, right after the World War-II infrastructure was focus.

Least developed and developing countries were encouraged to invest in infrastructure and engage the Western companies to lead the infrastructure development. The principle of productive infrastructure was not followed in true spirit, which resulted in debt crises in many countries, which led to second phase.

As, the guiding principle of all investments is that it must be “productive investments” and non-productive investments or loans must be avoided

The second phase started with a shift of focus and mantra of reforms took the driving seat. Countries were persuaded to implement the Washington Consensus and structural adjustment programs. It led to a web of reforms and adjustments, which required more loans. It culminated into debt trap or policy trap for many countries, as reform-based loans were non-productive in nature.

Simultaneously, west started to weaponries the economy by tagging it to power determinant in international relation. The development or prosperity of people was taken out or became second priority and economy as firearm of power took the driving seat. It brought a gigantic shift in global development and power agenda. The diplomacy was tasked to re-adjust focus and play leading role to secure the economic interest, which resulted in the introduction the modern concept of economic diplomacy. The economic instruments were weaponries, and debt was identified as major tool to trap the countries. The global institutions, which are controlled by West, are leading the implementation.

In these circumstances, China presented an alternative to world, the win-win cooperation. China launched comprehensive investment policies and programs to help the countries to come out of debt trap, which can be called debt relief diplomacy. The roots of debt relief diplomacy can be traced from the launch of Go Global policy. Since, the adaptation of Go Global policy China started to play a formidable role for people-oriented diplomacy with the objective of shared prosperity. It follows the vision of Chairman Mao of Three World, where he urged China to protect the third world from the exploitation of first world. President Hu Jintao accelerated the efforts and stressed the need of a harmonious world based on the principle of equality and fair play.

President Xi Jinping gave a new impetus to China’s efforts. President Xi introduced the concept of community with shared future and prosperity for everyone without any discrimination. He did not wait for the world and made it responsibility of China to play its role. He launched Belt and Road Initiative to share the Chinese prosperity with world. BRI has its root in the teachings of wise elders of China Confucius, Tao and Sun Zu, practitioners like Yellow Emperor, Chairman Mao, and lessons from the evolution of Chinese Civilization. BRI has been designed by applying principles of win-win cooperation and community with shared future. As, the guiding principle of all investments is that it must be “productive investments” and non-productive investments or loans must be avoided. Thus, the loans and investments under BRI will help to break the web of debt trap by generating revenues, and lead to prosperity at larger scale.

World Bank studies in 2019 validated this notion by analyzing the potential benefits of BRI, which would be enormous and multidimensional. The studies highlighted that the benefits will be for everyone, either they are member of BRI or not. The studies summaries the benefits as ; 1) travel time will be reduced by 12% in BRI and 3 % in Non-BRI countries, 2) trade will increase by 2.7-9.7%, in BRI and 1.7-6.2%, non-BRI countries, 3) real income will be enhanced by 1.2-3.4% and 0.7-2.9%, in BRI and Non-BRI economies, respectively. It has also been calculated that one percent increase in global GDP due to BRI will add US\$ 930 billion in the prices of base year of 2014.

BRI will also help to bring down poverty. It is estimated that 7.6 million extreme poor (US\$1.90 per day) and 32 million moderately poor (US\$3.20 per day) will break the poverty trap. It is pertinent to mention here that these projections were made on the infrastructure investments during the first five years. If we include the all the future investments, especially in the fields of industry and agriculture, the impact would be huge. It will definitely help world, especially the least developed countries to pursue the dream of development.

Hence, we can deduce that these all investments are enhancing the production capacity and economic size of participating countries. So, China is providing them debt to break the shackles of debt trap, which has been imposed on them by global financial institutes. In this way we infer that China is implementing “debt relief diplomacy” to create a community of shared future and prosperity.

In conclusion, there must be no confusion that China is doing it as charity, no not at all. China is also striving hard to secure its interest but on the basis of win-win cooperation, which is guided by the concept of relationship.

Nonetheless, the question would be how long China will follow this policy? Will China continue to follow it after 2035? Or will China commit the Western mistakes? And start to follow the self-interest-based policy.

However, there is hope that China will not commit the mistake of West, as President Xi is putting all efforts to infuse the same spirit in young generations. He has launched a comprehensive campaign to encourage youth to understand Chinese Civilization and ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The objective is to create a generation which can carry the flag of China by adhering to the values and standards of Chinese Civilization.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/726819/china-debt-relief-diplomacy-and-shared-prosperity/>

## **Pakistan Observer**

### **PM Imran sees CPEC beneficial for Sri Lanka**

Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday invited Sri Lanka to improve its economic and regional ties through Pakistan, which is a key part of the multi-billion dollar China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. Addressing a joint press conference with Sri Lankan counterpart

Mahindra Rajapaksa, he said that CPEC can be a route to extend economic ties to central Asia and Sri Lanka.

He added that Pakistan will be gateway to boost regional links. The premier said that the both Pakistan and Sri Lanka are facing problems related to terrorism, besides recalling that 70,000 people lost their lives due to terrorism in ten years.

The premier recalled that he had visited the Sri Lank for first time at the start of his international cricket career.

Earlier today, Imran Khan reached Sri Lank on two-day visit. His counterpart received him at the Bandaranaike International Airport, Colombo where he was also accorded a red carpet welcome and Guard of Honor.

Later, the premier held a one-on-one with PM Raja Paksa at Temple Trees. Matters related to mutual interests and bilateral relations came under discussion.

Both sides also held delegation level talks to discuss various matters.

Pakistan and Sri Lanka also signed several Memorandums of Understanding in various sectors including commerce, investment, education, science and technology and industrial cooperation.

The signing ceremony of MoUs was held in Colombo on Tuesday, in the presence of Prime Ministers of both countries.

The agreements were signed by departmental representatives from both countries.

<https://pakobserver.net/pm-imran-sees-cpec-beneficial-for-sri-lanka/>

### **The Express Tribune**

#### **CPEC body seeks recovery of Gwadar land**

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) on Monday directed ministries to immediately get 116 acres of prime Gwadar land vacated, which was under the possession of law enforcement agencies and was hampering work on CPEC.

The delay in getting the land vacated has slowed down work on the Gwadar Free Zone and Gwadar Eastbay Expressway - the two projects that were very critical for the full functioning of Gwadar Port, showed official documents.

Headed by Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar, the cabinet panel directed the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense to play their part in getting the land vacated. Under the Pak-China Gwadar Port agreement, the land has been leased out to Chinese companies. Asad Umar was not available for comments.

The CPEC committee said that the Ministry of Defense should issue directives to Pakistan Navy to vacate 72 acres of land. Similarly, the committee directed the Ministry of Interior and Ministry

of Defense to play their role in getting vacated another 44 acres of land, which was under the possession of Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG).

Sources said Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Zaidi underscored that the Gwadar Port Master Plan should be implemented in true letter and spirit by removing the occupants. Zaidi was also not available for comments.

It was the second time in the past two weeks that the CPEC committee discussed the occupation of Gwadar land. The committee struggled to reach consensus on the issue and again threw the ball in the ministries' court, which could not resolve the land dispute. Pakistan Coast Guards owned 44 acres of land, which is now part of the Eastbay Expressway project. The Eastbay Expressway will connect Gwadar Port with the Makran Coastal Highway.

Pakistan Navy is holding 72 acres of land which, according to the master plan, is part of the Gwadar Free Zone.

Out of the 44 acres, the Pakistan Coast Guards has so far vacated 19 acres and the federal cabinet in May last year approved Rs58 million in compensation for the demolished structures. However, official documents revealed that despite taking compensation of Rs58 million, the Pakistan Coast Guards has again started construction on the land under its possession.

The cabinet committee was told that Pakistan Coast Guards was “flouting” instructions of the Prime Minister’s Office and was not vacating the land.

“Illegal construction is taking place on 25 acres of the Gwadar Free Zone occupied by Pakistan Coast Guards without permission of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs.”

The 25 acres of land has been leased to Chinese concession holders for the Gwadar Free Zone, port operations and the Eastbay Expressway project.

It has been proposed that instead of 25 acres, the Pakistan Coast Guards may be allocated 50 acres in the joint cantonment area, Gwadar. However, there were issues in giving possession of land in the cantonment area.

During a meeting held in Gwadar in September 2020, it had been decided that the Pakistan Coast Guards may be allotted land in the southern part of cantonment area.

The Gwadar Development Authority said that for the establishment of a cantonment, 12,000 acres had been earmarked in the master plan of Gwadar city. Out of this, 50 acres has been allocated to the Pakistan Coast Guards but possession has not been given.

In June 2005, the then prime minister Shaukat Aziz and then president General Pervez Musharraf had told the Pakistan Coast Guards to “immediately vacate the land for utilization as per Gwadar Port master plan”.

The federal government again gave instructions to the Pakistan Coast Guards in February 2018 to comply with the president’s orders issued in 2005. In January 2019, Planning Minister Khusr

Bakhtyar asked the Ministry of Interior to immediately resolve the issue to ensure timely completion of the Eastbay Expressway.

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs informed the cabinet committee that Pakistan Navy had already been allocated 1,000 acres in the Pishkuan area of Gwadar, instead of 584 acres, which was under its possession in the Gwadar Free Zone.

However, Pakistan Navy still held 72 acres out of the 584 acres.

The Ministry of Defense was of the view that it did not receive instructions from the PM Office.

In its summary for the CPEC committee, the maritime affairs secretary stated that the Ministry of Defense in August 2020 “requested to allow Pakistan Navy to retain 84 acres of land with sea frontage along Gwadar Eastbay nearby the port in exchange for 84 acres in Pishkuan.”

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs stated that Pakistan would have to hand over the land to the Chinese concession holder to full its “international obligation”.

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs also raised the issue of Balochistan’s Gwadar city master plan, which was not in sync with the Gwadar Port master plan, approved by the federal government. The provincial government has imposed a ban on the acquisition of land which, according to the maritime affairs ministry, could hamper work on Gwadar Port in the medium to long term.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2285591/cpec-body-seeks-recovery-of-gwadar-land>

## **The Nation**

### **Nine Energy projects completed under CPEC**

Nine Energy projects have so far been completed under the China Pakistan Energy Corridor (CPEC), boosting the energy needs of Pakistan.

According to the details, these new projects have contributed 5340 MW of electricity to the main grid, helping meet the country’s vital needs for industry, agriculture, and domestic consumers.

Out of a total of 22 projects, another eight are near completion and would pump in an additional 4470 MW of electricity to the national grid. Another five projects are in the planning and implementation phase.

<https://nation.com.pk/23-Feb-2021/nine-energy-projects-completed-under-cpec>

### **Pakistan, China to collaborate in gems and jewellery industry**

On Monday, a meeting was held between the Chinese Consul General to Pakistan and Chairman Pakistan Gems and Jewellery Development Company (PGJDC) in the port city to discuss the possibilities of collaboration/cooperation between Pakistan and China regarding the development of gems and jewellery Industry.

According to a statement issued in this regard, Chairman PGJDC explained that the company is a public sector organization working under the Federal Ministry of Industries and

Production, Government of Pakistan. The company has now been declared as an autonomous body of the MoIP.

During the meeting, the potential of Pakistan's gemstones industry was discussed. At present, Pakistan ranks 5th in the world with regards to gemstone reserves and high-quality emeralds, ruby, sapphire, aquamarine, peridot, topaz, and tourmaline. These gemstone treasures are highly sought around the globe and there is dire need to exploit this potential for export growth.

Different areas of collaboration were discussed during the meeting and it was stressed that Chinese investment may be brought in for setting up lapidaries and special industrial parks for cutting, polishing, faceting and carving of gemstones.

The Chinese government may also invest in the extraction of gemstones as most of the gemstones get wasted due to indiscriminate blasting which can be reduced if modern mining machinery is used for extraction.

The CPEC and Gwadar port will also play a very important role in the enhancement of trade and exports of gemstones if the gems and jewellery special industrial parks and individual lapidary units are established along the CPEC route.

During the meeting, the two sides also discussed the possibility of China and Pakistan collaborating in terms of skills development.

It was stressed upon during the meeting that the Pakistani and Chinese governments should join hands and collaborate with each other for the development of the gems and jewellery industries of both countries and learn from each others' experiences.

<https://nation.com.pk/23-Feb-2021/pakistan-china-to-collaborate-in-gems-and-jewellery-industry>

**February 24, 2021**

**Pakistan Observer**

### **CPEC: Wider Regional Integration**

THE most significant and decisive factor in the interstate relationship of the states is the bilateral trust and mutual respect of each other's sovereignty. In international relations these aspects are driven by national interests of the states. In the relationship of Pakistan and China bilateral trust and mutual respect of each other's sovereignty have been the defining factors.

Generally, there has been convergence of national interests of both states in many areas. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the latest manifestation of trust, mutual respect and shared national interests with common developmental goals of both countries.

CPEC is aimed to drive practical cooperation between the two countries for the development of port facilities at Gwadar and other projects like energy resources, infrastructure development and industrial cooperation.



The ultimate objective of these projects is economic opportunities for the masses of the two countries and other regions of Asian Continent.

Siegfried O. Wolf authored a book entitled, “The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor of the Belt and Road Initiative: Concept, Context and Assessment”. The essence of this book is that CPEC is a project of immense significance for Pakistan and China.

The book provides an in-depth analysis of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); the gigantic Chinese project, which encompasses a set of corridors and Maritime Silk route spreading over three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe.

The author highlighted the philosophy behind Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and more about the strategy of Economic Corridors (ECs). The primary objectives of having these economic corridors are to connect China with its neighbours and then other regions and countries beyond Asia.

Contextualizing from history, the ancient Silk Road started during the westward expansion of Chinese Han Dynasty from; 206 BCE to 220 CE.

It forged trade networks passing through the contemporary Central Asian Region, Afghanistan, India and today’s Pakistan to further south, reaching over to European and African continents.

The BRI is therefore, revival of the old Silk Road and Maritime Route by modern Chinese leadership. The enormous size of Chinese economy and heavy industrialization warrants new communication corridors and routes in this highly interconnected and globalized world.

Besides, China needs energy resources and raw material in order to maintain its sustained growth and economic development.

The huge industrial base of China lacked the needed energy resources on a long-term basis.

China is currently importing over 50% of its energy resources from Middle East region and African countries.

Besides, it imports over 30 oil and gas from Central Asian region and Russia. Chinese imports and energy resources from the Middle East and Africa have to pass through Indian Ocean region, before entering the South China Sea.

Since Indian Navy is dominating the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), therefore in a future scenario there may be constraints for Chinese trade at the Strait of Malacca; a key point in the Indian Ocean. Strait of Malacca is a narrow passage of water between the Indonesian island of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. In 2003, Chinese Government highlighted its vulnerability at Malacca; ‘Chinese Malacca Dilemma’.

There have been many studies under Chinese Government and at the level of its think-tanks and universities to find out alternative routes for Chinese trade and energy imports.

Well deliberated findings of all such studies concluded that, in case there is a blockade of Malacca Strait, there are a few alternative routes available to China for its trade and oil imports.

Other available alternatives are either incompatible to take on the weight of modern ships and heavy traffic or else causing heavy expenditures owing to longer routes.

CPEC is the only secure and guaranteed alternative which can guarantee an uninterrupted flow of Chinese trade and energy resources.

It is shortest route, less expensive and more secure for the sustenance of Chinese energy and trade needs. Chinese leadership had selected CPEC 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. Its (CPEC) timely completion will provide a boost for the completion of other projects and corridors of the BRI.

The Chinese dream for global governance through its soft approach depends a lot on the implementation of BRI and completion of CPEC will be a booster for the BRI. 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 scheduled is the real challenge, facing China and Pakistan.

Despite its financial constraints, Pakistan has dedicated two security divisions under Pakistan Army for ensuring security of the CPEC from Khunjerab Pass to Gwadar.

In 21st century, economy (trade and commerce) drives the world politics. The strategic competition and the trade war between Washington and Beijing should not hamper the CPEC, since it is a project of economic benefits for all regional states including India, Iran, Central Asian and GCC states.

Whereas, CPEC effectively addresses the Chinese Malacca Dilemma, it provides a golden opportunity for the wider integration between various regions and states of Asian Continent. Now, it is up to the leadership of the Asian states to secure the future of their posterity through a visionary approach and prudence.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-wider-regional-integration/>

### **No CPEC project suspended or delayed: COPHC chief**

The federal government has made major progress in the energy-related projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as nine out of a total of 22 power projects have been completed to meet the country's energy requirements.

These new projects have contributed 5340 MW of electricity to the main grid, helping meet the country's vital needs for industry, agriculture, and domestic consumers.

Out of a total of 22 projects, another eight are near completion and would pump in an additional 4470 MW of electricity to the national grid. Another five projects are in the planning and implementation phase. The federal government has expedited the pace of work on different power projects initiated under the CPEC.

Meanwhile, a top Chinese official involved in the CPEC projects in Pakistan has denied media reports and statements by some Pakistani lawmakers that work on the multi-billion dollars infrastructure and energy programme has been delayed.

“It is true that Covid-19 had some negative impact on some projects but I can tell you that on CPEC projects, not a single CPEC project is suspended or delayed,” Zhang Baozhong, Chairman of the China Overseas Ports Holding Company (COPHC), which operates Gwadar port, told a foreign news agency in Gwadar last week.

“In fact I am happy to report that many projects have already been completed ahead of their scheduled time frame, including the Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute at Gwadar, at a cost of \$10 million, that would be handed over by the end of June instead of by the end of the year,” Baozhong added.—TLTP

<https://pakobserver.net/no-cpec-project-suspended-or-delayed-cophc-chief/>

### **CPEC: an Ideal Platform for socio-economic Prosperity**

DESPITE, continued western mass media biased propaganda against the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), chances of greater socio-economic integration, geopolitical realignment and geostrategic connectivity is on the increase day by day.

For the further strengthening of bilateral trade relations under the flagship of the CPEC Pakistan has now decided to construct new strategic route to decrease 350 Km distance to China border. The new proposed route, after crossing the border at Yarkand, will connect GB’s Shigar, Skardu and Astor districts to Muzaffarabad.

Most recently, on 15 January 2021, the Federal Government advised the GB Government’s Public Works Department to prepare a “project concept clearance proposal” for a 10 meter wide road capable of being used by trucks, from the Mustagh Pass on the border with the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region via the eastern GB region of Skardu, where the Siachen Glacier is located.

Right from the beginning CPEC stands for greater regional connectivity, socio-economic prosperity, food & energy security and above all poverty reduction. It has the mission and capacity to get connected with all the Central Asian Countries and beyond.

In this connection, most recently, Pakistan Federal Energy Minister Omar Ayub Khan and Islamic Development Bank (IDB) President Dr Bandar Hajjar inaugurated the construction of the 113 kilometer electricity transmission lines from Pak-Afghan border to Nowshehra under the South Asia Central Asia Regional Trade and Transmission Project (CASA-1000) during a virtual event.

It was indeed a giant step towards further strengthening of energy cooperation. It hopes that world class infrastructural development under the ongoing projects of the CPEC would supplement it.

He termed that project will support economic integration among four participating countries, through establishment of regional electricity connection and creation of an integrated electricity market.

It will also positively contribute towards energy security since the energy mix of Pakistan has been strengthened through substantial amount of cross-border import & export of electricity. He labeled it transformative development in the economic and power sectors of Central Asia and South Asia which is also an inspiring model of sustainable development.

He informed the participants that Pakistan has embarked upon tapping the huge indigenous potential of renewable energy.

CASA-1000 Project is a 1,270km power transmission line that exports excess hydropower generated in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Pakistan through Afghanistan. Transmission components under the project are being financed by IDB, World Bank, European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction & Development, UK's Department for International Development, and USAID at a total cost of \$1.17 billion.

The CASA-1000 involves building a mega power transmission line to carry some 1,300 MW of electricity from hydropower plants in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan into Afghanistan (300 MW) and on to Peshawar in Pakistan (1,000 MW).

Having similar objectives as the CPEC and the TAPI, the CASA-1000 happens to be the third most significant, groundbreaking project of the decade for our region.

It was officially declared in 2015, however, the progress of the CASA-1000 has been at a snail's pace until only recently. It was launched in 2016, it involved four countries, namely, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Pakistan and most of the funding was arranged from the World Bank, while the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) are also funding it partially.

Unfortunately, CASA-1000 has been unperformed project due to perpetual delays which create confusions whether the project is still on. Nevertheless, since TAPI was inaugurated there is new hope that the CASA 1000 could also move ahead as it is in the same region.

On the other hand, Uzbekistan is Central Asia's largest market, comprising almost a half of the population of the region. It is also the geographic pivot and lynchpin of Central Asia, bordering all of the other Central Asian States as well as Afghanistan, and with transit connections in all directions.

It is uniquely dependent on these cross-border linkages for which Pakistan's strategic seaport Gwadar and the CPEC role will be instrumental.

Uzbekistan is also central to the region's economy, including as a gas supplier for Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and the southern provinces of Kazakhstan.

It is also a major agricultural producer and a key player in Central Asia's water management challenges. It has great potential, and its role is critical to the emergence of a more prosperous, connected Central Asia which may be further connected with the help of the BRI & CPEC.

It is rich in hydrocarbons and mineral resources and possessing a relatively well educated and low-cost labor force.

It has diversified economy with great potential as a manufacturing, transport and financial hub for Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

In this context, Uzbekistan presented the concept of greater regional connectivity through the construction of the Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway.

A roadmap was signed by all the participating countries in Tashkent. Geodetic, hydro geological and topographic studies along the route of the road will be started in March 2021.

Feasibility study and mechanisms for financing the construction of the highway will also be finalized in May 2021. It has been projected as the "project of the century" for the region.

Most of the regional as well as international countries showed their keen and unconditional support for the project.

Representatives of the World Bank, ADB, EBRD, EIB, IDB, AIIB, International Development Finance Corporation have also shown interest in building a trans-regional railway.

Being a prominent regional expert on CPEC & CIS, I estimate that inauguration of the CASA-1000 and start of Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway will revolutionize the regional economies in the days to come.

It will further enhance bilateral or trilateral trade & commerce, FDIs, food & energy cooperation and, above all, regional connectivity for achieving and maintaining a sustainable development.

It is indeed a giant step towards regional integration of the CIS and South Asia Region which has combined population of 1.9 billion people 25 percent the world and a GDP of 3.5 trillion dollars.

South Asia is the fastest growing region in the world up 7.5 percent per year leading by China.

Moreover, South Asia's contribution to global growth is 15pc and by 2040 it may increase to over 30 percent. So this is Asian Century in which Chinese One Belt & One Road Initiative (BRI) and its flagship mega project CPEC will play a positive and productive role.

It is high time that peace in Afghanistan should prevail and all conflicting realities ought to be resolved as soon as possible for achieving dreams of greater regional connectivity.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-an-ideal-platform-for-socio-economic-prosperity/>

## Nawaiwaqt News

### چینی سرمایہ کاروں کو چین کے نئے سال کی مبارکباد پیش کرنے کیلئے تقریب

لاہور (کامرس رپورٹر) پاک چین جو انٹنیشنل چیمبر آف کامرس اینڈ انڈسٹری میں چینی سرمایہ کاروں اور تاجروں کو چین کے نئے سال کی مبارکباد پیش کرنے کیلئے چیمبر کے صدر ایس ایم نوید کی صدارت میں ایک تقریب ہوئی جس میں چیمبر کے، سینئر نائب صدر داؤد احمد، نائب صدر خالد رفیق چوہدری اور اراکین مجلس عاملہ کے علاوہ پاکستان میں کام کرنے والے چینی ماہرین اور چینی کاروباری افراد نے بڑی تعداد میں شرکت کی۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2021-02-24/page-12/detail-10>

## February 25, 2021

### Daily Times

#### **China's E-sports Association eager for collaboration with Pakistan**

China's Beijing E-sports Association is eager for collaboration with Pakistan, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday.

China, USA and South Korea are dominating forces in the global E-sports arena, and now, electronic sports are in the process of being granted as an official sport for Pakistan. According to the report, Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Fawad Hussain, confirmed that discussions regarding the legitimization for Pakistan's E-sports among Pakistan Sports Board and Pakistan Science Federation are underway, while the memorandum has already been signed.

Moreover, the first Pakistan E-sport tournament is set to be held in March this year. "I am glad to learn that Pakistan realized the huge economic benefits behind E-sports, and stimulated to greater efforts.

At the current stage, it will be incredible if Chinese and Pakistani organizations can host championships together. We are definitely interested in the performance of Pakistani E-athletes", Liu Zhen, Chairman of the Beijing E-Sports Association told Gwadar Pro.

The development of gaming and E-sports industry in Pakistan has been kept under the mainstream media's radar for decades. General perceptions of gaming remain skeptical. As the news came out, the majority of Pakistani netizens reacted positively, yet some posted their concerns under the Minister's Twitter announcement as well. "I am not surprised that such a proposal triggered public debates. Years ago, the majority of Chinese did not take gaming and E-sports seriously." Liu Zhen reacted to the comments. "I think people need to understand that, just like in every other sport, there are only a few who can 'make it' and become world-class athletes. It takes commitment, concentration and sadly yet most importantly, real talent, to become successful in this industry. We turn down students who wish to be E-sports athletes almost every day, and being an E-sport practitioner does not mean that you have to be a professional athlete. "

Liu told the reporter that currently in China, many types of careers are generated from the E-sports industry. “Aside from being professional players, E-sports related jobs include shout caster, referee, event organizer, video producer, PR executive, audio engineer, customer/fan base manager, E-sport finance practitioner, etc.”

The report added, on July 23, 2020, the Ministry of human resources and social security in China jointly released the development report for new occupations online learning platform with Alibaba group, which indicates that there will be a 2 million career vacancy for E-athletes and 1.5 million for E-sports organizers in the next five years. “There will always be a talent gap in this industry, we won’t say no to a true talent, regardless of their nationalities. We have many foreign athletes in different leagues,” Liu said.

The obstacles for China and Pakistan to cooperate in E-sports are that Chinese organizations do not have access to Pakistani official departments or leading enterprises in Pakistan. Currently, China secured 2nd place in the global share of E-sports revenue and has a gaming population of over 500 million with 26 per cent of internet users watching E-sports monthly.

As the Chinese government recognized E-sports as a formal sport in 2003, E-sports became a demonstration of China’s soft power and international goodwill. Nowadays, Chinese athletes regularly claim victory on the global stage. “The governmental level support is inseparable with the success of E-sports in China. Responding to national appeals, Tech giants in China invested tremendous amounts of money and manpower to support the growth of the industry,” Liu said. “Moreover, as a result of China’s rapid development in science and technology, the penetration rate for mobile, PC and console devices among people surged. This also laid a solid base for the development of the E-sports industry.”

Pakistan, with 40 percent of its population within the ideal competitive gaming age group, is like a gold mine waiting to be explored, Liu said, adding, “With a similar demographic pool, Pakistan can use China’s experience as a reference. E-sports industry can contribute to Pakistan’s economic development, provides jobs for the locals and attracts foreign investment.”

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/727721/chinas-e-sports-association-eager-for-collaboration-with-pakistan/>

## **The Nation**

### **China wants Pakistan to grow stronger, says acting Consul General**

Lahore - Acting Consul General of China in Lahore Peng Zhengwu in a interview to The Nation and Nawa-i-Waqt on Wednesday said that during the past years, Pakistan and China have enjoyed stable and excellent relationship.

“We have supported each other in development, prosperity and international relations as China is growing stronger, we want to help Pakistan to be stronger as well”, he added.

CPEC, is an essential part of BRI which has been built for years and received lots of appreciation, he said. Now the backbone of a modern industrial Pakistan has grown, which includes large scale energy, transportation, ports, communication projects, he added.

The Consul General said: "Next phase of CPEC will be some upper level projects to build the fresh projects in the country, with educational, environmental, agricultural and SEZ cooperation in sight."

"There is no reason to doubt the progress of the CPEC. Just like the building of a metro, sometimes the works are done underground and not so easily visible. CPEC has entered a stable developing period."

He further said: "Chinese President Xi Jinping has said, only the wearer of the shoes knows whether they fit the feet or not. Nobody else in the world knows better about our history and friendship than the Chinese and Pakistani people. We struggled for today's life and we deserve it. China advocates the building of a human community with shared future, in which China and Pakistan relationship could be the model. We sincerely hope that more and more countries can join us in the just cause for the peace, development and prosperity of our future."

Pakistan is a great, important and familiar country to me, he said. The Consul General said that he visited Pakistan in 2007 for the first time and 6 years later he visited Pakistan for the second time as a Press officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China and witnessed the launching of CPEC by Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang and Pakistani leaders in Islamabad. In 2018, he was posted to the Chinese Consulate General in Lahore to serve the CPEC and our bilateral relations, he stated. It seems that he was already bonded to Pakistan and CPEC many years ago. So, sometimes life is a magic, he added.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-02-25/page-12/detail-5>

**February 26, 2021**

**Business Recorder**

### **Energy projects won't add to debt: China**

BEIJING: A Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson said on Wednesday that power projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) did not incur debt burden on the Pakistani side because they were investment projects.

"I can say this with good authority that these energy projects are commercial investment where Chinese companies invested in Pakistan. They do not incur debt burdens on the Pakistani side because they are investment projects," Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing in response to a question that Pakistan had requested China to reschedule their debts to the tune of around a US\$22 billion in power projects which China has funded.

"We have responded to similar questions many occasions. I don't know how you got your specific figure," he questioned.



The spokesperson said that for the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, there were many power and energy cooperation projects and added, "I think perhaps you are referring to loans on the energy projects. Right?"

Zhao Lijian informed that he had worked in Pakistan for many years and he was very familiar with the energy projects and the CPEC.

"So, these loans are from Chinese companies. The Pakistani government doesn't need to pay back anything," he added.

The spokesperson remarked that the construction and operation of the energy projects under the CPEC are going on very well, providing steady and affordable power source and adding tax revenues and producing very tangible, economic and social benefits.

"We have every confidence that China-Pakistan energy cooperation will continue to make greater contribution to Pakistan's national development and livelihood improvement," he added. According to official data, a total of 22 energy and power projects will be constructed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

So far, nine energy and power projects have been completed, boosting the energy needs of Pakistan. These projects have contributed 5340 MW of electricity to the main grid, helping meet the country's vital needs for industry, agriculture and domestic consumers.

Another eight energy projects are near completion and will pump in an additional 4470 MW of electricity to the national grid. Another five projects are in the planning and implementation phase.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2021/02/26/1-page/871182-news.html>

### **CPEC a shining example of Pak-China friendship: SCCI chief**

PESHAWAR: The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Sherbaz Bilour has termed the Pak-China Economic Corridor project is a glaring example of Pak-China friendship, which could bring economic prosperity, development and change destine of the whole region. SCCI chief stated the Rashakai Special Zone was fully backed by the government of China, which has enabled it to attract new investment in the province that will help to create more job opportunities. He urged the government to take pragmatic steps and offer incentives to encourage investments in the province

Sherbaz Bilour was speaking to a Chinese delegation led by Lv Yan, DGM CRBC China here at the chamber house on Thursday. On the occasion, the SCCI Senior Vice President Engr Manzoor Elahi, Vice President Junaid Altaf, Peng, Investment Manager CRBC, Simon Lee, Abdullah Shehryar, Commercial Officers CRBC, senior official from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company Adil Salahuddin and Abdul Wasae Sahad were present.

A representative of the Chinese delegation on the occasion briefed the participants about the

significance of the Rashakai Special Economic Zone, a project which is being executed under CPEC in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region. He highlighted the investment opportunities in Rashakai SEZs and incentives, which are being offered to investors there.

The Chinese official informed that the importance of Rashakai SEZs is very high as compared to other SEZs in the rest of Pakistan, because Chinese government and investors were fully backed this project. Both sides have agreed to launch a joint venture to encourage local investors to make investments in different potential sectors in the Rashakai Special Economic Zone. Sherbaz Bilour while speaking on the occasion underscored the importance of CPEC projects, saying that the Pak-China joint initiative would bring economic prosperity, development and open new job avenues generally in Pakistan and particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He added that the CPEC will change the destiny of the whole region. KP is a lucrative destination for investors, wherein a lot of opportunities were available for making investment in multiple potential sectors, SCCI chief noted.

Sherbaz Bilour says, “We are making efforts to boost up bilateral trade with Afghanistan and central Asian countries, for which the government and relevant authorities have been taken on board to remove hurdles in the way of regional trade”.

He urged the government to take realistic measures to encourage investment and improve the national economy. He also invited the investors to make investment in potential sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

SCCI chief asked the government to take relevant stakeholders on board before formulation of provincial industrial policy. He furthermore emphasized that the provincial government should allocate sufficient funds for industrial development in the upcoming fiscal budget.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2021/02/26/16-page/871273-news.html>

**February 27, 2021**

**Daily Times**

### **CPEC to change economic fate of Balochistan people: Masood**

Describing Balochistan as a strategically important federating unit of the country, Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Sardar Masood Khan has said when Balochistan will achieve prosperity, the whole of Pakistan will be prosperous. The President expressed these views during a meeting with a 14-member delegation of journalists led by Ilias Kamboh, President Hub Press Club, and here at President House on Friday.

He said after the completion of development projects under the China-Pakistan Corridor, a new era of progress and prosperity will usher in Balochistan and it will turn the economic fate of the Baloch people.

The people of Balochistan should have faith and confidence that the whole of Pakistan, including Azad Kashmir, wants to see them prosperous and developed and with the grace of Almighty Allah, the time is not far when investors from all over the world will come to Balochistan and

create jobs, business and employment opportunities in the province. Expressing his deep gratitude to the people, government and media of Balochistan for consistently expressing their solidarity with the oppressed people of Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir; he said that the media should raise awareness about the opportunities that will arise for the development and the prosperity of the province in the coming time.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/728346/cpec-to-change-economic-fate-of-balochistan-people-masood/>

### **Dawn News**

#### **Proposals sought for research under CPEC deals**

HYDERABAD: Sindh Agri-culture University (SAU) Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Fateh Marri has urged SAU scholars who have done their PhDs from Chinese and other universities to submit their research proposals in the fields of environment, livestock, agriculture and climate change to be forwarded to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) in line with the commission's directives.

Addressing SAU scholars here on Friday, he said the projects would be submitted for joint research under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) agreements. He said SAU had been selected among the universities whose scholars would conduct research.

He said that under the CPEC agreement, there were opportunities for joint research on different proposals with various Chinese universities. Opportunities were available for experts to benefit from it, which would not only improve reputation of the institution, but also change their financial situation, he said. He said experts should prepare their research proposals within a week.

He said that as per HEC guidelines, consortia of Chinese and Pakistani universities were formed in various fields, including agriculture, livestock, environment, energy, social sciences, information technology, including the name of SAU from Sindh. Dr Abdullah Arijo, academic adviser to the VC, said funds for research projects were estimated at around Rs50m while in exceptional cases, budget went up to Rs100m. The scholars reiterated that projects would be prepared in relevant fields for the development of the university and scholars of university had a lot of potential.

Dr Qamaruddin Chachar, Dr Aijaz Ahmad Khoonharo and heads of various departments, postgraduate scholars from different departments, also spoke.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1609572/proposals-sought-for-research-under-cpec-deals>

### **The News**

#### **Chinese technical support lauded**

Islamabad : A meeting was held between Chairman, National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), Syed Javed Hassan and Ambassador of Peoples Republic of China to

Pakistan, Nong Rong. NAVTTC chairman appreciated the support of China in revamping the technical and vocational training programmes and put forth different proposals to further enhance the cooperation in TVET sector.

NAVTTC Executive Director, Dr. Nasir Khan apprised Ambassador Han Nianlong that NAVTTC's proposal will be effective in involving and engaging Chinese technical training entities and encouraging them to deliver training to the Pakistani labour especially youth in collaboration with existing training bodies and institutes across Pakistan.

The proposal will play vital role in training of Pakistani youth in relevant technical trades and soft skills in accordance with the skill requirements of Chinese companies, quality enhancement of Pakistani technical training institutes, enhancement of training delivery, preparation of Pakistani youth for Hi-Tech trades and ultimately preparation of globally competitive skilled workforce, Khan said.

Dr. Khan requested for co-operation and support of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan and the relevant Chinese departments in achieving the objectives of the proposals.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/796324-chinese-technical-support-lauded>

**February 28, 2021**

**Business Recorder**

### **Governor Yasinzai declares CPEC a game changer**

QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Amanullah Khan Yasinzai has declared the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a game changer project for the entire region.

This was stated by him while talking to the Chairman China Overseas Port Holding Company, Zhang Baozhong on the occasion of his visit to Gwadar Port on Saturday.

Amanullah Yasinzai said that the completion of the CPEC project will end the global economic stagnation. He said that the CPEC project will create innumerable employment opportunities in the country. The Governor Balochistan emphasized on the need to focus on imparting modern technical and vocational skills to the new generation in view of CPEC requirements. Amanullah Yasinzai lauded China's cooperation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Later, Governor Balochistan and Chairman China Overseas Port Holding Company visited various sections of Gwadar Port.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2021/02/28/7-page/871453-news.html>