



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

June 01-15, 2021

A pilot project of PICS

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Data collected and compiled by Rabeeha Safdar, Alishba Aslam and Zohaib Sultan

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June 01, 2021

Business Recorder

SEZs to be futile if industries not installed timely: CPEC body

ISLAMABAD: The Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has observed that the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would be futile, if industries are not installed there timely.

The committee met (in-camera) with Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Sher Ali Arbab in the chair at the Parliament House Monday.

The committee was briefed by additional secretary Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, secretary Ministry of Defence, secretary Board of Investment, secretary Power Division, secretary Petroleum Division, secretary Ministry of Railways, chairman FBR, managing directors SNGPL, SSGC and NTDC, CEO FIEDMC, CEO SEZDMC, CEO KPEZDMC, CEO PESCO, CEO KPBOIT, regarding security measures for projects under the CPEC framework, Mainline-1 (ML-1) project with special focus on ET component, and updated progress on the SEZs.

The committee recommended that the issues pertaining to sale and cancellation of plots in SEZs needs to be resolved at the earliest, so that the process of establishing industries in the SEZs could be expedited.

The committee emphasised on the need to move towards ease of doing business, so as to attract massive local and foreign direct investment in Pakistan.

The committee highlighted that quarters concerned should incentivise industries in the SEZs in such a way that the SEZs established in Pakistan could compete with other countries in the region.

Moreover, apart from focusing on agriculture and industrial sectors, the untapped potential in tourism should also be exploited.

The committee observed that a lot of revenue and employment opportunities can be generated by establishing integrated tourism zones in the country under the CPEC framework.

The committee, while receiving the briefing on security measures for projects under the CPEC framework, maintained that issues faced by the SEZs in terms of security measures affect businesses.

Measures which could thrive businesses in Pakistan should be made our top priority because economic stability will lead to peace and security in Pakistan.

The goals envisaged under the CPEC cannot be achieved without local ownership; therefore, issues faced by locals in terms of security arrangements should be resolved at the earliest, so that local ownership of CPEC projects could be secured.

While passing through security check posts, locals as well as tourists should be dealt with politeness and their self-respect should be maintained.

The committee remarked that the world is increasingly moving towards adoption of modern technologies.

Adding Electric Traction (ET) component in Mainline-1 (ML-1) project after eight to 10 years would become obsolete and costly.

Given the huge benefit of ET component in ML-1 in terms of its pay back, cost and compatibility with environment, we need to move towards its adoption right from now and upgrade existing infrastructure of project to the electric traction.

The meeting was attended by Noor Alam Khan, MNA, Sadaqat Ali Khan Abbasi, MNA, Mir Khan Muhammad Jamali, MNA, Nafeesa Inayatullah Khan Khattak, MNA, Ghous Bux Khan Mahar, MNA, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, MNA, Murtaza Javed Abbasi, MNA, Mehnaz Akbar Aziz, MNA, Zahid Akram Durrani, MNA, and Muhammad Aslam Bhootani, MNA.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2021/06/01/3-page/888064-news.html>

Daily Times

CPEC Authority Act

Munir Ahmed

At the very end of last month, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority won legal cover as the CPEC Authority Act 2020 sailed through the Senate. The Bill, already passed by the National Assembly, unexpectedly landed in the Senate through supplementary agenda minutes before the closing of the day's proceedings.

The opposition members strongly protested the government's move, and walked out over their being ignored. Thus, this proved a golden opportunity for the government to add the CPEC Authority Act feather to its cap. Once again, the PTI government has proved its stubbornness in refusing to take the opposition and other stakeholders into confidence. Thus, from this point henceforth, CPEC governance will remain controversial and stimulate a tug of war between the two ends; government and opposition.

The opposition had pointed out their concerns mainly regarding certain sections of the CPEC Authority Act. Yet these were not even addressed in the relevant Standing Committee of the National Assembly that passed the Bill with a majority of only two votes in October 2020. The opposition also strongly protested the sections of the Bill in the National Assembly session on February 1, 2021 when it was hurriedly passed without debate.

What strange thing is in the CPEC Authority Act that the government avoided a discussion in both houses? Why did Adviser to the Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Dr Babar Awan hurriedly want to present the Bill for immediate consideration through a motion on behalf of Minister for Planning Asad Umar? Following the opposition's objection that an adviser has no

authority in this regard, the motion was moved by Minister for Science and Technology Shibli Faraz, and the Bill sailed through the Senate.

The opposition's main concern is the procedure for the appointment of the CPEC chairman, two executive directors and six other members. Section-5 of the Act gives all authoritarian and discretionary powers to the Prime Minister to appoint all nine in the senior management initially for four years, extendable to another term of the same period. The procedure of appointments is contrary to country's previous practices for such kind of statutory bodies including National Accountability Bureau (NAB), National Commission of Human Rights (NCHR), Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) and some others where the opposition is taken on board for consensus appointment of its chief and the executive management.

Once again, the PTI has proved its stubbornness in refusing to take the opposition and other stakeholders into confidence. Thus, from this point henceforth, CPEC governance will remain controversial

It is strange, too, that three members of the CPEC Authority will make the Administrative and Financial Rules and Regulations for the authority, and they will be the final after its approval by their own executive management.

On the plus side, however, the CPEC Authority will have its quarterly meetings to review the progress, will have an audit and an annual report will be submitted to the Prime Minister within three months after every fiscal year. The Authority may establish a CPEC Fund with the Board of Investment (BOI) to further its objectives with "such a manner and no terms approved by the Finance Division" under the Section-15.

When "A single line budget shall be provided to the Authority" under Section-16 of the Act, then there will be no possibility to discuss it in Parliament. The chairperson shall be the Principal Accounting Officer of the budget prepared by his nominated two members and one from the concerned Division. "All the investments by the Authority shall be made with the approval of [its own] budget committee". That's it.

The bone of contention between the government and opposition is Section-23 of the Act that gives protection to all decisions and actions of whatsoever nature made by its chairman, senior management, members, directors, experts, consultants and staff working for the CPEC Authority.

Mystery surrounded the entire process of the making of this Act and its approval. Some of the Sections of the Act mentioned above reflect that the government has successfully made the CPEC Authority Act 2020 controversial. A regime that has been sloganeering for just and transparent governance in the country for 25 years is going to open several new Pandora's boxes. The Act will set an example contrary to the PTI's own shout outs. Lt General (Retd) Asim Bajwa has already been on the "mud-slinging" campaign very recently that has dented badly the reputation of the state institution and the gentlemen working for it. The Act is another ticking bomb that further blasts the image and repute of the institution and the uniformed personnel. The Act will open a road to legally compromised frameworks in the future too, further deteriorating

and undermining the position and role of the parliament. The “indemnity” in the CPEC Authority Act will encourage other “white elephants and lucrative government organisations” to demand the same legal cover. Rest in peace Pakistan, with unaccountable governance mechanisms.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/764821/cpec-authority-act/>

Pakistan, China open Khunjerab pass for trade, travel

After a prolonged closure due to the coronavirus outbreak, Pakistan and China have opened the Khunjerab pass for trade and travel activities. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Pak-China Division stated in a letter to the Gilgit Baltistan chief secretary that the border point has been opened. China has also opened its side of the border point, it added. The Chinese Embassy in Islamabad informed the ministry about the opening of the border crossing and asked it to open its side of the border point for resumption of trade and travel between the two countries. The border point between the two neighboring countries was closed in October 2019 following the coronavirus outbreak. Trade and travel activities through Khunjerab pass continue from April to December as per the protocol agreement signed between Islamabad and Beijing. However, it was closed for a long period due to the pandemic. Last year in June, the government of Gilgit Baltistan (GB) delayed its decision of opening Khunjerab pass as part of precautionary measures to stop the coronavirus’ possible entry into Pakistan from China.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/764909/pakistan-china-open-khunjerab-pass-for-trade-travel/>

Dunya News

USA, UK, China top three destinations of Pakistani exports in 10 months

ISLAMABAD (APP) - United States of America (USA) remained the top export destinations of the Pakistani products during the first ten months of financial year (2020-21), followed by United Kingdom (UK) and China. Total exports to the USA during July-April (2020-21) were recorded at US \$ 4019.722 million against the exports of US \$ 3368.090 million during July-April (2019-20), showing growth of 19.34 percent, according to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This was followed by UK, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth US \$ 1691.314 million against the exports of US \$ 1386.999 million last year, showing an increase of 21.94 percent. China was the at third top export destination, where Pakistan exported goods worth US \$ 1640.629 million during the months under review against the exports of US \$1411.004 million during last year, showing growth of 16.27 percent, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to Germany stood at US \$ 1245.122 million against US \$1116.232 million during last year, showing increase of 11.54 percent while the exports to UAE were recorded at US \$ 1215.939 million against US \$ 1377.287 million last year, the data revealed. During July-April (2020-21), the exports to Holland were recorded at US \$922.819 million against US \$850.421 million whereas the exports to Afghanistan stood at US \$ 828.727 million against US \$809.685 million. Pakistan’s exports to Italy were recorded at \$629.917 million against the exports of US \$ 642.617 million while the exports to Spain were recorded at US \$ 668.773

million against US \$751.606 million last year. The exports to Bangladesh stood at US \$497.396 million against US \$ 599.658 million. Similarly, the exports to France during the months under review were recorded at US \$ 361.699 million against US \$ 358.620 million while the exports to Saudi Arabia stood at US \$ 401.643 million against US \$ 388.610 million. Pakistan's exports to Turkey were recorded at US \$218.069 million during the current year compared to US \$240.196 million last year whereas the exports to Canada stood at US \$253.928 million against US \$ 231.242 million, to Poland US \$ 247.839 million against US \$ 218.654 million whereas the exports to Australia stood at US \$ 216.939 million during the current year against US \$ 170.321 million during last year. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed growth of 6.54 percent in ten months, from \$19.703 billion to \$20.992 billion, the SBP data showed.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Business/604156-USA-UK-China-top-three-destinations-of-Pakistani-exports-in-10-months>

Pakistan Observer

Gwadar: \$3 billion Chinese investment to create 30,000 employment

Lt-Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa, Chairman of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority, stated on Monday that a \$3 billion Chinese investment in a single project in the second phase of the Gwadar Port Free Zone would help create 30,000 employment. After seeing the port and other CPEC-related developments, the retired army general spoke to the media in Gwadar. The port and the free zone, according to Lt-Gen (retd) Bajwa, would produce roughly \$10 billion in economic activity if fully functioning. "Soon after completion of the Gwadar Free Zone, a lot of manufacturing and trading activities will start; cargoes will move, and trans-shipment activities will increase," he explained. "We will continue to monitor the development work in Gwadar till all the projects become fully operational.," he said. He stated the China Port Holding business had completed the port's infrastructure expansion at a cost of \$300 million, announcing that all four berths were operational. Over 67,000 metric tonnes of goods were processed at the port in the previous four months, he added, largely consignments under the Afghan Transit Trade Agreement that were afterwards transferred to Afghanistan. On Tuesday, a ship carrying 8,000 cubic feet of liquefied petroleum gas was expected to arrive at the port, while another ship carrying 24,000 MT of DAP fertiliser and feed supplies for Afghanistan was expected to arrive from Australia, he said. According to Asim Bajwa, the port handling capacity had been developed, and the Customs system had been put in place to help investors and merchants. "Now our full emphasis is to increase the port traffic for which we are pursuing the logistic companies to establish their offices in the city," he said. As regards the Gwadar Port Free Zone, Asim Bajwa said its first phase spreading over 60 acres of land had already been completed, with 47 enterprises registered. Bajwa stated six factories had been finished, three of which were completely operating, when asked about the port projects in detail. Six more are being built, he added, adding that the port and the free zone have contributed to the creation of 1,200 direct employment. He said that 12,000 employees had been engaged to construct the port's supporting infrastructure. According to Asim Bajwa, the second phase of the Gwadar Port

Free Zone would include 2,221 acres of land, and Prime Minister Imran Khan will lay the foundation stone. He said that the China Port Holding Company had already secured a second-phase investor, who would need 1,600 acres of property. The investor had promised a \$3 billion direct investment in a single business that would generate 30,000 employment. Asim Bajwa pointed out, the Eastbay Expressway would transport goods straight from the port to M-8, where it would be sent to Karachi and the rest of Pakistan. He said that 94 percent of the construction on the road had been done and that it will be launched in September. Similarly, he said that construction on Gwadar Airport was progressing at a rapid speed, and that the city's technical and vocational colleges will be finished in October. He said that the prime minister had particularly ordered the development of as many work possibilities as possible in the region, as well as the capacity development of local youngsters via skill training. The CPEC chairwoman expressed gratitude to Chinese President Xi Jinping, stating that his "gift" of a 150-bed hospital was already being built near the port. He said that Gwadar City's master plan had also been approved and was currently in the execution stage.

<https://pakobserver.net/gwadar-3-billion-chinese-investment-in-to-create-30000-employment/>

The Express Tribune

Pak, Afghan, China FMs to meet amid Afghan stalemate

ISLAMABAD: Foreign ministers from Pakistan, Afghanistan and China will hold a trilateral meeting on Thursday through video link to discuss the current stalemate in the war-torn country as the US and NATO accelerated their troop withdrawal from the neighboring country. The last trilateral meeting was held in September 2019 and the latest meeting being convened virtually because of the Covid-19 pandemic would discuss how to break the current deadlock in peace efforts. Also the meeting comes at a time when relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan hit a setback after Afghan National Security Adviser Hamdullah Mohib made unwarranted remarks against Pakistan. Islamabad has not only conveyed its strong reservations to Kabul but decided not to hold any bilateral meetings with the Afghan NSA, who one Pakistani official said represents the Indian lobby in the Afghan set up. "If you speak the language of Ajit Doval, then don't expect any cooperation from us," the official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity. However, despite Pakistan's strong protest, it is continuing with efforts seeking a political solution to the Afghan war. The trilateral meeting is manifestation of that approach, according to a Foreign Office official. The official said the three-way talks would review the situation in Afghanistan and discuss various options for the way forward. The situation in Afghanistan is precarious amid the US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan well ahead of the September 11 deadline given by President Joe Biden. The US and NATO forces would now complete the drawdown by July 4. However, the absence of a peace deal has further raised fears of instability in the war-ravaged country that has seen a spike in violence. Meanwhile, Afghanistan Wolesi Jirga Speaker Mir Rahman Rahmani met Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the Foreign Office on Tuesday.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2302897/pak-afghan-china-fms-to-meet-amid-afghan-stalemate>

The Nation

Chinese envoy calls on NAB Chief

ISLAMABAD - Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Mr Nong Rong called on National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman Justice (retired) Javed Iqbal at NAB headquarters on Monday. During the meeting, both discussed matters of mutual interest. Mr Nong Rong was accompanied by Director of Political Section Wang Sheng Ji.

The Chairman apprised them about NAB's 'Accountability for All' policy in order to eradicate corruption from Pakistan and efforts to nab the corrupt which were also lauded by reputable national and international organisations.

Meeting held in a very cordial atmosphere

The envoy appreciated the NAB's efforts and both sides reiterated the cooperation in all areas to eradicate the menace of corruption. The meeting was held in a very cordial atmosphere. The dignitaries discussed the issues related to mutual legal aid, United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and training-based assistance for the capacity building.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-01/page-1/detail-5>

The News

SEZ initiative

The Chinese model of economy has taught us to go all out for infrastructure development in the form of industrial clusters and economic zones to achieve economic development.

Pakistan has learnt recently to follow this Chinese economic growth model and has started taking initiatives to develop Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the backdrop of CPEC. The SEZ initiative is a step in the right direction towards a developed Pakistan.

Although the concept of SEZs has contributed a lot in the world economy, the Chinese experience has been amazing. Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s and early 1980s started implementing a new vision of economic growth through the modern concept of SEZs by opening the market for world investors. China has also developed economic and technological development zones, free trade zones, export-processing zones and high-tech industrial development zones. The SEZs and other economic zones are contributing in a big way to the Chinese economy by attracting FDI, generating employment, upgrading skills, enhancing and diversifying exports as well as trade efficiencies. According to some estimates, the SEZs are contributing around 23 percent to GDP, almost 60 percent in Chinese exports while attracting 45 percent in FDI and creating about 30 million jobs, which is not less than a miracle.

The SEZ model of economic growth is also popular in other parts of the world; most such zones are found in African and Latin American countries. These zones are in the thousands. Countries

like the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Eastern Europe have also developed their economic zones for growth and investment. The US has developed California Enterprise Zones, Maryland Enterprise Zones, New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zones and Michigan Neighbourhood Enterprise Zones. Same is the case in other countries of the world, especially developing countries or least developed countries in the African continent. Bangladesh is another prime example of developing SEZs with impressive economic growth credited to such zones in the country.

Pakistan has all the ingredients to go all out for such option but the SEZ part of our economic planning is absolutely needed for economic growth for which CPEC could prove to be very effective, as the Chinese are investing all over the world to expand their industrial network. The public-private investment model is the best way for development in the country. The public-private partnership (PPP) model is a way forward, which the government is already contemplating. It is my considered opinion that the sooner the better we capture this mode of partnership.

Two SEZs are being developed right now under CPEC; one in Rashakai (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and the other in Faisalabad but what we need is to develop at least 20-30 such zones. The government has to chalk out a comprehensive programme for the development of such zones from KP to Gwadar. The best use of CPEC could be to industrialise Pakistan through the PPP model by further cementing it through incentives for such zones, especially declaring them tax free for at least 15 to 20 years.

The way forward for our economy is to materialise the bigger concept to incentivise Large Scale Manufacturing (LSM) enhancing exports by further substituting imports at the domestic level. That dream may come true only if the concept of SEZs on the pattern of the Chinese economy is implemented in true letter and spirit. The LSM sector has already started giving results on the lowering of interest rates by the State Bank of Pakistan from 13.25 percent to 7 percent thanks to the pandemic outbreak. Our exports have also started improving, coupled with a big boost to our foreign remittances which is a great sign of our economic recovery subject to sustainability in the longer run. The development of SEZs can ensure such sustainability.

Last but not the least, Gwadar may be made the hub of such industrialisation like Shenzhen in China. The same model may be replicated in Pakistan along with the development of other SEZs for overall economic growth and prosperity of Pakistan. The SEZs are a must as is economic growth.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/842874-sez-initiative>

K2 Daily

چین، سرکاری وزیر خارجہ مذاکرات
کی آج میزبانی کرے گا
بیجنگ (شہوا) چین، افغانستان اور پاکستان
کے درمیان مذاکرات کا (باقی صفحہ 7 پیج نمبر 26)

بقیہ 26

چونکہ مذاکراتی اجلاس (آج) بھارت کو ہوگا۔ چین کے ریاستی کونسلر اور وزیر خارجہ وانگ نی مذاکرات کی میزبانی کریں گے۔ چینی وزارت خارجہ کے ترجمان وانگ وین من نے بدھ کو بتایا کہ افغان وزیر خارجہ محمد حنیف اتمار اور پاکستانی وزیر خارجہ شاہ محمود قریشی ویڈیو لنک کے ذریعے مذاکرات میں شریک ہوں گے۔ ترجمان نے بتایا کہ چین میں ممالک کے وزرائے خارجہ افغانستان میں امن اور مصالحت کے عمل، سرہ فریق ملی تعاون اور انسداد دہشت گردی سیکورٹی تعاون پر تعمیلی تبادلہ خیال کریں گے۔

https://www.epaper.dailyk2.com/Home?Issue=NP_ICT&Page=Baqia

June 02, 2021

Daily Times**Farrukh for enhanced Pak-China media cooperation**

Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Tuesday underlined the need for enhanced cooperation and close coordination between the media industries of China and Pakistan.

The minister, in a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong who called on him at his office here, said both the countries' news organizations, including Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV), Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and Xinhua had already signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) for the purpose, but there was a need to expand the cooperation to film industries.

The Chinese envoy said Pakistani media played an important role in disseminating positive information about the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), dispelling propaganda of the countries hostile to the initiative.

He stressed on strengthening business-to-business cooperation between the two countries. "Trade is a good beginning for all kinds of cooperation."

The minister said CPEC was a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was crucial to regional connectivity.

He apprised the envoy about the progress made on the Allama Iqbal Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Faisalabad, which, he said, had great potential for the Chinese investors. Necessary infrastructure in the economic zone had already been developed.

The minister stressed the need for joint ventures of both the countries' companies in the textile sector.

He expressed pleasure over the extension of CPEC beyond infrastructure development, social and agriculture cooperation.

Farrukh Habib called for city-to-city cooperation, research and collaboration on social protection programmes between China and Pakistan.

During the meeting, both the dignitaries exchanged felicitations on the successful completion of 70 years of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan.

Farrukh said China was an iron brother and all-weather friend of Pakistan, which always stood by the latter in difficult times.

“The Karakoram Highway is a testament of our strong friendly relations. The people of Pakistan have very favourable sentiments for China and keep Pakistan-China friendship in high regards,” the minister remarked.

He congratulated Nong Rong on the completion of 100 years of the establishment of Communist Party of China (CPC).

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/765702/farrukh-for-enhanced-pak-china-media-cooperation/>

Pakistan, China to boost medical cooperation

“The medical cooperation we have done with Pakistan is non-governmental. When the epidemic is over, efforts should be made to promote medical cooperation in technological innovation on the government level,” said Li Dinggang, executive president at Beijing Lu Daopei Hematology Hospital.

“I hope that the Chinese technologies will benefit Pakistan, which will then be extended to other countries along the Belt and Road, ” he said, according to a report published by China Economic Net (CEN). “In 2004, China approved the world’s first gene medicine for the treatment of malignant tumors, which can be used to treat advanced-stage cancers. This news caused a global sensation at the time. A large number of foreign patients came to China for medicine. Some people who couldn’t go to China invited Chinese doctors to come to their country for a consultation. I had the honor to participate in the preliminary research and development of gene medicine.” Li Dinggang said.

In 2014, Li Dinggang visited Pakistan and got in touch with the Pakistan government. “Under the guidance of Pakistani doctor friends, we conducted several exchange lectures on China’s genetic technology and biotechnology. Pakistani doctors hoped that we can help them build gene therapy center in Pakistan. At that time, we also signed a memorandum of cooperation,

promising to train them in China's genetic technology," he said. "This year is the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan, we will continue to promote our friendly cooperation between China and Pakistan. As a doctor, I hope that we can build a bridge for international medical cooperation between China and Pakistan and benefit more Pakistani friends," he added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/765651/pakistan-china-to-boost-medical-cooperation/>

Pakistan could benefit from the stability and development of Xinjiang: Yao Jing

Pakistan can benefit from the stability and development of Xinjiang, which can also benefit from China-Pakistan economic and trade cooperation and the construction of the CPEC, so this is a win-win and mutually beneficial outcome, said former Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Yao Jing. Xinjiang should be promoted to become a link between Pakistan and other countries in the future, said Yao, now director of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region People's Government. "Central Asia's economy and development are highly complementary, and China has provided Pakistan a good platform to expand its foreign economic and trade ties and enhance its foreign relations," he told China Economic Net. In order to speed up the construction of the Belt and Road Core Area, the Party Committee and the government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region have put forward a series of policy proposals, put the construction of the China-Pakistan economic corridor in a more important position, and continuously promoted economic and trade exchanges with Pakistan to a broader space.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/765611/pakistan-could-benefit-from-the-stability-and-development-of-xinjiang-yao-jing/>

CPEC faces new opportunities to boost industrial cooperation: Global Times

Since being officially launched in 2015, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) flagship project, has begun to bear fruit.

As construction of the CPEC project has come into the new stage of promoting industry and industrial park cooperation, Pakistan is facing new opportunities to fast-track the development of its industries which can help it compete globally, according to an article published by Global Times on Tuesday.

Industry cooperation has come along slower, relative to other aspects in overall CPEC cooperation in recent years. At the early stage of the project, there were issues including energy supply shortage, infrastructure deficiency and inefficient implementation of the incentive policies. At that time, some in Pakistan lacked a clear understanding of the direction of industrial development, despite seeing the value of building on the country's core competitiveness.

Since the 1970s, Pakistan has started the process to promote economic liberalization and the economy's opening-up. Joining the BRI and CPEC cooperation is part of the country's efforts in accelerating its opening-up process. In these couple of years, the country focused on industrial park construction while trying to undertake industrial relocation from China. Now, Pakistan has largely surpassed India in many aspects when it comes to economic opening-up. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the significance of the construction of the CPEC has become a key highlight for the country's economic development. The construction of the CPEC will play a supporting role in Pakistan's economic recovery in the post-pandemic era. Pakistan should seize the opportunity to formulate scientific development plans to advance domestic industries with competitive advantages.

Speaking of China-Pakistan industrial cooperation, agriculture is the sector that could help Pakistan consolidate its industrial advantages and industrial chain, and help the country quickly gain foreign exchange earnings through exports. At the same time, China should open its market to Pakistani agricultural products and fruits, and expand imports of Pakistani agricultural and industrial products. The textile industry is a traditionally strong industry in Pakistan. When China's textile industry is shifting outward due to labor price rises, Pakistan should seize the opportunity to use the advantages accumulated by China's textile industry to upgrade its own industry and accept orders from abroad. In addition, the Indian textile industry has largely come to standstill due to the latest resurgence of the pandemic, and a large number of global orders have been transferred to other markets, including China. Pakistan should seize the opportunity of global value chain and industrial chain restructuring to develop its emerging industries.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/765612/cpec-faces-new-opportunities-to-boost-industrial-cooperation-global-times/>

Chinese experience to help Pakistan control water pollution

China hopes to cooperate with Pakistan in water pollution control, protection of drinking water sources and recycling of waste water as it has gained experience through explorations in the sector.

This was stated by Wang Dong, director of Water Ecological Environment Planning Institute in Chinese Academy of Environmental Research.

Wang Dong stressed that the first step of water pollution control is legislation. China adopts a series of related regulations such as the Water Pollution Prevention Law. "China has more than 60 criteria for industrial wastewater emission. Moreover, there are local emission criteria for specific areas".

"In addition to installing online monitoring equipment to inspect conventional water pollution indicators, industries in China also need to conduct manual monitoring regularly. Third-party agencies and environmental management departments also come for monitoring and impose fines on illegal sewage discharge," he told China Economic Net.

China started to treat domestic sewage on a large scale in the 1990s, the work started from cities to towns and then to rural areas.

According to Wang Dong, the daily processing capacity of sewage treatment facilities in China now has exceeded 200 million cubic meters. “Collection facilities have also been constructed. To avoid secondary pollution, we also attach great importance to the treatment of sludge generated during sewage treatment”.

Wang Dong said that China’s sewage treatment plants produce about 70 billion cubic meters of water per year. “To ensure that the water can be reused, we adopt different treatment criteria according to the requirements of water users. Industrial water, landscape water, municipal miscellaneous water, etc., all have different water treatment standards,” he added.

Wang Dong also shared some Chinese experiences about how to guarantee the domestic supply of drinking water. “It is very important to set the water source protection zones. No pollution discharge is allowed in the first-grade protection zones, where the government also conducts overall management. In addition, citizens have the right to know about the drinking water protection regulation and they are encouraged to participate in the relevant decision-making and monitoring of polluted water discharge”, he added.

As this year’s World Environment Day, themed “Restore Our Earth” is to be hosted by Pakistan on June 5. Prof Dr. Muhammad Nafees, Chairman of the Department of Environmental Sciences elaborated on the challenges and issues in water pollution that Pakistan is facing.

“Pakistan should first clarify what the problem they have in water pollution control and what the goal they want to achieve. According to the difference between the problem and the goal, a suitable treatment can be adopted,” Wang Dong suggested.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/766118/chinese-experience-to-help-pakistan-control-water-pollution/>

Pakistan Observer

CPEC & CORRIDOR OF KNOWLEDGE

THE China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has now brightened the chances of regional connectivity especially with Central Asian States. It has become an engine of growth. It has become an essential fuel of energy generation in which hydropower has outperformed other sources of energy. It has become an instrument for massive industrialization. Last but not the least, it has accelerated the pace of industrialization in the country. While inaugurating the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, President Xi-Jinping, said: “Friendship between China and Pakistan is based on trust and mutual support and we have been devoted friends through both good and hard times. To restrain the hegemonic and expansionist designs of India and Narendra Modi-led BJP Government, the need for this partnership has further intensified in the last few years in which Corridor of Knowledge may play a decisive role in the days to come. The multibillion USD mega projects under CPEC are destined to usher in a new era of economic prosperity and peace in the region. These mammoth projects in the energy sector, strengthening

of physical and telecommunication networks, upgradation and strengthening of Gwadar port and establishment of Export Promotions Zones across Pakistan, are collectively called the “Destiny Changer” in the region. The dividends of the first early harvest phase of CPEC have already created trickle-down effects to the masses in Pakistan. The academic and research collaboration between China and Pakistan have witnessed impressive growth in the last few decades in the areas of graduate studies, joint collaborative research, research funding, exchange programs, short term placement of students and faculty, organizing conferences, seminars and workshops etc. In this regard, the Centre for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) Islamabad has been following a holistic approach for the further strengthening of bilateral relations and especially formation of Corridor of Knowledge through conducting numerous research papers, qualitative articles about CPEC, BRI, foreign policy of China, socio-economic policies, bilateral relations, its concepts about befitting regionalism and friendly globalization, universal health policies, global humanitarian assistance and last but not the least, support to WHO and other international organizations for the betterment of humanity at large. Moreover, it has been conducting interactive sessions with experts, seminars, round table interactive programs and international conferences/webinars on various topics of mutual interest. Its online internship programs are creating difference and disseminating a message of hope, better future and showcasing of soft image projection of China and, of course, Pakistan. It has been on the right path of forming a creditable “Corridor of Knowledge” which is essential for the rapid development of the CPCE, especially its phase-II. It has signed numerous befitting MOUs with many famous universities of the Eurasia and Middle East to create bridges of trust, better understanding and, of course, further enhancing people-to-people diplomacy and cultural cooperation. Regional Integration Centre, University of Punjab is another noble policy making institute/think-tank which has been striving hard to promote the soft image of Pakistan through educational, cultural and people-to-people diplomacy. It grants scholarships especially for the students of Central Asian Countries and China to get enrolled and experience a qualitative education. In this regard, a joint maiden program of the RIC & CGSS entitled “Contemporary Dynamics of Pakistan” has already been started from May 31, 2021 specifically for the global diplomatic community totally free of cost because CGSS & RIC matter friendship over money. The two important projects have started, China Pakistan Joint Research Centre at Quaid-e-Azam University and Academic Collaboration under CPEC consortium Universities. In the former mega project, three centres will be established with the main seat at QUA for earth Sciences, Labs for Cryosphere and Climate at Karakoram International University Gilgit and Marine Sciences Labs at Marine University Karachi. The CGSS has direct access to many Chinese universities, prominent think tanks and organizations which may be used for the further strengthening of the Corridor of Knowledge in the days to come. The objectives of the Corridor of Knowledge to establish collaboration amongst the CPEC Consortium Universities include study the geo-strategic and geo-economic dimensions of the Chinese Belt and Road initiative and CPEC to understand their long-term impact on Pakistan. It is meant to develop mechanisms to fully exploit the opportunities arising out of China’s appetite for global talent, and facilitate absorption of their graduates by Pakistani

economy. Thus the role of the CGSS & RIC is crucial and constant. It supports higher education institutions (HEIs) in the development of human resources to implement the CPEC Long Term Plan. It develops the capacity of Pakistani universities for providing policy inputs to the government on the challenges emerging in the wake of implementation of CPEC Long Term Plan. Last but not least, it develops an understanding of Chinese history, culture and the governance system that has created the Chinese miracle, while drawing lessons for its own development. The various components of corridor of knowledge may include, joint research on climate adaptation, sustainable mountain development, food Security, urban planning, water resource management, supply chain management, IT, entrepreneurship, medicinal plants, gemstones and mineral resource management etc. It also includes talent cultivation and training, post-doctoral research, short-term trainings, dual degree programs between Chinese and Pakistani universities, conferences, seminars, workshops etc. In this regard, CGSS & RIC have comparative advantages over others which may be used. On its part, the CGSS is currently conducting numerous bilateral or trilateral international conferences to showcase China's soft image to focus on the challenges faced by the two countries, with special emphasis over CPEC and BRI. The Pakistan Observer, a leading English daily newspaper, has been striving hard to project various aspects of China's soft image by publishing unlimited articles, news, interviews and special editions on a regular basis. It has been on the frontline to mitigate spillover repercussions of the western propaganda through qualitative articles. It has now become a sign of intellectual resistance against Indian and Western propaganda, fake news and unfriendly lobbies. Mind is the ultimate power in which the Corridor of Knowledge always plays a very important role. The future development of CPEC is heavily dependent on the Corridor of Knowledge.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-corridor-of-knowledge-by-zulkafil-h-khan/>

CPEC: Culmination of 70 years of Pak-China Friendship

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

CHINA and Pakistan, being iron brothers, have celebrated the 70th anniversary of diplomatic ties. Since its start both countries have successfully maintained an all-weather friendship and extended diverse cooperation in every field and issue of survival in which China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has now become icon of successful commercial diplomacy, durable economic partnership, effective tool of energy generation, means of new job generation and last but not the least, massive industrialization in the country. CPEC is indeed the culmination of Pak-China friendship which has actually revolutionized the concept of engagements. CPEC as an important flagship project of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which is now rated as project of the century and one of the main platforms for deepening bilateral cooperation, it has been bearing fruit. New inflows of foreign direct investment, joint ventures, formation of special economic zones, immense infrastructural development, roads, super highways, agricultural development, science & technology, educational and cultural cooperation have been further enhanced after the operationalization of the CPEC in the country. Moreover, Pakistan and China are time-tested strategic cooperative partners and the bilateral brotherly relations have

witnessed new heights since the launch of the CPEC since its inception in 2015. According to official statistics (April 2021), Pakistan recorded a substantial surge in its bilateral trade relations with China. It witnessed a 70% increase in exports to China in the first quarter of 2021. It was \$888 million as compared to 2020' Q1 \$526 million. Furthermore, the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFD) was started last year which now allows Pakistani manufacturers and traders to export around 313 new products to the Chinese market with zero duties. Fortunately, Pakistan is now benefitting from Zero Duties Regime (ZDRs) on exports of 724 products to China under the first free trade pact signed between the two countries in 2006. After implementation of the second pact, Pakistan has been now allowed to export more than 1,000 products to China with zero duties. The new facility is particularly benefiting the agriculture, mango exports, Halal foods, leather, confectionary items and biscuits product sectors as well. In 2019, Pakistan also inked an agreement with China to use Swapping of National Currencies Regime (SNCR) in which Chinese currency for bilateral trade to get rid of the dollar burden in \$15 billion bilateral trade. According to official data, Pakistan and China's bilateral trade volume increased to some \$15.6 billion in the 2019 fiscal year, up from \$2.2 billion in 2005. It shows constant improvement and upward push in the Pak-China bilateral trade relations since its inception. The \$64 billion mega-project of CPEC aims to connect China's strategically important Xinjiang province to the Gwadar port in Pakistan through a network of roads, railways and pipelines to transport cargo, oil and gas. The economic corridor will not only provide China with cheaper access to Africa and the ME but will also earn Pakistan billions of dollars for providing transit facilities to the world's second-largest economy.

In this connection, Gwadar port has made a series of achievements including the inauguration of liner services, Afghan transit trade and liquefied petroleum gas business and is sailing towards the dream of becoming a "New Dubai" in Pakistan. It is hoped that the improvement the CPEC has brought to Pakistan's transport infrastructure and Gwadar port can facilitate trade with Afghanistan and Central Asian countries, which will, in turn, tap the full potential of the corridor. The sufficient energy supply under CPEC energy projects has paved the way for the boom of Pakistan's national economic and social activities, enabling the country to embark on a path of clean and green development. CPEC has also modernized Pakistan's means of transportation. In Lahore, the launch of the South Asian country's first-ever metro train service last October has provided a modern, comfortable and eco-friendly way of travelling for over 11 million residents in the city. It has become a popular choice among local people and is expected to facilitate traffic and reduce air pollution in the city. Meanwhile, the CPEC's other transport infrastructure projects including the Karakoram Highway Phase-II and the Sukkur-Multan Motorway have connected different provinces of Pakistan in a modern and better way, facilitating transportation, trade and people's travel. Till now, a total of 46 CPEC projects are under construction or have been completed and the corridor has brought \$25.4 billion in foreign direct investment to Pakistan and created 75,000 jobs for the locals, serving as a focal point for China and Pakistan to drive practical cooperation. With fruitful achievements, the CPEC has entered a new stage of high-quality development, focusing more on industrial, agricultural and

socio-economic cooperation. The Pakistani government plans to develop nine special economic zones across the country under the CPEC to promote its industrialization. As the first one of its kind being implemented, the Rashakai special economic zone in the KP is pushing forward its construction and inviting investors, along with the building of the first factory invested by a Chinese company in the zone. Time and again Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan projected the strategic importance of CPEC for the socio-economic development of Pakistan. Rather he attached future economic development, stability and sustainability directly to the CPEC. Initiation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at an economically challenging time for Pakistan is a Chinese vote of confidence to Pakistan. CPEC has already proven to be a success story. Pak-China relations were built on a strong foundation of trust and complementarity of interests. Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong projected that “POWERCHINA” has inked an agreement with WAPDA for the 1,410 MW fifth extension of Tarbela Hydropower Project. The project will start electricity generation by mid-2024 and thereon supply 1.81 billion units of low-cost and clean electricity to the National Grid. Recently, Pakistan launched its Karachi Nuclear Power Plant with the help from China as USD 34 billion have been earmarked for energy projects under CPEC. The Chinese BRI had 56 economic zones in 20 countries, nine of which were in Pakistan. 2020 was a period of market cultivation under CPEC in which the emphasis was on reducing barriers to economic development of Pakistan. Being a prominent regional expert of CPEC & BRI, I suggest that we should jointly work to make Pak-China friendship an “everlasting spirit” because spirits “never die”. There is an urgent need to work on start of “Silk Health Route, Corridor of Knowledge, agricultural development, converting deserts of sands into hubs of greenery, sustainable military cooperation in Anti-Ballistic Missiles System, unmanned drones, stealth air fighter, unmanned naval warship and last but not the least, cooperation in artificial intelligence technologies.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-culmination-of-70-years-of-pak-china-friendship-by-dr-mehmood-ul-hassan-khan/>

Unleashing potential of Gwadar

THANKS to the active and comprehensive cooperation of China, Pakistan’s dream of unleashing the full potential of the strategic port of Gwadar is becoming a reality as a number of projects aimed at achieving this cherished objective are nearing completion.

Talking to the media here after reviewing the Gwadar Port and other projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Initiative, Chairman of the CPEC Authority Lt.Gen (Retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa highlighted that after becoming fully operational, the Gwadar Port and Gwadar Free Zone would generate economic activities of around \$10 billion per annum.

The details provided by General Asim Saleem Bajwa spark confidence that all projects and activities related to the port and other connected projects are progressing well and would be completed soon.

It is heartening that the port's infrastructural work had been completed by the China Port Holding Company at the cost of around \$300 million, and its all four berths were now fully operational.

Already, cargo ships including those under Afghan Transit Trade Agreement are handled at the port and now efforts are focused at increasing the port traffic for which logistic companies are being persuaded to establish their offices in the city.

As regards the Gwadar Port Free Zone, its first phase spreading over 60 acres of land had already been completed, with 47 enterprises registered while Prime Minister Imran Khan would perform ground-breaking of the second phase of the Zone spread over 2,221 acres of land.

Port's connectivity with the rest of the country and the region was the main stumbling block in the way of full exploitation of its potential and in this backdrop, it augurs well that about 94% of the work on Eastbay Expressway, which would directly take the cargo from port to M-8 for onward shipment to Karachi and the rest of the country, has been completed and the entire project would be accomplished during the next three/four months.

Chinese investors have started flocking to the region to set up factories and businesses in different sectors of the economy that would not only improve the lot of the local people and Balochistan but also have a positive impact on the overall economy of the country.

Gwadar is strategically located to connect three regions – South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle-East and way back in 1954 the Geological Survey of the United States published a report on the coastal line of Pakistan identifying Gwadar as an appropriate site for building a seaport without much financial cost.

Regrettably, we did only politics and missed several opportunities to develop this vital seaport and it was only with the Chinese assistance that the project took a concrete shape.

Then again, the port remained almost non-operational for years despite completion of its first phase in 2006 mainly due to lack of proper planning, commitment and resources.

This aspect was taken care of when Chinese included a number of projects for all round development of Gwadar under the economic corridor.

Though full exploitation of the potential of the port is deeply linked to these, under implementation, projects but there are also clear signs of improvement in socio-economic conditions of the local population due to increased economic and employment opportunities, establishment of educational institutions including professional and technical training, world-class infrastructure, increased mobility due to improved road network and, above all, setting up of factories and companies.

All this scuttles the negative propaganda by some vested interests that tried to hamper the developmental activities in Gwadar on different pretexts.

Gwadar was a backward region (despite its strategic location) as far as civic facilities, living conditions, agriculture and industrial activities were concerned but now its entire landscape is changing for the better.

Apart from projects that would accelerate the pace of industrial and business activities in Gwadar, the authorities are also working on several other aspects that would go a long way in transforming the lot of the local people.

Talks were underway with six Chinese companies to sign lease agreements for 32,500 acres of land, on which they would develop a unique model of corporate farming on the pattern of similar farms being executed in KP and Sindh.

The potential for progress and prosperity is enormous but it all depends on expeditious implementation of all projects and proper marketing of its potential.

Experts say completion of the desired infrastructure, facilities and services would make Gwadar a port of choice for transshipment of cargo to and from a number of countries as it is the shortest and most feasible route to sea for Afghanistan, most of Central Asian countries and for parts of Russia especially during winter when most of the ports are closed. It all means any investment on Gwadar is worth making.

<https://pakobserver.net/unleashing-potential-of-gwadar/>

June 03, 2021

Pakistan Observer

First batch of Pakistani mangoes to arrive China next week

First batch of Pakistani mangoes will arrive in China next week, according to Gwadar Pro. “This year we will start mango export to China on 10th of June. So they will reach China on the 11th,” said Adnan Hafeez, founder of Imperial Ventures who has been doing Pakistan mango and orange exports to China for 5 years. “This year, we want to conduct the mango export earlier, so that we can have proper marketing in China.” Due to the Covid-19, when mango or any kind of shipment arrives in China customs, they will first conduct Covid-19 tests on everything. If goods are detected positive, the shipment will be destroyed. So many of our previous buyers stopped bookings to avoid such loss.” Adnan told us that they started the B to C sale last year. They do promotions online to sell mango to individual customers in small quality on WeChat or other platforms. A lot of Chinese customers have already pre booked their mangoes. “In this way, the customers do not need to bear any loss.” Similar to the last year, the mango will be transported from Lahore to Kunming airport with the support of YTO Express. “We can achieve 72 hour delivery from Pakistan to your doorstep.” According to Adnan, the transportation cost is around RMB 7 to 8 per kilogram from Lahore to Kunming. “Now we have bookings about 2 tons. We still have one week. If we can get higher quantity, the transportation price can be further reduced.” “Last year Shanghai conducted the mango event in the mall. So

this year I suggested using the same strategy in Beijing, that we find some supermarket to hold the promotion activity. After the event, the display can continue, so people can come to buy and taste.” Adnan believes that in this way, they can get better feedback from the people. “We actually have never marketed our mango to the Chinese people. If you ask them what choices of mango they have, they never think of Pakistani mango. This is why we should put our mango in some better place where people may get to know that Pakistan also has mango, and it’s one of the five largest mango producers in the world.” This year, Adnan has started some new cooperation with Chinese partners in online sales. “Our new partner has never sold Pakistani mangoes before. They only did some small-scale marketing. When our first shipment arrives, they will check everything and start marketing aggressively in the next phase. We also expect that we get a better sale in the next phase.” “Last year we started mango export quite late, this year we started quite early. We expect that for every 10 days we will have one batch of mango sending to China. We’re planning like that. But let’s see what’s the market response after the first batch.” Adnan said.

<https://pakobserver.net/first-batch-of-pakistani-mangoes-to-arrive-china-next-week/>

Pakistan invites Tajikistan to leverage CPEC

During his meeting with visiting Tajik President Emomali Rahmon on Wednesday, Prime Minister Imran Khan welcomed Tajikistan to use Pakistan’s seaports and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The prime minister restated Pakistan’s support for Tajikistan’s participation in the Quadrilateral Traffic-in-Transit Agreement during a joint press conference (QTTA). He further said that Pakistan was willing to supply Tajikistan arms. President Rahmon came to Pakistan on a two-day visit. He had a one-on-one discussion with the prime minister, during which the two addressed the full range of bilateral connections as well as regional and international concerns. According to a joint statement released after the meeting, Prime Minister Imran briefed President Rahmon of the Gwadar seaport’s operationalization and offered Tajikistan the use of Pakistani ports and the CPEC. Imran emphasized that Pakistani seaports provided the most efficient and cost-effective connection to Central Asian nations, such as Tajikistan. Imran told a press conference that improving economic links were a main priority during the negotiations, adding that Gwadar Port could aid in improving trade and economic relationships with Tajikistan. The two sides also spoke about cooperating in other areas, including as defense. Imran said that Pakistan was willing to supply guns to Tajikistan and that a memorandum of understanding (MoU) had been signed for this reason. He did not, however, give any specifics about the arms sales. President Rahmon proposed to organize the joint working group to resolve transit trade difficulties as soon as possible and invited Afghanistan to attend its conference to enhance trade and commerce, with the goal of including the rest of the region. Prime Minister Imran and President Rahmon expressed alarm about the possibility of Afghanistan devolving into civil conflict after the United States’ withdrawal from the war-torn nation, saying that such a scenario would be disastrous for both nations. “We both share the concern that if there is no political settlement after the US withdrawal we fear Afghanistan may

face the same situation as it had after the Soviet withdrawal,” the prime minister cautioned at a joint news conference with the Tajik president. “This will not only affect our bilateral trade but also lead to terrorism,” Imran said. Imran said he and Tajik President Emomali Rahmon shared this concern and that the only way to avoid anarchy in Afghanistan was for a political resolution to be reached. He also said that both countries have agreed to collaborate with other nations in order to avoid turmoil in Afghanistan. The two leaders expressed their resolve to elevate bilateral ties to a new level of strategic cooperation for the mutual benefit of the two countries and their people, according to the joint statement, while expressing satisfaction with the steadily growing relations between Pakistan and Tajikistan. At global fora such as the UN, OIC, ECO, and SCO, the two presidents expressed delight with their good bilateral collaboration. They pledged to continue to expand multilateral collaboration in the future for global and regional peace and prosperity. To further expand bilateral commercial and economic connections, the two leaders emphasized the necessity of holding meetings of the Pakistan-Tajikistan Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, and Scientific-Technical Cooperation on a regular basis. They emphasized the need for thorough execution and continuous monitoring of the committee’s conclusions. The Intergovernmental Commission’s next session will be held later this year, as promised. The actions of many joint working groups (JWGs) formed to further improve the already expanding bilateral cooperation in numerous industries, including commerce, investment, transportation, energy, culture, and tourism, were observed with pleasure by the two presidents. They emphasized the importance of the Joint Commercial Council (JBC) established between the two nations in fostering direct business ties, as well as the necessity for chambers of commerce and the private sector to attend its meetings on a regular basis. They also agreed to hold frequent trade exhibits and business forums in order to increase bilateral commerce. The two presidents praised the progress made in the execution of Central Asia and South Asia (CASA)-1000 flagship power project and reaffirmed their commitment to completing it as soon as possible. They agreed that if the project were to come true, energy interconnection would be established, resulting in wealth for everybody. They emphasized the need of using the tremendous untapped potential, especially in the fields of commerce, energy, connectivity, agriculture, and industry, for mutual benefit. The two leaders emphasized the need of promoting people-to-people connections and enhancing collaboration in education, culture, and tourism via mutual development and collaborative partnerships. Both parties emphasized the significance of road, rail, and air linkages between the two nations in promoting bilateral and regional connectivity, and they agreed to strengthen current infrastructure and investigate new possibilities for boosting rail, road, and air connectivity.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-invites-tajikistan-to-leverage-cpec/>

Aimal Wali calls on Chinese ambassador

Provincial President Awami National Party (ANP) Aimal Wali Khan on Wednesday called on Chinese Ambassador, Nong Rong to discuss matters of mutual interest. According to the news release issued by Baacha Khan Markaz, during the meeting, Aimal Wali also urged the Chinese envoy to focus development of backward areas including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Chinese ambassador said that CPEC is a project of supreme importance that would impact backward areas in a positive way. Aimal Wali also said ANP would hold centennial celebrations of Communist Party of China in Baacha Khan Markaz.

<https://pakobserver.net/aimal-wali-calls-on-chinese-ambassador/>

Express News

پاکستانی طلباء کی جلد چین واپسی کے لئے پوری کوشش کریں گے، چینی سفیر کی یقین دہانی

پاکستان میں چین کے سفیر نوگ روگ نے وزیر داخلہ شیخ رشید کو پاکستانی طلباء کی جلد سے جلد چین واپسی کے لئے پوری کوشش کی یقین دہانی کرائی ہے۔

ایکسپریس نیوز کے مطابق وفاقی وزیر داخلہ شیخ رشید احمد سے پاکستان میں چین کے سفیر نوگ روگ کی ملاقات کی جس میں ملاقات میں دو طرفہ تعلقات، خطے کو درپیش مسائل، ملاقات میں دو طرفہ تعلقات، خطے کو درپیش مسائل، چینی شہریوں کے لئے ویزا سہولیات، سی بی سی منسویوں اور پاک چین دو طرفہ معاہدوں اور باہمی دلچسپی کے دیگر امور پر تبادلہ خیال کیا گیا۔

وزیر داخلہ نے چینی سفیر کو بتایا کہ حکومت نے چینی شہریوں اور سی بی سی منسویوں سے متعلق نئی ویزا پالیسی منظور کی ہے۔ نئی پالیسی کے تحت چینی شہریوں کے لئے ویزے کی کم از کم مدت دو سال کر دی ہے، چینی شہریوں کو اب متعلقہ مشنز سے 48 گھنٹوں میں دو سال کا ورک ویزا جاری کریں گے۔

شیخ رشید نے کہا کہ چینی شہریوں کے لئے سی بی سی کے تحت الگ ویزا کیٹیگری بنادی ہے، چینی شہریوں کی سہولت کے لئے ایئر پورٹس پر خصوصی ڈیسک قائم کیے جا رہے ہیں۔ انہوں نے چینی سفیر سے درخواست کی کہ پاکستان میں پھنسے چینی یونیورسٹی کے طالب علموں کی واپسی کے انتظامات کئے جائیں۔

اس موقع پر چینی سفیر کا کہنا تھا کہ پاکستان نے کورونا وائرس کو کنٹرول کرنے کے لئے بہت اچھے انتظامات کئے ہیں۔ سی بی سی سے متعلقہ منسویوں میں سرمایہ کاری اور روزگار کے نئے مواقع پیدا ہوں گے، پاکستان چین کا آہنی بھائی ہے ہمیں باہمی تعلقات پر ناز ہے، پاکستانی طلباء کی جلد سے جلد چین واپسی کے لئے پوری کوشش کریں گے۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2185693/1/>

Nawaiwaqt News

پاکستان چین ہمہ موسمی شراکت داری

اعوامی جمہوریہ چین اور اسلامی جمہوریہ پاکستان نے 21 مئی 1951 کو باضابطہ طور پر سفارتی تعلقات استوار کئے۔ گذشتہ 70 برسوں میں اس بات سے کوئی فرق نہیں پڑتا کہ بین الاقوامی منظر نامہ کس طرح تبدیل ہوا، چین اور پاکستان نے ہمیشہ آگے بڑھنے کے لئے باہمی تعاون کیا، دونوں ممالک نے سردی ہو یا گرمی، ہر موسم میں یکتا و منفرد دوستی قائم کی اور ہمہ جہتی تعاون کیا۔ دونوں ممالک کے مابین تعلقات میں گرجو شہی اور خلوص کو نسل در نسل ایک قابل قدر اثاثہ قرار دیا جاتا ہے۔

جیسے ہی دو ہزار سال قبل قدیمی شاہراہ ریشم نے چین اور پاکستان کو ایک دوسرے سے جوڑے رکھا۔ دونوں ممالک کے لوگوں نے اونٹ کی گھنٹیوں کی بازگشت کے درمیان دوستانہ تبادلے شروع کئے اور یہ دوستی مستقل مزاجی کے ساتھ تاریخ کے نصاب میں مضبوط تر اور گہری ہوتی گئی۔ برسوں کے دوران ہم نے ایک دوسرے کی ثابت قدمی سے حمایت کی اور ایک دوسرے کے بنیادی مفادات و بڑے خدشات کا اچھی طرح سے خیال رکھا ہے۔ یہاں تک کہ نازک اوقات میں بھی جب جدید چین بیرونی ناکہ بندی توڑنے اور سفارتی افتتاحی کوشش کرنے کی کوشش کرتا ہے، یا جب پاکستان خود مختاری اور قومی وقار کے دفاع کے لئے مشکلات کا سامنا کرتا ہے تو ہم ہمیشہ ایک دوسرے کے لئے موجود رہے اور ہمیشہ ایک دوسرے کے ضرورت میں کام آنے والے حقیقی دوست بنے۔

مشکلات کے وقت چین اور پاکستان کے عوام جتنی جلدی ممکن ہو، ہمیشہ ایک دوسرے کی طرف مدد کا ہاتھ بڑھاتے ہیں۔ اس طرح کے باہمی تعاون اور مدد کے بغیر کوئی ڈور جوڑ نہیں سکتی اور یہ خلوص اور محبت کا خالص عمل ہے۔ چاہے 2008 میں چین کے صوبہ ونچوان میں آنے والا بدترین زلزلہ ہو یا 2010 میں پاکستان کو متاثر کرنے والا تباہ کن سیلاب، دونوں ممالک نے فوری طور پر ایک دوسرے کی مدد کی۔ ایسی دل کو چھونے والی کہانیاں چین اور پاکستان کے عوام میں زبان زد عام ہیں اور یہ دوستی طویل عرصے سے دونوں اطراف کے لوگوں کے دلوں سے جڑی ہوئی ہے۔

اکیسویں صدی کے آغاز کے بعد سے ان تعلقات کو مزید تقویت ملی اور دونوں اطراف میں تعاون کو اپ گریڈ کیا گیا۔ اپریل 2015 میں صدر شئی جن پنگ نے پاکستان کا تاریخی دورہ کیا۔ دونوں ممالک کے رہنماؤں نے تعلقات کو ہر موسم میں سٹریٹجک تعاون پر مبنی شراکت میں بڑھانے کا اعلان کیا۔ اور یوں چین اور پاکستان کے مابین دوستانہ رابطوں کا ایک نیا باب کھل گیا ہے۔ سیاسی تبادلے متواتر ہوتے ہیں۔ ہمارے دونوں ممالک کے سربراہان مملکت اور حکومت نے دو طرفہ اور کثیر الجہتی چینلز کے ذریعے رابطے برقرار رکھے ہیں۔ دو طرفہ تبادلوں اور تعاون کو فروغ دینے کے لئے صوبہ پنجاب کے گورنر اور وزیر اعلیٰ چینی ہم منصبوں سے بات چیت کرتے رہتے ہیں۔

چین پاکستان تعاون کے نتیجے میں خیر نتائج برآمد ہوئے ہیں۔ چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری دوسرے مرحلے میں داخل ہو گئی ہے جس میں زرعی اور صنعتی تعاون پر توجہ دی جا رہی ہے۔ صوبہ پنجاب پاکستان کا ایک اہم زرعی اور معاشی صوبہ ہے اور سی پیک کے بڑے منصوبے اسی صوبے میں ہیں۔ حکومت پنجاب کی بھرپور حمایت اور دونوں ممالک کے قریبی تعاون کے تحت، پنجاب میں سی پیک منصوبے قابل ذکر نتائج کے ساتھ بہترین طریقے سے ترقی کر رہے ہیں، جس کو پنجاب کی معاشی اور معاشرتی ترقی کی ایک اہم پیشرفت قرار دیا گیا ہے اور اس کے ساتھ مقامی حکومتوں اور دونوں ممالک کے عوام کے لئے دوستانہ تبادلے اور تعاون کی ایک کامیاب مثال بھی قرار دیا گیا ہے۔

یہاں یہ بتانا بھی ناگزیر ہے کہ عوام کے عوام سے تبادلے مزید عروج پر ہیں۔ چین پاکستان دوستی کے لئے ہمیشہ بڑھتی ہوئی طاقت ہمارے دو طرفہ تعلقات کی ٹھوس بنیاد رہی ہے۔ حالیہ برسوں میں لاہور میں چینی قونصلیٹ نے چین کے صوبوں اور پنجاب کے شہروں کے مابین تبادلہ خیال اور تعاون کے فروغ کے لئے بڑی کوششیں کیں، میڈیا، تھنک ٹینک، سکارلز، تعلیم ثقافت جیسے شعبوں میں چین کے مقامی وفود اور ان کے ہم منصبوں کے مابین باہمی دوروں کا اہتمام کیا۔ اور یہ اقدامات باہمی تبادلوں اور آہنی دوستی کے لئے مزید سہولت آمیز ثابت ہوئے۔

انسداد کورونا کے حوالے سے تعاون قابل ذکر کامیابیوں سے مزین ہے۔ ہماری دوستی کو ویڈیو 19 کے امتحان کو بھی کامیابی سے ہمکنار کر چکی ہے بلکہ مزید مضبوطی کے ساتھ سامنے آئی ہے۔ 2020 کے آغاز میں چین نے کوویڈ 19 سے نمٹنے کے دوران پاکستان نے چین کو عطیات کی فراہمی کے لئے سب کچھ کیا۔ میڈیا سمیت پاکستان کے تمام شعبے ہائے زندگی کی طرف سے چین کی حمایت کا اظہار کیا گیا اور وبائی مرض پر سیاست چکانے اور چین کو رسوا کرنے جیسے پراپیگنڈے کی بھرپور مخالفت کی۔ جب پاکستان میں کوویڈ 19 کے واقعات میں اضافہ ہوا تو چین کی مرکزی و مقامی حکومتوں، فوج، کاروباری اداروں اور سماجی تنظیموں سب نے پاکستان کی مدد کرنے کو میدان میں آگئے۔ چین نے میڈیکل سپلائی کے یکے بعد دیگرے بیچ فراہم کیے، میڈیکل ٹیمیں بھیجی اور تجربہ کار اشتراک اور تکنیکی تبادلے کو تیز کیا۔ لاہور میں چینی قونصلیٹ جنرل نے وبائی روک تھام میں مددگار 7 لاکھ آراین بی مالیت کا کاسمان پنجاب حکومت، پولیس بیورو، دوست تنظیموں اور گروپوں کو دیا اور اس کے ساتھ ساتھ دوست صوبوں شندونگ، جیانگسو، ننگشیا، سسٹ شہروں جیسے شیان اور شنگدو اور صوبہ ہوبے کو پنجاب کو 100 ملین مالیت کے طبی سامان کی فراہمی کے لئے ترغیب دی۔ دونوں ممالک نے مشترکہ وبائی امراض کی روک تھام اور کنٹرول کا طریقہ کار قائم کیا ہے جس کا مقصد ہے کہ سی پیک پراجیکٹس میں بلا تعطل کام جاری رکھنے کے ساتھ ساتھ کسی کو بیروزگار نہیں کیا جائے گا اور اس دونوں ممالک کے اس اقدام نے عالمی انسداد وباء کے حوالے سے تعاون اور معاشی بحالی کی ایک نظیر قائم کی۔ پاکستان کے مشہور شاعر خالد عباس نے پاک چین دوستی پر یوں اپنے جذبات کا اظہار کیا

چین تاریک سفر کے دوران ایک روشنی کی مانند ہے، جب کبھی ہماری کشتی کسی بھنور میں پھنسی ہے، چین ہمیشہ وقت پر پہنچتا ہے اور ہمارے لئے امید اور مستقبل لاتا ہے۔“

اس سال چین کی کمیونسٹ پارٹی کے قیام کی 100 ویں سالگرہ منائی جا رہی ہے۔ چین ایک جدید سوشلسٹ ملک کی طرف ایک نیا سفر طے کرے گا۔ پاکستان معاشی اور معاشرتی ترقی کو پوری رفتار سے آگے بڑھا رہا ہے اور ”نیا پاکستان“ کے لئے وزیر اعظم عمران خان کے ویژن کو حقیقت میں بدلنے کے لئے لوگوں کی معاشیات کو بہتر بنا رہا ہے۔ ”تمام موسم سٹریٹجک شراکت دار“ کی

حیثیت سے چین آگے بڑھنے کے لئے پاکستان کے ساتھ مشترکہ کوششیں کرنے پر راضی ہے۔ لاہور میں چینی توصلیت جزل دونوں ممالک اور عوام کو مستقل فوائد پہنچانے کے لئے مقامی حکومتوں کے مابین تبادلے اور تعاون کو فروغ دینے، سی بی سی منصوبوں کی مستقل تعمیر کو اور ”ہمہ موسمی تزویراتی تعاون پر مبنی شراکت“ کو آگے بڑھانے کے لئے پنجاب کے ساتھ رابطے اور ہم آہنگی میں اضافہ کے لئے اقدامات جاری رکھے گا۔

پاک چین دوستی زندہ باد

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2021-06-03/page-2/detail-1>

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Daily Times

Govt approves new visa policy pertaining to CPEC projects: Sh Rashid

Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed has said the government has approved a new visa policy regarding China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects for Chinese nationals.

During a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong here Thursday, the Interior Minister said the minimum period of new visas for Chinese nationals has been set at two years under the new policy.

According to a statement issued by the Interior Ministry, the Minister and the Chinese Ambassador discussed issues of mutual interest including Pakistan-China bilateral relations, CPEC projects, Pak-China bilateral cooperation agreements and visa facilitation for Chinese citizens.

The Minister expressed pleasure over the completion of 70 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China. On the occasion, the Minister said that the government has approved the new visa policy for Chinese citizens.

Sheikh Rashid said that Chinese nationals would now be issued two-year work visas within 48 hours from the respective missions, adding that a separate visa category has been created for Chinese citizens related to CPEC projects. Special desks are also being set up at airports to facilitate Chinese citizens.

The Chinese Ambassador said that he was grateful to the government of Pakistan for easing visa facilities for Chinese nationals, which would further enhance the relationship between the two countries, increase investment in CPEC related projects and create new job opportunities.

The Interior Minister thanked the Chinese government for providing the coronavirus vaccine to Pakistan while the Ambassador commended the arrangements made by Pakistan to control the pandemic.

Sheikh Rashid said that arrangements should be made for the return of Pakistani students to China for study as they are facing the risk of wasting precious academic years.

The Chinese Ambassador said that every possible effort would be made for the return of Pakistani students as soon as possible.

The Minister said that friendship between Pakistan and China is based on mutual trust and Pakistan is proud of its friendship which will be made stronger.

The Chinese Ambassador said that CPEC related projects were evidence of strong and old relationships between both the countries. He said, Pakistan is China's Iron Brother and is proud of its bilateral relations.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/766865/govt-approves-new-visa-policy-pertaining-to-cpec-projects-sh-rashid/>

Pakistan to work with China for conservation of mangroves

Pakistan has a great scope to work with China for mangroves conservation under CPEC along Gwadar. There are areas along Gwadar where mangroves trees are planted. We can not only work on those mangroves along with China but also for their rehabilitation, said Dr Tahir Rasheed, Regional Head, Sindh and Balochistan, WWF-Pakistan, according to Gwadar Pro.

“With the help of Chinese research, we can improve our marine environment as well,” he said.

WWF Pakistan had played an important role in the conservation of mangroves for three decades. The biggest advancement in this is the engagement of local people, who are working hand in hand with WWF and the forest department so that we can better promote the protection and rehabilitation of mangroves.

According to Dr. Tahir, China has done much work on mangroves in recent years, with 52 nature reserves where mangroves are distributed established nationwide. There areas in China have increased by 7,000 hectares in the last 20 years, making it one of the few countries in the world with a net increase in the mangrove area, according to a report by Chinese media. “As this year's World Environment Day is soon to be hosted by Pakistan, WWF Pakistan along with the forest department will hold different ceremonies regarding mangroves. We shall inform masses about the importance of mangroves and will prepare the guidelines about how to save and conserve them,” said Dr. Tahir Rasheed.

Pakistan is blessed with rich and diverse natural resources, one of which is 0.6 million hectares of mangrove ecosystem mostly in Sindh's coastal zone. However, now as per estimates, mangroves are on the continuous decline as deforestation takes place at an alarming rate.

According to Tahir Rasheed, once there were eight types of mangroves in Pakistan, but now only four types are left and distributed in different areas. Most of them are *Avicennia*, which approximately account for 90%, then *Rhizophora* 8%, and the other species comprise about 2%. Now it is the seventh biggest mangrove forest in Asia and the twelfth largest forest in the world. With regards to the reduction of mangroves, Tahir Rasheed said that the biggest problem is the

lack of water in rivers because less water is released in the Indus River and the water does not flow into the area of mangroves and deltas, which affects their growth.

According to the water record of 1992, ten million acre feet of water should be released into the Indus River after Kotri Barrage. However, now only about 0.75 million acre feet are released.

Tahir Rasheed added that the second biggest problem is pollution, as contaminated and untreated water of city is flowing to seas, and the third reason is the dependence of local people on it. Some locals use mangrove for grazing and burning purposes, resulting in its gradual decrease. Besides, an increase in urban population and establishing new settlements would be another big issue, Tahir Rasheed mentioned.

As Tahir Rasheed introduced, mangroves in a hectare help in breeding 100 kg fish and 150 kg shrimps. Similarly, these mangroves help in the sequestration of one million to ten million metric tons of carbon dioxide. Mangroves have 4 times more potential to absorb carbon than ordinary forests. “Mangroves help in stopping tsunamis, cyclones, and storms. If Karachi is hit by a tsunami or cyclone, the whole city may be destroyed if we do not have mangroves. Mangroves are our safeguards, our silent soldiers,” said Kamal Shah, a resident of Coast Belt, Karachi.

Regarding the protection of mangroves, Tahir Rasheed said, “we must release water according to the amount that was given in 1952. Secondly, the banks of rivers of Baluchistan should be closed. Even if the canals are opened for water then a regulated amount of water should be allowed from the rivers in Baluchistan so that maximum water can flow to deltas and aid in the growth of mangroves.” “Thirdly, we should promote ecotourism. The locals should visit mangroves sights and be educated about the importance of mangroves. The income obtained by this could be spent on locals to improve their livelihood, and their dependency on mangroves could reduce,” he added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/766829/pakistan-to-work-with-china-for-conservation-of-mangroves/>

Pakistan, China committed to CPEC with 41 projects in pipeline: FO Spokesperson

Pakistan and China have so far completed 19 projects under the umbrella of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), while 28 are under-construction and 41 more in the pipeline.

“Both Pakistan and China remain committed to implementation of CPEC for quality economic growth and enhanced regional connectivity,” the Foreign Office Spokesperson said at a weekly media briefing here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said the tremendous progress made in the CPEC projects signaled the “shared commitment of Pakistan and China”.

He mentioned that last month, the Rashakai Special Economic Zone under the transformational China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was inaugurated by Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Over the past seven years, he said, CPEC projects had created more than 26,000 jobs and boosted the local power industry.

In addition, the CPEC motorway projects have created over 50,000 jobs, he added.

The Spokesperson said as the year 2021 marked the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and China, celebrations continued with a number of events organized in Islamabad and Beijing.

On the two-day official visit of Tajikistan's President Emomali Rahmon, the Spokesperson said the two sides exchanged views on deepening bilateral cooperation in diverse areas including political, economic, trade, investment, energy, security, defence, culture, education and regional connectivity.

"The visit of the Tajik President is in line with Pakistan's vision of enhancing strategic partnership with the Central Asian States, for regional connectivity and integration," he said.

"We believe the visit by President Rahmon, his 8th since 1994, will help further strengthen brotherly ties between Pakistan and Tajikistan," he said.

A number of Agreements and MoUs in the areas of Education, Trade & Commerce, Anti-Corruption, Prevention of Emergency Situation, Art & Culture and Connectivity were also signed during the visit.

On Palestine, he said while the ceasefire announced on 21st May in the Occupied Palestinian Territories was a welcome development, "we once again reiterate the need for permanent resolution of the Palestine issue".

"Pakistan believes that a viable, independent and contiguous Palestinian state based on internationally agreed parameters with the pre-1967 borders, and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital is the only way forward to the Palestine issue," he said.

The Spokesperson said Pakistan, on behalf of the OIC, had requested to convene a special session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), which was held on 27 May.

"The Council's session led to the adoption of a resolution to establish a standing international Commission of Inquiry (COI) to investigate the human rights violations by Israel," he added.

The resolution represents global resolve to end systemic impunity and injustice and begin a process of meaningful accountability, he added.

On Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK), he said it had been 22 months since the unprecedented military siege, communications blockade and suspension of fundamental freedoms in IIOJK.

The lives and livelihoods of the Kashmiri people have been severely affected in the aftermath of India's illegal and unilateral actions of 5th August 2019, he added.

He said India continues with its design to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory in clear violation of international law, including the 4th Geneva Convention. India has already issued over 3.4 million fake domicile certificates.

The FO Spokesperson said India continued to employ rape, torture, degrading treatment and killings of Kashmiri women as instruments of state terrorism in the occupied territory.

“India’s gross and systematic violations of human rights in the occupied territory and lack of accountability of the perpetrators have been widely documented by a number of independent Commissions, human rights organizations, global media and civil society organizations, including the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR),” he added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/766897/pakistan-china-committed-to-cpec-with-41-projects-in-pipeline-fo-spokesperson/>

Pak-China JV tyre plant to start production this month

Pakistan-China joint venture tyre plant is ready to start its production this month, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro.

The joint venture aims to reduce the expense while exporting a majority of the merchandise. It plans to export at least 85% of its tyre output.

Earlier, Service Global Footwear Limited (SGFL) – a leading exporter of footwear in Pakistan started a joint venture with a Chinese firm Chaoyang Long March Tyre Co. Ltd, to establish a tyre manufacturing plant for buses and trucks in Pakistan.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be Rs16.43 billion. The project is being financed through 50% debt and 50% equity with installed production capacity of 600,000 tyres per annum. The new production facility was established in Pakistan at a time when the US and European Union (EU) imposed anti-dumping and countervailing duties on tyres made in China.

The development may help the joint venture win export orders from Western markets as the grant of tax exemptions to the company will keep its cost of production comparatively low.

Arif Saeed, CEO of Service Industries Ltd., and Li Qingwen, Chairman of Chinese Chaoyang Long March Tyre Co. Ltd signed a Joint Venture Agreement in November 2019. The scheme is in line with the government’s key target of attracting new investment in export projects to improve the country’s international payment capacity and to build foreign currency reserves.

Currently, the Chinese tyres have captured 85 percent of Pakistan’s market share, a substantial 45% increase from two years ago. In the light truck category tyres, China held a share of 30-40% two years ago which has now up to 65-70%. Similarly, China also dominates the truck/bus tyre market with over 75% market share, which was 40% two years back.

Former chairman of the Pakistan Tyre Importers and Dealers Association (PTIDA), Azim K. Yousufzai said, “Mushroom growth has been noted in the number of dealers who are regularly flooding the market with Chinese tyres.”

On the other hand, Pakistan rubber tyre market attained a value of around \$415 million in 2020. The market is further expected to grow in the forecast period of 2021-2026 at a Compound Annual Growth Rate of almost 24% to reach \$1,510 million by 2026.

Establishment of tyre manufacturing plants at this time will be particularly beneficial as Pakistan is eagerly awaiting the benefits of relocating the Chinese industry to Pakistan in the second phase of industrialization under CPEC, which will help increase exports.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/766958/pak-china-jv-tyre-plant-to-start-production-this-month/>

Pakistan Observer

Peace, uplift of Pakistan, China and Afghanistan linked: Qureshi

Minister for Foreign Affairs Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Thursday said that the peace, prosperity and economic development of Pakistan, China and Afghanistan are linked. In his virtual address at the 4th China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue, the foreign minister said Pakistan had always strived to strengthen its relations with China and Afghanistan in the bilateral as well as regional context. "We attach great importance to this dialogue enhancing cooperation and coordination," he said. Qureshi said that it was about four years ago that the three countries had conceived this trilateral forum for discussing collaborative efforts to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region, enhancing security and counter-terrorism cooperation and deepening regional connectivity and shared economic development through meaningful projects. The foreign minister said since then, Pakistan had successfully moved forward this forum through a gradual, phased but consistent approach. He said the United States and NATO forces had already started withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. He said while the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan entailed serious security challenges, it also offered a unique opportunity for peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan and moving the country from a perpetual internal conflict to an era of peace and stability. "We should, therefore, explore how our three neighbourly countries can work together to deal with the evolving situation in an effective manner and steer it towards achieving our shared objective of lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region," he said. The foreign minister said Pakistan, China and Afghanistan were located in a region which had immense opportunities for fostering mutually beneficial economic and development cooperation.

<https://pakobserver.net/peace-uplift-of-pakistan-china-and-afghanistan-linked-qureshi/>

China and the Covid origins

Haya Fatima Sehgal

THE fact-finding mission of the origin of Covid-19 will give an interesting turn to say the least. A bit of a surprise was felt as the Biden Administration ordered a 'scientific'90-day probe into the origin of the virus. I do believe this was a sound decision for the sake of millions. Whatever occurs will give some answers and may just quell the unease that is still felt about where the novel coronavirus, Covid-19 started from. There have been doubts surrounding the virus origins

story which still persist. This past year and a half, the world has been busy in a gruelling battle against the disease. We have faced losses in multitudes; hundreds of thousands of deaths worldwide occurred daily as the deadly virus seeped through our homes and left us shattered. It is estimated to now have 3.5 million deaths worldwide. It is believed that the virus started in the city of Wuhan, China. There was the other speculation if this was something more deliberate which was earlier decried last year. There remain stories of whether this was a lab leak where this virus was being studied in Wuhan. Apart from this, we do not know much except that after over a year and half, there are regions in the world still battling this disease. Wave after variant ravages a majority of earth's population as it is not fully vaccinated. The facts may just help us move with a clear focus on better future development strategy to safeguard the human population. By no means must this fact-finding probe be taken as a hyped-up conspiracy theory against China. We must endeavour together to get to a better understanding of this deadly disease. The world cannot be left blank as to why families were torn through with illness, loss of life, and a global recession which has taken away incomes and left a depressed state of being. Pakistan is already facing a dilemma with vaccine hesitancy due to superstitious beliefs, misinformation, coupled with the fact that it is also struggling to get in more jobs for its ready population. Recently there was news the new strain of the virus, variant B.1.617.2 also termed as 'Delta' has entered into Pakistan. The world is a place of global allies, intertwining relationships that strengthen each other. These findings will be pivotal for the world dynamics. The investment in science, technology, factual reports and increased focus on healthcare, discovery, innovation, and shared knowledge will see humanity through. Health practitioners and experts are of the understanding that there has been a marked increase in depression and exacerbated mental health conditions due to the novel coronavirus. Disease, isolation, lockdowns, unemployment have led to anger, frustration and anxiety. A note must also be given that the world must strive to keep balance and a clear perspective as there have been several random incidents of hate speech as well as attacks on the AAPI community. The WHO has also advised against calling any strain of the virus by location-based names. It has been seen that certain location-based names created a backlash onto that community's Diaspora. The answers of this scientific probe will bring clarity. It will not reverse the immense destruction this virus has caused, but it will provide some solutions to create better future systems and certainly an increase in global welfare. It will also put many thoughts to rest on the matter. For the average human who has suffered losses or been through the throes of this devastating disease, they will have a better understanding of simply this: what really happened.

—The writer, based in Islamabad, is known for her articles on cultural impact.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-and-the-covid-origins-by-haya-fatima-sehgal/>

Joint Statement of the Fourth China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue

On Afghanistan's Peace and Reconciliation Process On June 3, 2021, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign

Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Afghanistan Mohammad Haneef Atmar, and Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Shah Mahmood Qureshi held the Fourth China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue via video link. They had a comprehensive and in-depth exchange of views on Afghanistan's peace and reconciliation process and reached the following consensus: The three sides underscored that as insecurity in Afghanistan will directly impact the stability and economic prosperity of the entire region, there is a need for joint efforts and a response to eliminate the current challenges in our region. The three sides noted the start of the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and believed that while this move has complex impacts on Afghanistan's peace and reconciliation process, it will also provide opportunities for Afghanistan and the region to truly take the future of their countries and nations into their own hands. The three sides called for a responsible and orderly withdrawal of foreign troops to avoid deterioration of the security situation in the region or giving terrorist forces the opportunity to re-emerge and grow. All relevant parties should earnestly fulfill their anti-terrorism commitments and agreed not to allow any terrorists to operate from their respective territories against each other's interests. The three sides underlined the importance of a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Afghanistan and called on all parties in Afghanistan for an early declaration of a comprehensive ceasefire and an end to the senseless violence, in order to create the conditions needed for negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban. The three sides believed that UNSC resolution 2513 must be observed while looking forward to and welcoming the early return of the Taliban to the political mainstream of Afghanistan. The three sides reiterated that they do not support the establishment of any government-imposed by force in Afghanistan. The three sides supported Afghanistan to be an independent, sovereign, and democratic state that enjoys security and stability, achieves development and prosperity, and lives in harmony with its neighbors. The three sides maintained that resolution of the Afghan issue should fully reflect the "Afghan-led, Afghan-owned" principle. The Afghan government could play a leading role in Afghanistan's peace and reconciliation process to draw up a plan jointly with all parties that reflect extensiveness and inclusiveness. The three sides support all multilateral efforts that are conducive to building political consensus in Afghanistan, and the international community and to promoting Afghanistan's peace and reconciliation process. They support the international community, particularly the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, in making a positive contribution to advancing the peace and reconciliation process. They believed that Afghanistan's neighboring countries, as the most direct stakeholders in relation to Afghanistan's domestic situation, should play a more important, constructive role in this regard. China and Afghanistan recognized that Pakistan has continued to host with dignity and honor millions of Afghan refugees for decades as a consequence of the protracted Afghan conflict. They emphasized that a time-bound and well-resourced return of Afghan refugees to their homeland and their re-integration into the Afghan society should be part of the comprehensive peace agreement. China and Pakistan reaffirmed their firm support for the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan and

readiness to expand economic and trade ties with Afghanistan, support Afghanistan in enhancing its capacity for independent development.

<https://pakobserver.net/joint-statement-of-the-fourth-china-afghanistan-pakistan-trilateral-foreign-ministers-dialogue/>

The Nation

Under CPEC, 19 projects completed, 28 under-construction

SHAFQAT ALI

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and China have completed 19 projects under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, the foreign ministry said yesterday.

Speaking at a weekly news briefing here, Foreign Office spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said that 28 CPEC projects were under-construction and 41 more were in the pipeline.

“Pakistan and China remain committed to implementation of CPEC for quality economic growth and enhanced regional connectivity,” he added.

He said the relationship between Pakistan and China is based on mutual trust and understanding. “Our comprehensive engagement covers all aspects of our relations,” he remarked.

Chaudhri said the tremendous progress made in the CPEC projects signalled the “shared commitment of Pakistan and China”.

He mentioned that last month, the Rashakai Special Economic Zone under the transformational CPEC was inaugurated by Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Over the past seven years, he said, CPEC projects had created more than 26,000 jobs and boosted local power industry. In addition, the CPEC motorway projects have created over 50,000 jobs, he added.

The spokesperson said as the year 2021 marked the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and China, celebrations continued with a number of events organized in Islamabad and Beijing.

To a question, he said Pakistan’s policy on Xinjiang was consistent and clear. “We believe that affairs related to Xinjiang are an internal matter of China,” he added.

Chaudhri said China had taken important measures to combat terrorism and radicalization along its western region.

Besides, he said, China has undertaken massive development measures in the region. China has also organized visits of our and other representatives to Xinjiang for first-hand information and knowledge about the situation. “China is also engaged with the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) with regard to Xinjiang,” he said.

On Palestine, the spokesperson said while the ceasefire announced on 21st May in the Occupied Palestinian Territories was a welcome development, “we once again reiterate the need for permanent resolution of the Palestine issue.”

Pakistan, he said, “believes that a viable, independent and contiguous Palestinian state based on internationally agreed parameters with the pre-1967 borders, and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital is the only way forward to the Palestine issue.”

The spokesperson said Pakistan, on behalf of the OIC, had requested to convene a special session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, which was held on May 27.

“The Council’s session led to the adoption of a resolution to establish a standing international Commission of Inquiry to investigate the human rights violations by Israel,” he added.

The resolution represents global resolve to end systemic impunity and injustice and begin a process of meaningful accountability, he added.

On Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, he said it had been 22 months since the unprecedented military siege, communications blockade and suspension of fundamental freedoms in IIOJK.

The lives and livelihoods of the Kashmiri people have been severely affected in the aftermath of India’s illegal and unilateral actions of 5th August 2019, he added.

Chaudhri said India continues with its design to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory in clear violation of international law, including the 4th Geneva Convention. India has already issued over 3.4 million fake domicile certificates.

The spokesperson said India continued to employ rape, torture, degrading treatment and killings of Kashmiri women as instruments of state terrorism in the occupied territory.

“India’s gross and systematic violations of human rights in the occupied territory and lack of accountability of the perpetrators have been widely documented by a number of independent Commissions, human rights organizations, global media and civil society organizations, including the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights,” he added.

To a question, he said, Pakistan had consistently maintained that there was no military solution to the Afghan conflict in Afghanistan and that a negotiated political settlement was the only way forward.

Pakistan, he said, had played a constructive role in the Afghan peace process. “We have facilitated the signing of US-Taliban Peace agreement (29 February 2020); the commencement of Intra-Afghan Negotiations (12 September 2020) and the Agreement on Rules and Procedures between the Afghan parties (Doha, 02 December 2020). We have also repeated underscored the need for reduction in violence leading to a ceasefire,” he said.

The spokesperson said Pakistan believed that there should be an ‘orderly’ and ‘responsible’ troops withdrawal from Afghanistan, leaving no security vacuum that could be exploited by spoilers.

“In addition, the withdrawal of US forces must coincide with the overall progress achieved in the peace process. In this regard, we have been in contact with all the relevant stakeholders,” he added.

Chaudhri said as the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan continues, we reemphasize the importance of progress in the Afghan peace process. “We believe that all parties to the Afghan conflict must remain committed to the ongoing efforts for a negotiated settlement of the conflict,” he added.

Regarding the detection of COVID in a family member of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad, he said, “I can share that a group of 12 officials and family members of the Indian High Commission (IHC) in Islamabad crossed over to Pakistan through Wagah border on May 22, 2021. As per the laid down COVID related health and safety protocols, all passengers carried negative PCR reports with them.”

However, upon arrival, the spouse of an official of the Indian High Commission tested positive on Rapid Antigen Test, conducted by Pakistani health officials, he said.

The spokesperson said the National Command and Control Centre, being the competent forum, after reviewing the case, advised all passengers and the driver of the vehicle to undergo mandatory quarantine.

“The Indian High Commission was accordingly advised to strictly follow the guidelines provided by the NCOC,” he said.

He said Pakistan and the US had the framework of cooperation in terms of Air Lines of Communication and Ground Lines of Communication in place since 2001. No new agreement has been made in this regard.

To a question about the issue of UAE visas, he said, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, had repeatedly addressed this issue in his media interactions.

“This issue has already been discussed numerous times in my media briefings as well. Any further development in this regard will be shared,” he said.

As for the issue of vaccines, he said, Pakistan had taken up with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the issue of vaccines which are mandatory for travel to Saudi Arabia for visit, Umrah and Hajj.

“We have proposed inclusion of some of the Chinese vaccines used in Pakistan in the list of vaccines approved by the Saudi authorities. The Ministry is actively pursuing this matter with the Saudi side,” Chaudhri said.

On the two-day official visit of Tajikistan’s President Emomali Rahmon, the spokesperson said the two sides exchanged views on deepening bilateral cooperation in diverse areas including

political, economic, trade, investment, energy, security, defence, culture, education and regional connectivity.

“The visit of the Tajik President is in line with Pakistan’s vision of enhancing strategic partnership with the Central Asian States, for regional connectivity and integration,” he said.

He added: “We believe the visit by President Rahmon, his 8th since 1994, will help further strengthen brotherly ties between Pakistan and Tajikistan.”

A number of Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding in the areas of Education, Trade and Commerce, Anti-Corruption, Prevention of Emergency Situation, Art and Culture and Connectivity were also signed during the visit, he elaborated.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-04/page-1/detail-7>

Economic development of Pakistan, China, Afghanistan inter-linked, says FM

SHAFQAT ALI

ISLAMABAD - Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said Thursday that Pakistan and China were important players in Afghanistan peace. In his virtual address at the 4th China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers’ Dialogue, Qureshi said Pakistan, China and Afghanistan were located in a region which had immense opportunities for fostering mutually beneficial economic and development cooperation.

“Pakistan attaches huge importance to its trilateral mechanism with China and Afghanistan for enhancing cooperation and coordination in the areas of shared interest,” he said.

FM Qureshi said Pakistan had always strived to strengthen its relations with China and Afghanistan in the bilateral as well as regional context.

“We strongly believe that peace, prosperity and economic development of our three countries are inter-linked,” he added.

The FM said about four years ago three countries had conceived this trilateral forum for discussing collaborative efforts to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region, enhancing security and counter-terrorism cooperation and deepening regional connectivity and shared economic development through meaningful projects.

He said since then Pakistan had successfully moved forward this forum through a gradual and phased but consistent approach. He said the United States and NATO forces had already started withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan.

He said while the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan entailed serious security challenges, it also offered a unique opportunity for peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan and moving the country from a perpetual internal conflict to an era of peace and stability.

“We should, therefore, explore how our three neighbourly countries can work together to deal with the evolving situation in an effective manner and steer it towards achieving our shared objective of lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region,” he said.

The FM said the three geographically linked countries straddle historical routes traversing east-west and north-south.

He said durable peace and stability in Afghanistan would lead to a conducive environment for harnessing the true potential of regional connectivity and further deepening economic interdependence through use of innovation and technological advances. “Such an outcome will surely contribute to progress, welfare and better lives for the peoples of our countries,” he added.

Qureshi said the deliberations of trilateral meeting on all the agenda items would be constructive, meaningful and result-oriented.

The FM thanked State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi for hosting the meeting and welcomed Afghanistan’s Foreign Minister Hanif Atmar for joining the dialogue.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Qureshi met Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong here to discuss enhanced cooperation.

During the meeting, issues of mutual interest including the 70th anniversary of successful diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China were discussed, said a foreign ministry statement.

Regional security issues, including progress in the Pak-China Economic Corridor, were also discussed, it added.

The Chinese Ambassador appreciated the Foreign Minister for his full cooperation in the celebrations of 70-year diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China.

Qureshi said Pakistan was committed to the timely completion of ongoing projects under CPEC.

He said Special Economic Zones to be set up under CPEC will lead to development not only for both the countries but for the entire region.

“We are offering special incentives to attract foreign investors in these special economic zones,” he said. The Foreign Minister appreciated China’s support in the fight against corona and the provision of vaccines and thanked the Chinese leadership.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-04/page-1/detail-6>

Nawaiwaqt News

پاک چین دوستی آزموہ، باہمی تعاون میں مثالی: خیال کاسٹرو

لاہور (سپیشل رپورٹر) لاہور آرٹس کونسل الحراء میں، پاکستان اور چین کی دوستی کو 70 سال مکمل ہونے کے موقع پر شاندار نمائش کا انعقاد کیا گیا۔ صوبائی وزیر ثقافت خیال احمد کاسٹرو نے چینی تونصلیٹ کے ڈائریکٹر ڈویو کے ہمراہ نمائش کا افتتاح کیا۔ ایگزیکٹو ڈائریکٹر فرحت جبین کا مہمانوں کا پرتپاک استقبال کیا۔ کامیاب دوستی کے 70 سالہ سفر کی خوشی

میں ایک کانگیا، سوونیز کا تبادلہ بھی ہوا۔ چیئر پرسن الحراء منیزہ ہاشمی نے بھی تقریب میں شرکت کی۔ صوبائی وزیر ثقافت خیال احمد کاستر نے کہا کہ پاک چین دوستی آزمودہ، باہمی تعاون میں مثالی ہے، حکومت کے اس اقدام سے دنیا میں مثبت پیغام گیا۔ عالم میں پاکستان اور چین کی دوستی کو بے پناہ شہرت حاصل ہے، سی پیک معاشی انقلاب کا پیش خیمہ ہو گا۔ ڈائریکٹر، چینی قونصلیٹ، ڈوبو نے الحراء کی اس کاوش کو خوبصورت قرار دیتے ہوئے کہا کہ پاکستانیوں کے احسن جذبات پر فخر ہے، مستقبل میں بھی دوستی کا یہ رشتہ مضبوط تر ہوتا دیکھتے ہیں۔ ایگزیکٹو ڈائریکٹر لاہور آرٹس کونسل الحراء و ایڈیشنل سیکرٹری اطلاعات فرحت جمیں نے اپنے تاثرات میں کہا کہ نوجوان آرٹسٹوں کا اپنے فن کے ذریعے پاک چین دوستی کے رشتے کو زبردست انداز میں خراج تحسین پیش کیا۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2021-06-04/page-2/detail-14>

June 05, 2021

Daily Times

Chinese medical team reaches Pakistan for CPEC project

A Chinese medical team has been sent to Pakistan to serve the work staff and construction of Karot Hydropower Project, under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). According to Gwadar Pro, the team consists of one doctor-in-charge of the Critical Care Medicine and five nurses, which was the third one sent by the First People's Hospital in Yichang, Hubei Province.

All of them are experienced in epidemic prevention and control, and patients' treatment as they have been the frontline workers during the fight against COVID-19.

They will rotate the teammates who were sent here early and improve the samples collecting and testing capacity for nucleic acid tests at the construction site.

The nine-member team had to conduct COVID-19 nucleic acid tests for about 4,000 workers every two weeks. "We once collected samples and gave nucleic acid tests up to over 900 cases at most one day in March 2021," said Yu Lianghuan, the nursing supervisor of the First People's Hospital in Yichang, who had served at the Karot's site for a year.

The third team, along with the first two medical teams, was also invited by China Three Gorges Corporation (CTG) to serve workers of Karot and its construction. These medical workers have played an important role in the fight against the novel coronavirus pandemic since May 2020, ensuring the smooth progress of the Karot project. They have been praised by Pakistani ambassador to China Moin ul Haque, CTG, and China and Pakistan's departments in charge of construction.

Karot hydropower project, invested by CTG, is one of the priority projects of CPEC. With a total investment of 1.74 billion U.S. dollars, it will solve the power supply bottleneck in Pakistan and provide sustainable and stable energy support.

China Three Gorges Corporation once donated two batches of supplies to Pakistan in order to help Pakistanis contain COVID-19 in 2020, which included 750,000 surgical masks, ventilators and protection gowns.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/767427/chinese-medical-team-reaches-pakistan-for-cpec-project/>

Dunya News

EAC reviews progress on CPEC, food security

ISLAMABAD (Dunya News) - A follow up session of the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) meeting presided over by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Shaukat Tarin was held at the Finance Division today. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Industries and Production Khusro Bakhtiar, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Division Omar Ayub Khan, Adviser to PM on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood, Adviser to PM on Institutional Reforms & Austerity Dr. Ishrat Hussain, SAPM on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation Dr. Sania Nishtar, SAPM on Power Tabish Gauhar, SAPM on Finance and Revenue Dr. Waqar Masood, Governor State Bank of Pakistan Dr. Reza Baqir, Mr. Abid Suleri, Mr. M. Ali Tabba, Dr. Rashid Amjad, Mr. Sultan Allana, Syed Salim Raza and many others from the private members category. The first session of the second meeting of Economic Advisory Council was held on 1st June 2021. During the second session of second meeting of Economic Advisory Council, which continued four hours, four sub-groups gave their detailed presentation. The four sub-groups which presented their suggestions during second session of the second meeting of Economic Advisory Council included groups on Food Security, Agriculture, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Social Protection and Information Technology & Digitalization. Federal Minister for National Food Security Syed Fakhar Imam, SAPM on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation Dr. Sania Nishtar and Chairman CPEC General (R) Asim Saleem Baja gave presentations on behalf of their respective groups. The presentations included in-depth analysis of the relevant sectors, current functioning and ways forward for future. All the participants gave their inputs over the presentations. The first sub-group presentation on Agriculture was made by the Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Syed Fakhar Imam. Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Khusro Bakhtiar, emphasized the need to introduce the 'Agricultural Transformation Plan' which has been prepared by the present government after extensive discussion with the relevant stakeholders and after making detailed analysis of available data. The Finance Minister assured that the proposed plan will be thoroughly considered and firmed up recommendations will be made a part of the upcoming budget. The subgroup on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) led by Chairman CPEC Authority gave a comprehensive presentation on the progress of the project. The group also thanked the Finance Minister as Chairman ECNEC for according approval to road connectivity projects for Balochistan Province that will significantly enhance the effectiveness of the Project. The group briefed the meeting that the projects under CPEC are being completed according to our commitment. General Asim Saleem Bajwa discussed the possibilities of investment in the special economic zones in

collaboration with the regional development partners in a structured manner through short, medium and longterm strategies. The subgroup on social security led by Ms. Sania Nishtar SA PM on Social Protection, briefed the meeting on the proposed plan of interventions by Ehsaas in the next year and submitted proposals for budgetary allocations. The Chair appreciated the proposals and commended the SAPM on evolving a comprehensive program for social protection and poverty alleviation. The IT subgroup discussed their proposals to explore the potential of the sector and create an enabling environment for generating exportable surplus. The Finance Minister tasked the group to bring up proposals that facilitate local trade, enhance financial inclusion, pave the way for forming partnerships with International IT Experts and develop skills of the untrained youth. He also affirmed his support for the sector by making policy changes according to the needs of the sector. The next follow up session would be held soon. The sub-groups on State Owned Enterprises, Energy & Industrialization and Exports will make their presentations in the concluding session. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Shaukat Tarin during the meeting said that fundamental objective for constitution of Economic Advisory Council is to make concrete short, medium and longterm strategies for growth and transformation of all sectors of the economy. Different sub-groups have been constituted to get concrete proposals in consultation with all sub-groups. The Finance Minister immensely appreciated the professional in-depth deliberation on the presentation during the session. The Finance Minister further directed to make regular discussions a part of the working of the Finance Division with reference to EAC.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Business/604815-EAC-reviews-progress-on-CPEC-food-security>

The Nation

CPEC Progress

The government has provided a helpful update on work done on the CPEC project so far; this was much needed. Information on the CPEC projects has been hard to access at times, which is why this element of transparency will help in allowing for greater public understanding on where we stand.

19 projects have so far been completed, which is an important achievement. Each complete link of the chain can help bring benefits of the area around specific projects and to the overall economic situation. The fact that we have managed to continue work on these large projects even with the pandemic raging is quite the accomplishment.

But resting on our laurels is not acceptable when only 22 percent of the work is completed. With 28 projects partially completed and 41 still in the pipeline, there is still quite a distance to cover before CPEC can be declared complete.

It is important to remember the significance of this initiative; our tilt towards geo-economics and transitioning to a new structure of exploiting a trade route to its maximum can only be possible once CPEC is at the very least; mostly complete. Given that we have spent more than five years on this plan, more should be done.

Moving forward, it is important to pick up the pace. Prioritising on projects that can immediately lead to benefits upon completion—such as new road and rail routes—is quite naturally what is needed. But beyond that, any quick wins that the government can secure on smaller projects should also be looked at.

There must also be a clearer timeframe on when various spheres are completed; but more than that, a clearer deadline for CPEC itself must be outlined. All of this must be done for our own sakes, because CPEC is only as good as the sum of its parts, and there are a lot of components that must be in place to make sure the route is the financial windfall we have been expecting.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-05/page-6/detail-3>

The News

Sanjrani invites Pak-UK business communities to invest in CPEC

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani on Friday, foreseeing a number of opportunities for the Pak-UK business communities, invited them to invest in CPEC and get benefit of the multi-billion-dollar project.

Speaking at a ceremony to celebrate the success and achievements of talented individuals, Senator Sanjrani remarked that there could have been no better way for the business council's flagship launch in Pakistan, saying the council has been operating as an effective means of communication with latest insight into the trade and business activities between Pakistan and the UK. "This helps the trade and business communities to identify common ground to explore opportunities and to find ways and means to make effective and promising investments to enhance business-to-business relations."

The chairman Senate said Pakistan and the UK shared hefty trade volume at around £2.3 billion, though it is important to understand that it is still far from the business potential of both countries. He said the business council could play a vital role in achieving significant increase in the trade volume. He also informed the participants that due to the friendly policies of the government for overseas Pakistanis, the investment in the country is increasing day by day.

Talking about the CPEC, Sanjrani sought attention of the business communities around the world, luring them with the immense investment opportunities in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. He further said the CPEC could span across a multitude of industries and all kinds of business opportunities are available under this multi-billion-dollar project. He expressed his satisfaction that the UK has remained a strong supporter of Pakistan in securing the GSP plus status from the EU, adding that its trade and commerce policies are also friendly and in favour of Pakistan. The chairman Senate said these are all positive conditions for the entrepreneurs and business community from both sides to come forward and utilise the resources for their benefits.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/844993-sanjrani-invites-pak-uk-business-communities-to-invest-in-cpec>

Chinese medical team sent to Pakistan for CPEC project

BEIJING: A Chinese medical team has been sent to Pakistan to serve the work staff and construction of Karot Hydropower Project, under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

According to Gwadar Pro, the team consists of one doctor-in-charge of the Critical Care Medicine and five nurses, which was the third one sent by the First People's Hospital in Yichang, Hubei Province. All of them are experienced in epidemic prevention and control, and patients' treatment as they have been the frontline workers during the fight against COVID-19. They will rotate the teammates who were sent here early and improve the samples collecting and testing capacity for nucleic acid tests at the construction site.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/844998-chinese-medical-team-sent-to-pakistan-for-cpec-project>

June 06, 2021

Business Recorder

'Under-invoicing of imported Chinese tyres causing huge tax losses'

KARACHI: The extensive under-invoicing of imported Chinese tyres in Pakistan is causing huge tax losses to the government, said CEO General Tyre.

Hussain Kuli Khan said that the local industry plays a vital role in the economic development by paying taxes and generating employment besides saving millions of dollars as an import substitute. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the government to protect its local industry, he added.

The local tyre industry is facing two major issues namely smuggling and low ITP values, he said and added that the extensive under-invoicing of imported Chinese tyres in Pakistan is causing huge tax losses to the government while at the same time it is a major obstacle to new investments in the local tyre industry.

The imports of Chinese tyres in the passenger car category has increased to 300 percent. Similarly, the import of Chinese tyres for light trucks has increased by 150 percent in two years and their market share in this category has increased to 75 percent.

Chinese tyres are also being imported for trucks and busses radial and their market share in this segment has increased from 60% to 90% in the last two years.

He said the main reason for under-invoicing of Chinese tyres is their Import Trade Price (ITP) which has not changed since August 2018, although the price of raw materials and other factors have led to a significant increase in the international prices of tyres.

“The loss to the government due to the non-revision of ITPs can be gauged from the ratio of imported tyres for truck buses radials, which accounted for 95 percent of the 975,000 imported tyres in nine months.

“For example, the ITP of one tyre (size 11.00 R-20) showed as \$147 while the price of a well-known brand of tyres of the same size is \$160. Thus, under-invoicing of only one tyre caused a loss of approximately Rs 7 million to the national exchequer,” Hussain said.

He therefore said that it is necessary to maintain regulatory duty and increase ITPs of imported tyres to prevent the national exchequer and local industry from a big damage and proposed to increase 25 percent in the ITP as it would not only generate additional revenue of Rs 3 billion for the government but also attract new investment at local level.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2021/06/06/3-page/888735-news.html>

Daily Times

Pakistan preparing for green CPEC: Amin Aslam

“When the PM of Pakistan visited China, there was a meeting on the Greening of Belt and Road Initiative, where they discussed changing China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to Green CPEC.

We have done lots of preparation for that,” Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Malik Amin Aslam said in an interview with Gwadar Pro.

Malik Amin Aslam said that it is the vision of Pakistan’s Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chinese President Xi Jinping that we have to convert the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor into green land.

To achieve the goal, “First, we are including hydropower development which is zero-carbon energy into that. Secondly, we had discussed our forest issues with China,” he said.

China has vast experience in forestation and its greening of Kubuqi Desert, which is converted into a forest with millions of hectares of trees planted, is a hugely successful model for land restoration projects everywhere.

“We have signed an MOU with the Chinese company that carried out this experiment in the Kubuqi Desert. In Pakistan, we will also carry out that pilot experiment.

The Chinese government is funding it. It will help us in integrating the same experiment in our Billion Trees Tsunami Project,” Malik Amin Aslam said.

He also added that the Chinese company, known as Elion Resources Group, has carried out all kinds of experiments about different trees, habitat and environment that is required for their growth. “I have personally visited Kubuqi Desert and it is a wonder of the world,” he mentioned.

Talking of this year’s World Environment Day, he said this is a great honor for Pakistan to host it, adding that it’s because the actions taken for climate change according to the vision of Prime

Minister Imran Khan are being recognized and accepted by the world and they act as an inspiration for the world.

Among these effective actions, he highlighted the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami project, saying that as Pakistan is blessed with rich natural forests, its target is to spread awareness about the need for the forests, which is very important for our next generation.

“In Balochistan, KPK, Punjab, and Sindh, there are certain belts where there can be successful cultivation of olive trees. We are researching it. In the Billion-Tree Tsunami project, we have started a sub-project in KPK that is an Olive Tree Tsunami, and hopefully, we will expand it further as well.”

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/767973/pakistan-preparing-for-green-cpec-amin-aslam/>

Shanghai Electric partners with NFEH on World Environment Day

Shanghai Electric, which is at the helm of a mega CPEC project in Thar, partnered with National Forum for Environment and Health for the successful hosting of the World Environment Day 2021 Seminar held on Thursday. The hybrid seminar took place at the NED University City Campus Karachi on Zoom. This year’s theme for the World Environment Day was Eco-system Restoration which has been defined by UNEP as “eco-system restoration means assisting in the recovery of eco-systems that have been degraded or destroyed, as well as conserving the eco-systems that are still intact. Healthier eco-systems, with richer bio-diversity yield greater benefits such as more fertile soils, bigger yields of timber, fish, and larger stores of greenhouse gases.” Commenting on the occasion, Mr Li Jigen, CEO Sino Sindh Resources Private Limited (SSRL), a subsidiary of Shanghai Electric, said that his company will always come forward to play its role in protecting the environment. “Health and environment are key areas and we will play our role in protecting them,” he said. Mr Li Jigen added that Shanghai Electric was already carrying CSR activities in Thar Block 1 and is preparing welfare plans for the local population in the near future.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/767965/shanghai-electric-partners-with-nfeh-on-world-environment-day/>

Dunya News

PM thanks Chinese president for his strong message on World Environment Day

ISLAMABAD (Dunya News) – Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan on Sunday has thanked Chinese President Xi Jinping for his strong message on World Environment Day 2021 hosted by Pakistan. In a post on social-networking website Twitter, the premier stated, “I thank President Xi’s strong message on World Environment Day 2021 hosted by Pakistan reflecting our commitment to counter environment degradation.”

“We laud President Xi’s leadership in combating climate change and biodiversity loss and his offer to step up cooperation on ecosystem restoration,” he added. The reaction came after Chinese President Xi Jinping said that China is working with Pakistan on climate change projects. In a message delivered by Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong on World Environment Day 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping said that improving the environment is essential for the survival of humanity, and that the international community must work together to tackle environmental pollution. He said that the world is facing the challenges of climate and ecosystem change, global laws and cooperation need to be improved to meet the challenge of change adding that China is working with Pakistan on climate change projects.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/604868-PM-thanks-Chinese-president-strong-message-World-Environment-Day>

June 07, 2021

Daily Times

USA, UK, China top three destinations of Pakistani exports

The United States of America (USA) remained the top export destination of the Pakistani products during the first ten months of financial year (2020-21), followed by the United Kingdom (UK) and China.

Total exports to the USA during July-April (2020-21) were recorded at \$4019.722 million against the exports of \$3368.090 million during July-April (2019-20), showing growth of 19.34 percent, according to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

This was followed by the UK, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth \$1691.314 million against the exports of \$1386.999 million last year, showing an increase of 21.94 percent. China was the third top export destination, where Pakistan exported goods worth \$1640.629 million during the months under review against the exports of \$1411.004 million during last year, showing growth of 16.27 percent, SBP data revealed.

Among other countries, Pakistani exports to Germany stood at \$1245.122 million against \$1116.232 million during last year, showing increase of 11.54 percent while the exports to UAE were recorded at \$1215.939 million against \$1377.287 million last year, the data revealed.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/768623/usa-uk-china-top-three-destinations-of-pakistani-exports/>

Dunya News

China, Turkey, Japan extend condolences over loss of lives in train collision

ISLAMABAD (Dunya News) - China and Turkey extended condolences to Pakistan over the loss of lives in the train collision on Monday. Chinese envoy to Pakistan Nong Rong said in a tweet, “we were deeply saddened to learn of the accident in Ghotki. I want to extend my sincere condolences to the families of the victims and my good wishes for a full and speedy recovery to

the wounded”, On the other hand Turkey also expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of lives in Ghotki train collision. “We are deeply saddened to receive the news that as a result of a train crash in Ghotki district of Sindh province in Pakistan today more than 30 people have lost their lives and many others were injured,” the Turkish Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Turkish foreign ministry further said that “We wish Allah’s mercy upon those who have lost their lives in this tragic accident, speedy recovery to those who were injured, and convey our condolences to the friendly Government and the brotherly people of Pakistan.” Japanese ambassador to Pakistan Matsuda Kuninori also expressed grief and sorrow over the Ghotki train accident that claimed more than 30 precious lives and left over 50 injured. In his condolence message, the ambassador conveyed his heartfelt grief and sympathies to the bereaved families and wished a speedy recovery to the injured, said a news release. “Our thoughts and prayers are with the government, the people of Pakistan, and the families of those who have lost their dear ones in the tragic train accident. Please accept our deepest condolences, and we wish for a quick recovery of the injured,” the ambassador said. The envoy prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls and wished for the bereaving families to bear the irreparable loss with fortitude and equanimity.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/605057-China-Turkey-extend-condolences-over-loss-of-lives-in-train-collision>

Pakistan Observer

CPEC helps to increase transmission network voltage in Pakistan

Increase transmission network voltage may reduce electric losses in Pakistan, says Chinese expert, according to a report published by China Economic Net. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, has solved the electricity shortage problem in Pakistan and will further promote the country’s industrialization to create more jobs, Pakistani President Arif Alvi noted during a recent online reception held to celebrate the Sino-Pak 70th anniversary. Explaining China’s new energy construction experience, Lei Yu, an expert at the Chinese Academy of Environmental Planning pointed out that “At the government level, China has formulated the Renewable Energy Law, which has laid a sound legal foundation for the development of renewable energy. To ensure the scale of power generation and ensure a better return for the investment in this area, China’s State Grid gives priority to receiving electricity from these renewable energy sources,” Lei said. In terms of price, China has set a preferential benchmark price for renewable energy such as wind power and hydropower. In addition, subsidies have been given to high-cost construction, such as offshore wind power, to boost returns on investment, Lei told the reporter. In addition to government purchases, China also encourages the participation of nongovernmental capital. In the process of the construction of renewable energy transmission channels, part of its network is open to society so that such investment can enter, develop, and yield good returns. According to some studies, Pakistan has a high rate of electric transmission and distribution losses.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-helps-to-increase-transmission-network-voltage-in-pakistan/>

The Express Tribune

China welcomes PM Imran's appreciation of President Xi's letter

BEIJING: China on Monday welcomed positive comments of Prime Minister Imran Khan on President Xi Jinping's congratulatory message on World Environment Day and reaffirmed its resolve to work together to build a clean and beautiful world. "We take note of Prime Minister Khan's positive response to President Xi's words. China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperative partners. We are ready to work with Pakistani side to forge close cooperation and enhance global environment governance to build a clean and beautiful world," Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesperson Wang Wenbin said during his regular message. In a tweet, Prime Minister Imran thanked the Chinese president for his "strong message" on World Environment Day hosted by Pakistan on June 5. "I thank President Xi's strong message on World Environment Day 2021 hosted by Pakistan reflecting our commitment to counter environment degradation. We laud President Xi's leadership in combating climate change and biodiversity loss and his offer to step up cooperation on ecosystem restoration," the premier said. Wang Wenbin in today's press briefing said President Xi appreciated that PM Imran was giving priority to environment governance and stressed that China was ready to work with Pakistan and the wider international community within the framework of United Nations (UN) to build a community of human and nature and to build a beautiful and clean world. He said that Xi's congratulatory letter showed that China had taken a major responsibility in building a global community of shared future. "As I said, China and Pakistan are all weather strategic cooperative partners. We are ready to work with Pakistani side to forge close cooperation and enhance global environmental governance to build a clean and beautiful world," he added. Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Nong Rong read out President Xi's message at World Environment Day event held at Convention Center. PM Imran during his address said hosting the World Environment Day manifested Pakistan's commitment to counter environmental degradation. "We laud President Xi's lordship in combating climate change and biodiversity loss and his offer to step up cooperation on ecosystem restoration," the prime minister remarked on Twitter. In his message, Chinese president pledged that China would continue to be a participant, contributor and leading force in the construction of a global ecological civilisation. Noting that China will host the 15th meeting of the conference of the parties to the convention on biological diversity, Xi said his country was ready to work with all parties to inject new impetus into global environmental governance and contribute to a clean and beautiful world.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2303955/china-welcomes-pm-imrans-appreciation-of-president-xis-letter>

The BRI-backed Afghan-Pakistan rapprochement is reshaping the region

The geopolitics of the Eurasian Heartland are gradually being reshaped by the BRI-backed Afghan-Pakistani rapprochement. Ties between these neighbouring nations have always been complicated for historical reasons, but Kabul appears ready to behave more pragmatically as it

seeks to chart a new era of relations with Islamabad in the wake of the US' impending withdrawal from the country by September 11th. Their Foreign Ministers joined China's last week in their fourth trilateral meeting that was held online this year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The joint statement that resulted from their talks emphasised Afghanistan's enhanced regional connectivity through its use of CPEC's terminal port of Gwadar. This speaks to the landlocked country's desire to become land-linked via the Belt & Road Initiative's (BRI) flagship project, which in turn is responsible for Afghanistan's pragmatic policy recalibration towards Pakistan. In other words, BRI isn't just connecting economies, but governments, as each of its participating states has a mutual interest in repairing whatever strained relations they may have with one another in order to mutually benefit from this global series of megaprojects. Moreover, Afghanistan's increased reliance on CPEC proves the viability of the N-CPEC+ proposal for expanding this corridor further northwards deeper into Central Asia through the trilateral railway that's planned between them and Uzbekistan (PAKAFUZ). Another pertinent observation is that Afghanistan is seemingly no longer all that interested in Iran's Indian-controlled port of Chabahar that New Delhi had initially envisioned functioning as that country's corridor to the sea. Kabul will likely use it to some extent, but it's unrealistic to expect it to trade more across that corridor than across N-CPEC+, especially once the PAKAFUZ railway is completed. This throws a wrench in India's regional engagement plans, but it might be for the better since New Delhi could prospectively seek to retain stable relations with Islamabad so as to more reliably access Afghanistan via their mutual neighbour. That's actually what Pakistani officials suggested in March when they unveiled their country's new grand strategy. The best-case scenario of improved Indian-Pakistani ties is probably still a ways off considering their unresolved dispute over Kashmir's final political status and Prime Minister Imran Khan's recent statement that such normalisation of relations is impossible until New Delhi restores the region's autonomy. Nevertheless, this doesn't mean that pragmatic bilateral and multilateral (i.e. including Afghanistan) economic engagement can't occur, but it'll still require considerable political will from all players in order to succeed. In addition, India might feel uncomfortable trading with Afghanistan across a corridor that's referred to as N-CPEC+, hence the possible need to rebrand it as something more neutral such as the "Central Eurasian Corridor" (CEC). Semantics aside, it's unclear whether that scenario will come to pass in the coming future considering the political complexities involved, but it's much more obvious that India will definitely have to recalibrate its regional approach to Central Asia in light of Afghanistan's increased cooperation with CPEC at Chabahar's perceived expense. That Iranian port was also supposed to function as a key node in the North-South Transport Corridor (NSTC) that's envisioned as stretching all the way north to Russia, but the project has been mostly stillborn since India voluntarily decided to comply with the US' unilateral sanctions against the Islamic Republic. Should they be lifted as part of a revised nuclear deal, then the project might finally be revived. Even in that event, however, India and its pertinent partners would have still lost a lot of time since Afghanistan's incorporation into CPEC is irreversible. The NSTC will therefore likely fail to meet the lofty expectations that were originally held of it, especially with respect to

serving as India's entry point to Central Asia. That's not to say that the project will be a complete failure since it'll probably still be used in some capacity or another, but just that India might either have to abandon its hopes of "balancing" China in this geostrategic space via the NSTC or seriously explore a rapprochement with Pakistan in order to guarantee reliable access to Central Asia. Neither policy option is what India initially envisioned doing. Regardless of whatever course of action it ultimately decides upon, it's clear that the BRI-backed Afghan-Pakistani rapprochement is reshaping regional geopolitics by mitigating Indian influence in Central Asia. India might even accept that it'll probably be unable to become a mainland Eurasian power like it wanted and instead focus more on what it describes as the Indo-Pacific in order to become a maritime one. That might arguably be more of a pragmatic policy since it's practically impossible for India to make up its lost ground in Central Asia after what just recently happened even if it doesn't abandon this part of the world outright. Concentrating more on East Africa, Southeast Asia, and Russia's Arctic & Far Eastern regions might be a better choice. With India potentially bowing out of the Great Power competition in Central Asia, the only realistic extra-regional "balancing" partner left for those five countries is Turkey, which is making strides in the region through its "Middle Corridor". Ankara's relations with the Russian-Chinese duopoly jointly managing Central Asian affairs at the moment are somewhat complicated though the West Asian country has recently behaved much more pragmatically with both of them than in time's past despite concerns over Turkish drone sales to the Polish-led anti-Russian "Lublin Triangle" and Turkey's interest in China's Uyghur minority. Nevertheless, it's unlikely that Turkey would try to disrupt the state of affairs in Central Asia since it benefits from stability there. The end result of the BRI-backed Afghan-Pakistani rapprochement is that Turkey might soon become a more serious extra-regional player in Central Asia than India since the latter seems to have lost out on its opportunity for comprehensive regional engagement via Chabahar. The South Asian state might also be encouraged by these dynamics to seriously consider a meaningful rapprochement with Pakistan which would in that case require some tough compromises on Kashmir. The broader region's geopolitics are therefore being reshaped, though it's not yet clear what the outcome will be. In any case, the observable trend is a positive one which will contribute to Eurasian stability if it remains in effect as is expected.

<https://tribune.com.pk/article/97395/the-bri-backed-afghan-pakistan-rapprochement-is-reshaping-the-region>

The Nation

Pakistan's various sectors ready to receive CPEC benefits

ISLAMABAD - Economic experts claimed that Pakistan's various sectors are ready to receive maximum benefits from China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project

According to political economists, many sectors will get benefits from the project as in addition to the economic corridor, CPEC in Pakistan will include energy projects, infrastructure development, industrialization, and the expansion and improvement of Gwadar Port. The project

has great potentials for Pakistan, in both economic and regional domains. They said that the goal of CPEC is both to transform Pakistan's economy—by modernizing its road, rail, air, and energy transportation systems—and to connect the deep-sea Pakistani ports of Gwadar and Karachi to China's Xinjiang province and beyond by overland routes.

Expert Nasreen Khalid said that the features of CPEC included integrated Transport & IT systems including Road, Rail, Port, Air and Data Communication Channels, Energy Cooperation, Spatial Layout, Functional Zones, Industries and Industrial Parks and Agricultural Development. She said that various studies highlighted the importance of CPEC for Pakistan and its role in the development quest of Pakistan. CPEC presents multidimensional benefits for Pakistan. It has been predicted that there would be an increase of 6.43 percent in national GDP due to transport infrastructure. She said that better transport infrastructure will also help Pakistan increase trade. It has forecast that Pakistan's trade can increase by 9.8 percent if Pakistan implements reforms well in addition to transport infrastructure under CPEC. It would be a huge contribution, keeping in mind the existing situation of trade. Another expert Usman Naeem said that the Gwadar Port has already been operationalised and has started to deliver benefits to the people of Balochistan. The port has introduced multidimensional benefits for the province and will turn Gwadar city into a hub for regional connectivity.

He added transit trade through Gwadar will bring new opportunities for livelihoods for local people and province. It will also help enhance trade with Afghanistan, especially from the Balochistan border.

He said that Chinese companies are also contributing to local development. For example, COPHC, the executing agency for the Gwadar Port has created more than 4000 jobs during the last five years in Balochistan.

COPHC is also contributing in the education sector. It has built a school in one of the most backward areas of the country, he added.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-07/page-8/detail-7>

June 08, 2021

Daily Times

Pakistan-China cooperation in sugar industry to bring 'sweet revolution'

Pakistan and China can produce high-grade sugar in abundance and export it across the world, said Dr Gu Wenliang, Agricultural Commissioner of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, according to China Economic Net (CEN). "Sugarcane cooperation between China and Pakistan will bring sweet revolution, and will literally turn the friendship between the two nations 'sweeter than honey'," he remarked.

Dr. Gu Wenliang was speaking at "China-Pakistan Sugarcane Industry Cooperation and Exchange Forum" where experts from both China and Pakistan participated and exchanged

views. “It is a great forum. Our responsibility is to connect people and experts from China & Pakistan and provide them a platform. This is what we are doing with zeal and zest. China and Pakistan should join hands to promote sugarcane production and processing to produce high-grade sugar. Believe me, two iron friends can export sugar to the world if they enhance cooperation in this field,” he said, adding that the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan will continue connecting people from both sides.

Liu Kui, Director of International Cooperation Department, Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS), introduced different aspects of CATAS, and gave an impressive industrialization application of ‘Tissue Culture’ which, according to him, can bring revolution in the production of sugarcane. “Chinese Academy of Tropical Agriculture Science has been giving training to the scientists across the globe. It has introduced 100 training courses for 4,000 participants from more than 90 countries. More than 40 young scientists from Asia, Africa, and Latin America came to CATAS for medium and long term visits and exchanges,” he said, adding that CATAS has sent its experts to more than twenty countries to conduct agriculture technology guidance and demonstration of extension.

Dr Zhang Shuzhen, Researcher from Institute of Tropical Bioscience and Biotechnology of CATAS strongly rejected using conventional seeds. “Conventional seeds are not suitable for planting. Breeding and planting disease free seedlings are perfect for sugarcane production,” she told participants of meeting. While giving impressive presentation, Dr. Zhang Shuzhen made it loud and clear that by applying integrated disease-free techniques, the pathogens of viruses and RSD can be removed, and problem of degradation and purification can be solved simultaneously,” she said.

“As CPEC inches near to completion in Pakistan, we are offering our latest agricultural technology to Pakistan. We are here to modernize Pakistan’s agriculture sector,” Dai Bao, Manager of China Machinery Engineering Corporation, Head of China-Pakistan Agricultural Cooperation and Exchange Center said, while presenting well-prepared presentation in the forum. He said CMEC has a deep understanding of the Pakistani market and its development in the past four decades, a long time span CMEC has endured since it entered the country in the 1980s. “Pakistan is a traditional agricultural country, but there is still a lot more to do to modernize its agriculture sector to enable it to meet international. We are here to help Pakistan achieve goals. We established the Pakistan-China Agricultural Cooperation and Exchange Center in the first place in 2019 and now the Information Platform, in a wish to vitalize cooperation between the enterprises and research institutions of the two sides and promote Pakistan’s development in agriculture,” Dai Bao said.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Shahid Afghan, acting CEO SRDB, said Pakistan’s sugarcane industry couldn’t prosper until growers get leading sugarcane variety. “Pakistan is still far from getting access to leading sugarcane varieties which offer great resistance against diseases. We must start sugarcane breeding program in Pakistan with the help of China. It is the need of hour,” he said.

Manzoor Soomro of ECOSF stressed on the need of collaboration between Pakistan and Chinese governments in agriculture sector and said ‘it is the need of hour’.

Taking part in discussion, Fateh Mari, Vice Chancellor of Tandojam University, said there lies great scope of cooperation between China and Pakistan in agriculture sector including ‘sugar industry’. “We need to cooperate so that we can learn from China and China can learn from Pakistan. It will mutually benefit us,” he said.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/769131/pakistan-china-cooperation-in-sugar-industry-to-bring-sweet-revolution/>

Pakistan Observer

CPEC phase II agri development allocation to be doubled

In connection with CPEC phase II tech-savvy Agriculture cooperation between Pakistan and China, Punjab budget 2021-22 is going to have double allocation for agriculture projects with emphasis on improving the quality of seeds and agricultural services to boost production, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. Inspired by incentives given by China to farmers and implementing new priorities laid down in CPEC phase II, Punjab budget 2021-22 is ushering in a new era of agriculture taxes to boost agro-based initiatives as well as corporate farming. The tax rate on agricultural services is being curtailed to 1 per cent from 16 per cent for the corporate sector in order to make the sector attractive for investment. CPEC authority Chairman Asif Saleem Bajwa in a media talk said that efficient and corporate farming is going to be introduced for the first time in the country in cooperation with China under CPEC.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-phase-ii-agri-development-allocation-to-be-doubled/>

June 09, 2021

Daily Times

Adil Ashraf willing to contribute for success of CPEC, Pak-China friendship

Adil Ashraf, CFO of Three Gorges Wind Farm Pakistan on Tuesday expressed the resolve to work for the success of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and friendship of both countries.

He said :”I am willing to contribute to the success of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pak-China friendship and Pakistan’s historic development.”

Ashraf made these remarks when he was awarded the ‘Outstanding Pakistani Employee’ of CPEC, with the other 17 ones, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

Adil Ashraf, with his outstanding professional ability, has dealt with many finance and taxation issues, defused relevant risks, saved expenses and safeguarded rights and interests for the company since he joined Three Gorges Wind Farm Pakistan.

In 2020, the COVID-19 epidemic was rampant in Pakistan. Though the company advocated staff to work from home, Ashraf and his team had to remain at their posts as financial staff had to conduct businesses at the office and in the bank to ensure the company could function well.

Once in a while, some teammates complained: why did the financial team worker have to brave the risk of infection and even work overtime, since most of the workers worked remotely and avoided going to the crowded areas?

Ashraf used to respond to these complaints with a little seriousness in a calm, orderly manner: The more difficult the company is, the more it can reflect our true value to the company.

“When Pakistan is at the most difficult times, our Chinese colleagues stood by us through thick and thin. There is no reason why we should not work harder and dedicate ourselves to our job,” he added.

The financial team had made great contributions and sacrifices for the company’s projects.

For professional ability, responsibility, and performance, Adil Ashraf has become one representative of the “Outstanding Pakistani Employees” of CPEC in 2020. For Ashraf, CPEC is not unfamiliar. He has in-depth understanding of the development of CPEC.

Ashraf thinks that CPEC will not only help Pakistan attract investment from China and other countries, but also boost the development of transportation, industry and trade, and create more job opportunities for Pakistanis.

Actually, Pakistan, like other developing countries, has been facing the dilemma of brain drain due to the lack of development opportunity. While the implementation of CPEC has ignited the hope of many Pakistanis, including Ashraf.

<https://dailymtimes.com.pk/769692/adil-ashraf-willing-to-contribute-for-success-of-cpec-pak-china-friendship/>

Dunya News

Govt will allocate Rs2021bln for projects under PSDP: Asad

ISLAMABAD (Dunya News) - Planning Minister Asad Umar said the government will allocate 2021 billion rupees for projects under Public Sector Development Program with increase of 36.1 percent for coming fiscal year 2021-22. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad this afternoon, he said the allocation will be for 40 percent for energy, transport and communication, 10 percent for water projects, 31 percent for social and regional equalization, 5 percent for production, science and Technology and 7 percent for Viability Gap Funding. He said 244 billion rupees are being allocated for infrastructure motorways, highways, interprovincial roads, airport and Railways projects. He said that 3261 kilometers length of new roads will be added to the network. He said 14 high-impact public-private partnership based projects worth 978 billion rupees are expected to be completed till October this year. He said the government is giving special attention to improve agricultural and industrial productions which are very imperative for

economic improvement. He said that investment has been made on building large dams and water conservation system as per commitment under National Water Policy. Asad Umar said that 84.5 billion rupees will be allocated for construction of Diamer-Bhasha, Mohmand and Dasu Dams. He said that 100 billion rupee will be allocated for de-bottlenecking and up gradation of transmission system of energy sector in the country. The Minister said that the government is also fusing allocation in social sector. He said 44 billion rupees will be allocated for Higher Education and 105 universities to be benefited from 120 projects, while 5 billion will be provided for 6000 scholarships under Scholarship Scheme. He said Special packages are being provided under PSDP for Southern Balochistan, Karachi Transformation Plan, Socio-Economic Development of Gilgit Baltistan, Sindh Development Plan for 14 plus priority districts and enhanced allocation for newly merged districts erstwhile FATA. Reacting on presser of CM Sindh, Asad Umar said that 125 billion rupees will be provided to Sindh under different programs.

Giving detail about projects of China Pakistan Economic Corridor, he said that 87 billion rupees will be allocated for these projects including 78 billion rupees for CPEC Transport and Communication projects, 42 billion for Projects of Western Alignment and 7 billion for Special Economic Zones. He said the special focus is being made on projects in backward areas of the country. He said the government is also tackling the global warming and climate change issue with an integrated strategy which is being acknowledged and appreciated internationally. Chairman CPEC Authority Asim Saleem Bajwa, on the occasion, briefed about projects under CPEC.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Business/605218-Govt-will-allocate-Rs2021bln-for-projects-under-PSDP-Asad>

Pakistan Observer

CPEC and Environment: How bad is it?

Ahmad Mujtaba Khan

THE name CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor) is well-known to many people across the world. It is recognized as China's Belt and Road Initiative's flagship project in Pakistan. Experts are divided on the economic advantages and environmental repercussions of this project, leaving aside the political and strategic aspect for the sake of this article. However, an examination of cross-economic gains and environmental costs is required. To do so, one must first comprehend the notion of sustainable development. Different international organizations, notably the World Wild Fund (WWF), the United Nation (UN) and the WCED, have defined it in similar fashion. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), sustainability necessitates not only the protection of natural and environmental assets, but also the provision of economic and social well-being for current and future generations. According to the concept, economic and social comfort is just as vital as environmental and natural resource conservation. The challenge then becomes whether it can work concurrently, to

which the frantic response is a resounding “yes.” But, then again, will a developing country be able to fully implement such a policy? Before delving into the specifics, we must first examine how the CPEC would help Pakistan’s economy recover from its previous state of insecurity. Self-sufficiency is essential for becoming a developed country; today, every developed country is self-sufficient to a larger level in terms of energy, food, healthcare, education and infrastructure, among other things. Such countries rely heavily on their export economy and invest heavily in research and innovation in order to prosper. The main roadblocks to industrialization include a lack of infrastructure (roads, trains and buildings), a lack of communication, unreliable transport mechanism, insufficient power supply and untrained labour. As a result of the increased competitiveness in the world market, the high cost of manufacturing and human resources lead to less exports. The goal of CPEC is to remove these barriers, first by assisting Pakistan in becoming self-sufficient in terms of energy, water, information technology, infrastructure, transportation, skilled education, trade & commerce and second by providing Pakistan with a fair chance to compete in the international market via BRI routes. Returning to sustainable development, experts debate the magnitude of environmental costs that Pakistan will face as a result of its usage of coal for energy production and increased traffic on CPEC routes. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Carbon dioxide (CO₂) accounts for roughly 75% of all worldwide greenhouse gas emissions. Coal is responsible for about 39% of CO₂ emissions, yet it is the most cost-effective source of energy for many advanced and emerging economies. In a developing country like Pakistan, depending solely on renewable energy sources isn’t ideal (optimal). To provide a fair picture, we compare the worldwide proportion of carbon emissions to significant nations and, in particular, nearby neighbours. As per 2019 estimates, Pakistan is ranked 29th in the world, with 0.68% of global carbon emissions, compared to China’s 28%, the United States 15%, and India’s 7%. Other countries including Russia, Japan, Germany, Canada, Iran, Indonesia, Turkey and the United Kingdom are following suit, generating between 1% and 6% of global CO₂. In comparison to other Asian countries, Pakistan’s yearly relative change in carbon output during the last 20 years (since, year 2000) is +0.42%, compared to China (+13%), Japan (+5%), India (+4%), Iran (+2%), Indonesia (+1%), and North Korea (+0.28%). Although the United States proportion of global carbon is smaller than China’s, the overall relative change since 2000 is the highest (+24%). During the pandemic, global coal demand fell by 11%, as did CO₂ emissions, but the International Energy Agency (IEA) forecasts a 2.6% increase in global coal usage in 2021. Also, the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects that total CO₂ emissions would increase by 21% in 2021 and 2022 as coal becomes more cost-effective for electricity generation as natural gas prices rise. Before drawing any comparisons, it’s worth noting that carbon emissions are an externality that impacts everyone on the planet, regardless of their level of engagement. As per World Bank statistics, Pakistan generates 31% of its electricity from hydropower, 37% from petroleum, 26% from gas, 4.8% from nuclear power plants, and only 0.10% from coal-fired power plants. According to another estimate by the International Trade Administration (ITA), Pakistan gets 64% of its energy from thermal sources (coal, fossil fuels,

and gas combined), 27% from hydro, and 7% from renewable sources. In contrast to big nations and near neighbours, Pakistan consumes significantly less coal and emits significantly less carbon dioxide. The preceding comparisons of carbon emission statistics reveal that Pakistan's contribution to global CO₂ emissions is quite minimal, but it is also evident that progress comes at a price in terms of the environment. Pakistan, on the other hand, is trying everything possible to avoid using coal as much as possible and instead employ eco-friendly technology to create electricity. As of now, CPEC has twenty-three active and planned power-generation projects in different areas of Pakistan, with just nine of them being coal-fired power plants. The remaining fourteen power plants will create electricity using water, wind, and solar energy. The main reason for the use of coal for power generation in few areas is because of the infeasibility or unavailability of other sources of energies. Moreover, Pakistan postponed 2600 MW of imported coal projects under the CPEC last year, replacing them with 3700 MW of zero-carbon and hydropower projects. In addition, the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) announced a new policy last year to produce roughly 20% of its installed capacity from renewables by 2025, and 30% by 2030. These measures will further lessen the country's reliance on fossil fuels, natural gas, and coal for power generation. Pakistan's dedication to climate-friendly and sustainable growth is demonstrated by the Green Stimulus package announced in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to protect nature while offering green jobs to nearly sixty five thousand daily wagers; applauded by global experts. This is an excellent model for linking economic development with a new deal for nature. In addition, Pakistan has achieved a significant milestone on the path to environmental preservation by achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal 13 ten years ahead of the schedule (2030). Furthermore, the 10 Billion Tree Tsunami Program, the Clean Green Pakistan Initiative, the Clean Green Pakistan Index (CGPI), Pakistan Electric Vehicles Policy 2020-2025, the Protected Areas Initiative for the creation of new national parks, the Ecosystem Restoration Fund for facilitating green growth, and the Land Degradation Neutrality Initiative are visible strategies adopted to combat climate change. While CPEC presents a window for Pakistan to industrialize, it is apparent that Pakistan is well ahead of many other countries in terms of environmental preservation and climate change mitigation. Finally, Pakistan is committed to transforming the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor into a China-Pakistan Green Economic Corridor.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-and-environment-how-bad-is-it-by-ahmad-mujtaba-khan/>

CPEC & concept of ecological civilization

By Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

CHINA-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) “stimulates” green economy, green transportation system and green channels of production in the country which would be further “consolidated” in its phase-II. Most recently, Prime Minister Imran Khan while addressing a ceremony to mark the World Environment Day with co-partnership with the UN Environment Program urged the developed world to support those countries vulnerable to climate change and highlighted Pakistan's contributions towards tackling global warming. He announced four key “Ecosystem

Restoration Initiatives” (ERI) on World Environment Day. On the part of Pakistan, first billion trees plantation target has now been achieved under the Prime Minister’s flagship Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Plantation (TBTP) project. Bonn Challenge successfully restored 0.3 million hectares of forest cover in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Protected Areas Initiative (PAI) successfully established 15 National Parks along with marine protected area and finally Green Financing initiatives introduced by Pakistan at global fora for ecosystem restoration fund have achieved tremendous success. Even Pakistan has become pioneer in introducing green financing for the first time in the country’s history. \$500 million sovereign guarantee ‘Green Bonds’ was launched by Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) for two hydro-power projects. Moreover, the zero carbon emission vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan under “Ecosystem Restoration Fund (ERF) has secured \$180 million from the World Bank as initial funding and Rs12 billion will be spent by the government in this Fund to generate 200,000 daily waged nature protecting green jobs. The “Pak-China Green Zone” Initiative under CPEC will be led by the Chinese Company Elion Resources Group that had successfully reversed Kubuqi Desert into a green area. The Debt for Nature Swap may be a unique mechanism for using debt financing for ecological conservation as many countries are interested in initiating dialogue on the project. In this connection, Recharge Pakistan Project would also be launched among others that help store 100 million acres of flood water to revive wood lands. Ecological Civilization (EC) is a set of values and development concepts incorporated in the constitution of the People’s Republic of China in 2018. It has now become a key driver in China’s transition to high quality development for the future. It is simultaneously a philosophy, vision and compass for a green and prosperous future. For the last two decades, China has been taking numerous structural reforms to gradually control colossal impacts of the Climate Change and introduced a comprehensive “five-in one” holistic model for protecting and enhancing natural capital. It is a comprehensive plan that is potentially capable of establishing ecological integrity at many levels from local to global. China always puts nature first which consolidates its EC policy. The new EC approach is also primarily based on Chinese central government pledge of “Putting People First” which has actually opened up new quality of life options. It is based on a moderately prosperous lifestyle and living within ecological limits. As China progresses toward the medium-term phase and beyond, to address 2035 and 2050 modernization and prosperity aspirations the EC can be expected to play a significant role which has already been included in the 12th and 13th Five Year Plans which has international orientation too i.e. with the United Nations Environment Program and at the UN General Assembly. The global community is struggling with climate change, health of the oceans, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and integrated sustainable development goals. No country can succeed in fully addressing today’s global ecological and environmental crises on its own. The magnitude of the problems currently exceeds our combined efforts to deal effectively with the situation. The UN and many international organizations and scientific bodies have already warned us about the deteriorating climate change equations which urgently need integrated solutions. Being a prominent regional expert of CPEC & BRI, I outline various essential ecological and environmentally sound development transformative measures

comprising paradigm shift in governance model by introducing effective legal reforms, economy and investment decision making with ecological orientations, massive people's drive and innovations, especially for the application of science and technology advances. There is an urgent need to incorporate holistic policies, plans and projects in CPEC Phase-II for achieving the optimal level of green development, green finance, green economy, circular economy, low-carbon economy, ecological redlining, ecological restoration and construction, green urbanization, climate change mitigation and adaptation and sustainable development. Shifting of investment and priorities toward ecological civilization in the ongoing projects of CPEC especially, in its phase-II may be initiated immediately. CPEC deals with sectors such as transportation, water, energy, industry, tourism, parks, public health and education which should also be redesigned under flagship holistic model of the EC. Consolidation of sustainable ecological progress, green sustainable production and consumption, improved environmental and ecologically-based spatial planning and designs for both urban and rural areas, industrial ecology based on no-waste advanced circular economy, green transportation and emphasis on green amenities including national parks and recreational areas should be part and parcel of the CPEC Phase-II to improve people's health and accelerate green development throughout the country. To achieve these goals and channels of green development and basic survival Chinese government has already agreed to further transform the CPEC into a model green belt and road initiative to protect and preserve natural environment important issues i.e. environmental sustainability, climate resilience, renewable energy, green economic recovery, air pollution, water conservation and disaster risk reduction. On its part Pakistan has already initiated an ambitious Protected Areas Initiative (PAI) under the flagship program 'Clean Green Pakistan' aiming to expand the country's protected area from 13% to more than 15% by 2023 and create 5,000 green jobs across the country. The world's largest Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Program (TBTTP), Clean Green Pakistan (CGP), Protected Areas Initiative (PAI), Plastic-Free Pakistan (PFP) and Recharge Pakistan Initiative (RPI) are also slowly but surely transforming Pakistan into green country. China has been pursuing policies of Green Special Economic Zones (GSEZs) and built Eco-Industrial Parks which has reshaped its development orientation by conserving its resource bank, of both energy and physical materials which may be replicated in the CPEC phase-II in the country. A holistic climate artificial intelligence mechanism is must to resolve the problems related to the environment and biodiversity in the country which proposes attractive and environmentally friendly alternatives. Installation of CO₂ scrubbers, construction of Algal ponds and development of research stations across the roads, formation of corridor of knowledge and introducing the concept of carbon canopy may be value-addition. In this context, the Belt and Road Ecological and Environmental Cooperation Plan" may provide knowledge and wisdom to control climate change. Moreover, Chinese "Concept of Ecological Civilization and Strengthen Policy Coordination" will also translate positive progress and promising results by actively deepening bilateral dialogue, exchange and cooperation with countries along the Belt and Road, reinforcing eco-environmental information support services and advancing cooperation on environmental standards, technologies and industries.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-concept-of-ecological-civilization-by-dr-mehmood-ul-hassan-khan/>

COAS, Chinese ambassador discuss CPEC, regional security

RAWALPINDI – Nong Rong, Ambassador of China to Pakistan, on Wednesday called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), according to military's media wing. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, progress on CPEC and regional security situation including the latest developments in the Afghan Peace Process were discussed, said the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement. COAS thanked the dignitary for China's contribution towards the fight against COVID-19 and the provision of vaccines to Pakistan and said that Pakistan greatly values its friendly relations with its "iron brother" China. COAS also felicitated the dignitary for holding the grand ceremony in Beijing on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of Pak-China diplomatic relations. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's sincere efforts for bringing peace and stability in the region, especially the Afghan Peace Process. Pakistan Army chief offers assistance to Azerbaijan in defence-related fields. On Tuesday, the Commander of Azerbaijan's naval forces Rear Admiral Subhan Bakirov called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), during the meeting, matters of mutual interest, including defence, training, security cooperation between both countries, and the overall regional security situation were discussed. COAS said that Pakistan values its brotherly relations with Azerbaijan and also offered all possible assistance and cooperation in the development and defence-related fields. Pakistan Army chief also commended the thorough professionalism and valour of the Azerbaijan forces. Both sides reaffirmed their determination to work together for enhancing diplomatic / security cooperation in various fields.

<https://pakobserver.net/coas-chinese-ambassador-discuss-cpec-regional-security/>

The Express Tribune

ML-I financial close likely in FY22

ISLAMABAD: Planning Minister Asad Umar on Tuesday hoped to secure financing for the Mainline-I project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in next fiscal year, saying that one of the irritants in reaching a deal was the Chinese banks' reluctance to lend new loans. The Chinese banks had financed CPEC energy projects but their money was stuck in the power circular debt, said Umar while addressing a press conference along with CPEC Authority Chairman Asim Saleem Bajwa. The government has started clearing the circular debt and this would address their concern, said Umar. About Rs209 billion were due to Chinese investors power plants and at least two coal-based CPEC power plants were facing financial issues in ensuring uninterrupted coal supplies, an official told The Express Tribune. Pakistan wants to expand and modernise its dilapidated rail infrastructure through \$7 billion Chinese investment. But the project is facing delays due to lack of financial close of the project.

The proposed Annual Plan 2021-22 for next fiscal year's says that ML-I's "financial close is expected in the year 2021-22". However, the government has allocated only Rs6.2 billion for the ML-I project in this budget, which is 38% less than what it had indicated at the initial budget approval process stage. Bajwa said that CPEC's second phase was making progress and the government has made Rs87 billion allocation in the budget for CPEC projects. The Pak-China Industrial cooperation agreement is the deliverable for the next Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting. But absence of the industrial agreement has not stopped work on the CPEC industrial zone, said Bajwa. The chairman said that one Chinese investor has invested in Rashakai zone and four are investing in Faisalabad zone. The CPEC Master Plan is integrated with Pakistan's economic plan, said Bajwa. Pakistan is keen to sign a framework agreement on industrial cooperation during the next JCC meeting. However, the Chinese authorities were not willing to enter into another framework agreement. Pakistan is trying to show progress on at least three SEZs – Rashakai SEZ in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Allama Iqbal SEZ in Punjab and Dhabeji SEZ in Sindh. The development agreement for Rashakai SEZ had been concluded in September last year. The government has allocated Rs7 billion in the budget for meeting power requirements for Rashakai, Allama Iqbal, Dhabeji and Bostan SEZs are estimated at 885 megawatts in addition to 110 mmcf/d gas requirements, according to the proposed annual plan. Bajwa said China was also cooperating with Pakistan in the agriculture sector and supporting in cotton seed development. Pakistan will share its agriculture plan with China and the Chinese investors are keen to invest in modern corporate farming, said the chairman. Bajwa said that three dams will be made in Balochistan for agriculture purposes. There has not been any meeting of Joint Working Group on agriculture since April last year. In the last meeting, the working group had agreed to formulate an action plan for agriculture with emphasis on enhancing productivity of major crops, value addition in agri produces, reducing post-harvest waste and pest and disease controls. Bajwa said that there will be focus on the western route of CPEC and the government has made Rs42 billion allocation in the next budget. On the western alignment, Hakla-Dera Ismail Khan section is under construction, said Bajwa. The chairman said that this road will be completed by November this year. The Zhob-DI Khan segment is included in the JCC and the work on Zhob to Quetta has already begun. Bajwa said that the construction of the Gwadar-Khuzdar section will also be completed by November this year. Umar said that the government has proposed 31% of the next year's budget for regional equalization as a nation cannot be kept united with force of tanks and guns. Umar said that Chinese financing for projects will reduce in coming years due to shifting of focus from public sector projects to private sector led projects. The minister also spoke about objections raised by Sindh Chief Minister. The centre was spending billions of rupees on several projects in the province, he added. Against Rs93 billion allocations for Punjab projects, Sindh is being given Rs90 billion, said Umar. CM Murad last week expressed his reservations over the upcoming budget, saying that ever since the PTI-led government had come to power, it had been "biased" towards the province. Umar, while responding to CM Murad's objections, said any province including Sindh cannot dictate the centre about the federal development budget. "It's the prerogative of the federal government to

spend money on projects of its own choice. However, we do take provinces' input," he said. "But they cannot dictate the federal government," he stressed. "The PPP government from 2008 to 2013 did not develop a single inch of motorway in the province," said the planning minister.

The minister said that there was not sufficient space in the PSDP to finance mega infrastructure projects, therefore, the government has decided to collaborate with the private sector. An amount of Rs61 billion has been kept in the budget for viability gap funding of public private partnership projects, he added. Umar admitted that the quality of the projects being added in the next PSDP was not good and it has been decided that no new project will be accepted for inclusion in the PSDP after March next year. He said that against an allocation of Rs650 billion, the actual spending is estimated at 90% of the allocation. He hoped that in the next fiscal year about 320 projects will be completed.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2304230/ml-i-financial-close-likely-in-fy22>

The Nation

CPEC to reduce US influence in region

SHAHBAZ ALI HADI

US created Jehadi organisations and funded them monetarily and also militarily to counter Russia in 70s. Not only from Pakistan, Jihadis were brought to Afghanistan from all over the world and trained them. After more than a decade long war, Russia was defeated in Afghanistan and there was no further plan for these Jehadi fighters. US left them and these Jihadis in different groups and started ruling different areas of Afghanistan. Taliban were strongest of them. This strategy was criticised within US after 9/11. In 2009, then Foreign Minister Hilary Clinton stated that we are fighting the people who are funded and trained by US in the past. After achieving goals, we left Pakistan to deal with the consequences and today we are on door of Pakistan again. Not only this, we also put sanctions on Pakistan.

US is planning to leave Afghanistan by September 11, 2021 but their actions are suggesting that they may leave Afghanistan but they will not leave region to monitor Afghanistan. It is a hot debate in US that abandoning Afghanistan again will be a grave mistake. On 7 April, 2021, US Chargé d'Affaires Angela Aggeler visited Gwadar and held meetings with local military leadership and port authorities which raised eyebrows of a lot of people. On 17 May 2021, Moeed Yousuf, NSA of Pakistan was given status of Federal Minister and later on May 23 news came that Pakistan NSA Moeed Yousuf met his US counterpart Jake Sullivan. On May 24, Pentagon claimed that Pakistan will provide air and ground routes to US for Afghanistan. On 27 May, Assistant Sect. Defence David Helvey stated in front of US Senate that Pakistan has assured air routes in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and Foreign Office on two different occasions rejected the news regarding provision of any routes to US. Nearly after a decade, a bill is presented in US Senate with title "Pakistan-Afghanistan Economic Development Act". This act will help in boosting economy of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

With all above mentioned points, we must also keep in mind that China is a big stake holder in Pakistan as well. Under CPEC, a large investment is under process by China in infrastructure and other sections of Pakistan. US, China rivalry is not hidden from world. Question arises if Pakistan provides land/ air routes or bases to US, what will be reaction of China? What will be the future of Pakistan China relationship? And will China take it as threat to its interests in

Pakistan and Asia? Answers of all these questions end up at Pakistan on the losing side. If China decides to reroute One Belt One Road initiative, they can continue it without Pakistan. Recent deal of economic cooperation for 25 years between Iran and China is an example. Pakistan must understand that US is an unreliable partner and new deal with US may result in losing China along with all the investment.

On the other hand, China has delayed the payments of several projects. ML-1 railway project is an example. Gwadar is epicentre of CPEC but is deprived of basic facilities of water and electricity. Water supply and distribution was an important project which facing delays. Similarly, Gwadar Intl. airport is also facing delays due to economic constraints. 300 MW coal based power plant is of great importance as it will provide electricity to not only to Gwadar but also other areas of Balochistan and is important for economic activities in port city. Unfortunately, this project is also facing funding issues. Concerned banks are not funded by Chinese government to loan money for these projects.

China must understand that Pakistan suffered badly due to Afghanistan and lucrative economic project by China called CPEC reduced worries of Pakistan and resulted in reduction of US influence in region. If China will step back or will not fulfill commitments with Pakistan, than, Pakistan would have no choice but to look for US again. Strong US in region and weak Pakistan is not in favour of China as it will affect Iran as well like in the past. It is need of time to speedup economic activities in Pakistan so that Chinese and Pakistani interests can be safeguarded.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-09/page-9/detail-5>

The News

Rs87b allocated for CPEC projects in next budget

ISLAMABAD: Dispelling the impression of slowing down of CPEC projects, Federal Minister for Planning Asad Umar has said the government has allocated Rs87 billion for the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) for the next budget 2021-22 for execution of CPEC projects.

The National Economic Council (NEC) approved an allocation of Rs42 billion for Western Alignment and Rs6.2 billion for Mainline (ML-1). The government allocated Rs7 billion for provision of basic necessities such as utilities and other infrastructure into the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) at Rashakai, Dhabeji, Faisalabad and Bostan.

“The appetite for making new commitments by Chinese companies is expected to increase, so the financing of ML-1 will now be finalized. The increased circular debt and nonpayment to IPPs had created difficulties which also hindered the ML-1, but now after debt clearing, the Chinese

appetite for new investment would improve,” Asad Umar said while briefing newsmen here at the P Block along with CPEC Authority Chairman Lt Gen (retd) Asim Salem Bajwa on Tuesday.

The chairman CPEC Authority said that the Industrial Cooperation Framework was under consideration, which was part of deliverables for the next Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) under CPEC. The agriculture transformation package announced by the government was shared with the Chinese side, so partnership and match-making between Pakistani and Chinese companies would be done, he added.

While responding to concerns raised by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah during the NEC meeting, the minister said the PPP had remained in the federal government four times and provincial government for six times but they had never utilized a penny for motorways in Sindh. He said the PTI government made a payment of Rs90 billion for the Multan-Sukkur Motorway. The federal government provided funding for several projects that stood at Rs93 billion and in the next budget this amount would go up to Rs125 to Rs130 billion, if taking into account of VGF in 2021-22.

The minister for planning said that the federal PSDP was increased from Rs660 billion in the outgoing fiscal to Rs900 billion for coming budget, registering an increase in allocation by 36.4 percent. The provincial allocation of ADPs increased from Rs867 billion in outgoing fiscal to Rs1,202 billion for the coming budget. The minister made a comparison and stated that there was a paradigm change in composition of PSDP under the PTI led government as the allocation of energy, transport and communication stood at 56 percent in the fiscal year 2016-17 but it decreased to 40 percent in 2021-22.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/846903-rs87b-allocated-for-cpec-projects-in-next-budget>

Jang News

پاکستان اپنے ’آئرن برادر‘ چین کے ساتھ دوستانہ تعلقات کی بہت قدر کرتا ہے، آرمی چیف

آرمی چیف جنرل قمر جاوید باجوہ کا کہنا ہے کہ پاکستان اپنے ’آئرن برادر‘ چین کے ساتھ دوستانہ تعلقات کی بہت قدر کرتا ہے۔

پاک فوج کے شعبہ تعلقات عامہ آئی ایس پی آر کے مطابق آرمی چیف جنرل قمر جاوید باجوہ سے چین کے سفیر لونگ لونگ نے ملاقات کی جس میں باہمی دلچسپی کے امور سمیت سی پیک پر پیشرفت سے متعلق تبادلہ خیال کیا گیا۔

آئی ایس پی آر کے مطابق اس ملاقات میں علاقائی سلامتی اور افغان امن عمل کی تازہ صورتحال پر بھی تبادلہ خیال کیا گیا۔

آئی ایس پی آر کا کہنا ہے کہ آرمی چیف نے کورونا سے نمٹنے میں چین کے کردار کو سراہا جبکہ پاکستان کو ویکسین کی فراہمی پر چین کے سفیر کا شکریہ بھی ادا کیا۔

اس موقع پر آرمی چیف جنرل قمر جاوید باجوہ کا کہنا تھا کہ پاکستان اپنے ’آئرن برادر‘ چین کے ساتھ دوستانہ تعلقات کی بہت قدر کرتا ہے۔

<https://jang.com.pk/news/939543>

June 10, 2021

Daily Times

China-Pak firms' tyre plant to be functional this month: Dawood

A joint venture of Service Group and Chinese firm Chaoyang Long March Tyre Co Ltd is ready to start its tyre manufacturing plant this month in Pakistan for buses and trucks.

This was announced by Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce and Trade Abdul Razak Dawood in a couple of tweets on Wednesday.

Dawood mentioned that the total cost of the project is Rs16.43 billion, adding: "The joint venture aims to reduce import expenses while exporting the majority of the merchandise. It plans to export at least 85% of its tyre output." A day earlier, Abdul Razak Dawood said that electric fans' exports increased by 41.47 percent during the first 10 months (July-April) of the current fiscal year 2020-21 against the corresponding period of the last financial year. He said that it is very pleasing to see the country's fan exports have recovered and are once again on the growth path.

According to the trade data provided by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the exports of electric fans remained \$4,272,000 during the first 10 months (July-April) of the current fiscal year 2020-21.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/770383/china-pak-firms-tyre-plant-to-be-functional-this-month-dawood/>

Nawaiwaqt News

غربت کا خاتمہ: حکمت عملی بنالی، چین کامیاب بھارت ناکام رہا، عمران

اسلام آباد (خبرنگار خصوصی / نوائے وقت رپورٹ) وزیر اعظم عمران خان نے کہا ہے کہ پاکستان میں پہلی دفعہ معاشی طور پر کمزور طبقے کو غربت سے نکالنے کیلئے جامع حکمت عملی مرتب کی گئی ہے، ہمسایہ ملک چین اور بھارت کی مثال سامنے ہے، چین نے پچھلے تیس سال میں لاکھوں لوگوں کو ایسے اقدامات کے تحت غربت سے نکالا جبکہ بھارت اس میں ناکام رہا، حکومت کی اولین ترجیح نچلے طبقے کے لوگوں کی مالی مدد کے ساتھ ساتھ ایسے اقدامات سے انہیں روزگار میں خود کفیل بنانا ہے۔ وہ بدھ کو کامیاب پاکستان پروگرام کے اعلیٰ سطح اجلاس کی صدارت کر رہے تھے۔ اجلاس میں وزیر خزانہ شوکت ترین، معاونین خصوصی وقار مسعود، عثمان ڈار، چیئرمین نیا پاکستان ہاؤسنگ اتھارٹی لیٹیننٹ جنرل ریٹائرڈ انور علی حیدر، چیئرمین حبیب بینک سلطان علی الانہ، طفر مسعود پریزیڈنٹ پنجاب بینک، متعلقہ اعلیٰ حکام اور سٹیک ہولڈرز نے شرکت کی۔ اجلاس کو کامیاب جوان پروگرام کے تحت کامیاب کاروبار، کامیاب کسان اور کامیاب ہنرمند پروگرام، کم لاگت رہائشی سکیموں اور کامیاب پاکستان ہاؤسنگ کیلئے ہول لینڈنگ کو ایک پروگرام، "کامیاب پاکستان پروگرام" میں شامل کرنے پر بریفنگ دی گئی۔ کامیاب پاکستان پروگرام ملک میں معاشی سرگرمیوں کو بڑھانے اور لوگوں کو روزگار کیلئے خود کفیل کرنے میں اہم کردار ادا کرے گا۔ پروگرام کے تحت بڑے پیمانے پر نئے امیدواروں کو کاروبار، کم لاگت رہائش اور زرعی قرضے فراہم کیے جائیں گے جو نہ صرف روزگار کے مواقع فراہم کریں گے، بلکہ معاشی سرگرمیوں کو بڑھانے کے ساتھ ساتھ غربت کے خاتمے، جی ڈی پی گروتھ اور لوگوں کو بیکاری کے دھارے میں شامل کرنے میں معاون ثابت ہوں گے۔ وزیر اعظم عمران خان نے کہا ہے کہ احساس پروگرام فلاحی ریاست کے قیام کی بنیاد ہے، یہ ایک زبردست اقدام ہے، اس پروگرام اور ہائر ایجوکیشن کمیشن کے تحت طالب

علموں کو دی جانے والی سکالرشپس کو ایک ڈیٹا بیس پر لایا جائے۔ بدھ کو اسلام آباد میں پہلے ون ونڈو احساس سنٹر کی افتتاحی تقریب سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے وزیر اعظم نے کہا کہ یہ فلاحی ریاست کی جانب ایک بنیادی قدم ہے، جب اعداد و شمار دستیاب ہوں گے تو اہداف کا تعین کرنے میں آسانی ہوگی۔ انہوں نے اس موقع پر ڈاکٹر ثانیہ نشتر اور ان کی ٹیم کی کارکردگی کو بھی سراہا۔ اس موقع پر وزیر اعظم کی معاون خصوصی برائے سماجی بہبود و تخفیف غربت ڈاکٹر ثانیہ نشتر نے وزیر اعظم کو ون ونڈو سنٹر اور احساس ون ونڈو منصوبے پر بریفنگ دی۔ گلگت بلتستان کابینہ کا اجلاس وزیر اعظم کی زیر صدارت ہوا۔ کابینہ نے 1037 عارضی ملازمین کی تنخواہ 16 ہزار کرنے کی منظوری دی۔ رواں سال بلدیاتی انتخابات کرانے کی بھی منظوری دی گئی۔ پاکستان ہاؤسنگ اتھارٹی کیلئے زمین فراہم کرنے کی منظوری دی۔ وزیر خزانہ جی بی نے کہا کہ پی ایچ اے کے تحت 1200 گھر تعمیر کئے جائیں گے۔ ناردرن ایریاز ٹرانسپورٹ کارپوریشن کو 35 کروڑ گرانٹ کی منظوری دی۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2021-06-10/page-1/detail-23>

June 11, 2021

Business Recorder

Umar explains hike in development budget for FY22

TAHIR AMIN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar on Tuesday said that the National Economic Council (NEC) has approved allocation of Rs2,102 billion for the country's development programme, including Rs87 billion for the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), for 2021-22 against Rs1,527 billion for 2020-21 showing an increase of 36.4 percent.

Flanked by Chairman CPEC Authority Lt-Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa (retd), while briefing regarding the allocations for the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), Umar said the allocation for federal development budget is Rs900 billion for 2021-22 against Rs650 billion for 2020-21, while the provincial development budget is of Rs1,202 billion for 2021-22 against Rs867 billion for 2020-21.

The development budget of Punjab is Rs500 billion for 2021-22 against Rs310 billion for 2020-21, Sindh's Rs321 billion against Rs194 billion, Balochistan's Rs133 billion against Rs89 billion and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Rs248 billion against Rs274 billion.

He said one of the reasons behind the projected 4.8 percent growth, which could be more than five percent, is a highly significant increase in the development budget for the next fiscal year. He said that there was a huge difference in allocation and actual expenditure during 2017-18, therefore, he preferred five-year-old data - 2016-17.

At that time, total allocation was of Rs800 billion and now it is of Rs900 billion. He said that 56 percent funds of the total estimates were allocated for the energy and transport projects in 2016-17, which have been reduced to 40 percent in 2021-22.

He said that a reduction in the PSDP does not mean that development work in road transport and communication sector is being reduced, adding that, in fact, more roads would be constructed by using alternative sources of funding such as public-private partnership.

He said an allocation of Rs244 billion is made for motorways, highways, interprovincial/districts roads, airport, Railway projects, adding that 3,261km length of new roads will be added to the network.

Major projects include Khyber Pass Economic Corridor Project (Rs8.5 billion), Sukkur–Hyderabad Motorway land (Rs4.6 billion), Eastbay Expressway Gwadar (Rs2.1 billion), dualization and improvement of existing N-50 - Yarik-Sagu-Zhob - 210km (Rs1.6 billion), construction of M–8 Hoshab–Awaran–Khuzdar (section-2) 168km (Rs1.5 billion), improvement and widening of Chitral-Booni-Mastuj-Shandur Road (Rs2 billion), roads linking motorways in Punjab, Main Line I (ML-I) (Rs6.2 billion), and Gwadar Airport (Rs1.1 billion). He said that major focus is on PPP (Public Private Partnership) projects including approval of a 14 high-impact PPP transactions of over Rs978 billion expected in April to October 2021, major projects include Sialkot-Kharian Motorway, Sukkur-Hyderabad, Motorway, Karachi-Quetta-Chaman Road, Karachi Circular Railway, Karachi-Pipri Freight Corridor, Railway Hospitals. He said the PSDP requirements are not commensurate with the resources available for infrastructure development.

Therefore, in collaboration with private sector through the Public Private Partnership mega projects would be carried out and for this purpose ‘Viability Gap Fund (VGF)’ has been created. No amount was allocated for it in 2016-17 but now seven percent of PSDP budget has been allocated to it for 2021-22.

According to him, for the first time, the VGF has an allocation of Rs61 billion in the PSDP. Further, four percent was allocated to the water sector in 2016-17, which has been increased to 10 percent in 2021-22.

Umar was of the view people cannot be united through tanks and guns, adding that uniform or equitable development in all areas is needed to unite the nation.

He said that work on three dams has been started.

Investment on building large dams and water conservation system as per commitment under National Water Policy, new cultivable command area of 100,000 acres developed during 2020-21 and further 200,000 acres to be added during the next two years, Diamer–Bhasha, Mohmand and Dasu (Rs84.5 billion), K-IV, Nai Gaj Dam, Raineer Canal and Small Storage Dams in Sindh (Rs25 billion), Kachhi Canal Balochistan, Awaran, Winder and Panjgur Dams (Rs8.2 billion) and small/medium dams in Balochistan and Ghabbir Dam and Papin Dam in Punjab (Rs3.65 billion).

He further said that for the energy sector investment include de-bottlenecking and upgradation of transmission system (Rs100 billion).

He said that earlier it was decided to shut down low efficiency plants and only high efficiency line to remain operational but for that it is important to upgrade transmission system. Only then will the government be able to shut low efficiency plants, he added.

Further investment is being carried in loss reduction and rehabilitation projects in high loss DISCOs, focus on provision of electricity and gas to the CPEC SEZs, K2 and K3 coastal power projects Karachi (Rs16.5 billion), Tarbela 5th extension HPP (Rs4.6 billion) and Evacuation of Power from Suki Kanari (Rs5.5 billion) and interconnection of isolated Makran network at Basima (Rs5 billion).

He said social sector, regional equalization was allocated 23 percent in 2016-17 which has been increased to 31 percent in 2021-22.

He said the Higher Education Commission (HEC) was allocated 2.7 percent of the budget in 2016-17, which has been increased to 4.9 percent.

He said the HEC allocation increased to Rs44 billion, adding that 105 universities would benefit from 120 projects while scholarship schemes of around Rs five billion would benefit more than 6,000 scholars/faculty.

He said that flagship “Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Project” would continue with an allocation of Rs14 billion.

He said that Rs51 billion was spent on the health sector in the outgoing fiscal year. He said that for reducing regional disparities special packages have been added to the PSDP, including accelerated development plan for Southern Balochistan, Karachi Transformation Plan, Socio-Economic Development of Gilgit-Baltistan, Sindh Development Plan for 14+ Priority Districts, and allocation for Newly-Merged Districts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa enhanced. He said that production sector like industries and agriculture need to be focused for growth. He said two percent was allocated for production/science and technology/IT sector in 2016-17, which has been increased to five percent in 2021-22.

He said the PSDP allocation for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects is Rs87 billion.

These include CPEC transport and communication projects (Rs78 billion), projects of Western Alignment (Rs42 billion) and CPEC SEZs, i.e., Dhabeji, Rashakai, Faisalabad, Bostan (Rs7 billion).

The federal minister said that five percent budgetary allocation will be spent on science and technology and information technology (IT).

Responding to a question, he said that projects are being prioritized and all projects could not go at a time.

He said that China is very much interested in the CPEC projects.

He said that different nature of projects have been initiated under the CPEC during the ongoing PTI government’s tenure.

“The first phase was of construction, while the second is of agriculture and industries,” he said. He said in Rashakai industrial zone where foreign investment has already reached through a Chinese company while more companies are coming there.

“You will see a declining trend in the Chinese financing ahead due to a different nature of phase,” he said.

Other Chinese companies are working on the agriculture sector in Pakistan and for the last two years, work on cotton is being carried out and their seed will be available in Pakistan in the next one to two years.

The NEC has decided that after 31 March, no project can be accepted in the PSDP. He said that financing in Chinese projects mainly came to IPPs, adding that this financing increased the overall size of circular debt.

He said that during the last year of the PML-N government, circular debt was increased by Rs450 billion, adding that the increase would be decreased by Rs100-150 billion in the current fiscal year. Due to delay in payment circular debt piled up, he said and added that now those Chinese banks that had given loans are facing issues in payments.

“Now big decisions have been taken and payments have been started,” he said. He said the throw-forward of projects is of around Rs5.5 trillion. Bajwa said that negotiations are being held on Industrial Cooperation Framework with China through Board of Investment and its Chinese counterpart.

“It is a deliverable of the JCC [Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of CPEC]. Nothing has been halted due to it,” he said.

He further said a Joint Working Group has already been created on agriculture sector, adding that a value chain processing is being discussed with China as well.

“You will see Chinese private sector’s participation in the agriculture sector as well,” he said. There is a commitment from the Chinese side to come and participate in the agriculture transformation, he added.

He said the Pakistan People’s Party-led Sindh government has not constructed even a single inch of motorway in the province, however, the federal government is spending Rs200 billion on the Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway project. Besides this, development work worth Rs90 billion is under way on different projects in Sindh.

Umar said the federal government is also making efforts to eliminate encroachments and cleaning of nullahs in Sindh.

He said that Rs25 billion of funds are being spent on water projects in Sindh. “Centre works for the welfare of Sindh’s people and not for its government,” he said.

Responding to Sindh CM Murad’s objections, Umar said no province can dictate the Centre about the federal development’s budget.

“It’s the prerogative of the federal government to spend money on projects of its own choice. However, we do take provinces’ input. But they cannot dictate the federal government,” he said. Umar said that 90 percent utilisation of the PSDP is expected compared to 66 percent during the outgoing fiscal year.

Last year, low utilisation of PSDP was due to the Covid-19 outbreak, he added.

He further said that 320 projects have been targeted to be completed this year.

He said the GDP size was Rs34 trillion in 2017-18, Rs47.7 trillion in the current fiscal and it will be Rs53.9 trillion in the next fiscal year.

He further said the Economic Coordination Committee’s (ECC’s) approval would be sought on Wednesday to procure Covid vaccine worth \$1 billion.

APP adds: Asim Bajwa on the occasion said the only portion left on the Eastern Alignment, was Sukkur-Hyderabad motorway and work on it would commence soon.

On the Western alignment, he said the Hakla-D.I.Khan motorway would become operational in October this year which would reduce the travel time by 50 percent.

He said the D.I. Khan-Zhob section has been included in the upcoming CPEC Joint Coordination Committee while work on Zhob-Quetta had already started. Similarly, he said the road network from Quetta to Gwadar is almost complete.

To a question, Asad Umar said Sindh province was getting lion share of Rs 90 billion in the federal PSDP for its various development projects. While Punjab would get Rs 93 billion so despite a big difference of population, allocation for both provinces was almost same, he added.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2021/06/09/1-page/889062-news.html>

Daily Times

Rs 70 commemorative coin issued on 70th anniversary of Pak-China ties

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Thursday said the time-tested relationship of Pakistan and China was flourishing with each passing day, unaffected by the vicissitudes of time and changes in the regional and global environment.

The minister, in his address at the issuance of commemorative coin in connection with the celebrations marking 70 years of establishment of Pak-China diplomatic relations, said unrelenting efforts of the successive generations of people, and the leadership of Pakistan and China had transformed the relationship into an ‘All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership’.

The coin’s denomination has been kept at Rs 70, depicting the 70 years of all-weather, time-tested and brotherly relationship between Pakistan and China.

The foreign minister said the relationship of Pakistan and China was unique in the world with the historic ties stretching over the span of millennia.

“Historically, academics, monks, travellers and traders frequently traversed the stretches of Trans-Karakorum tracts and laid the foundation of this fraternal bond,” he said.

Qureshi said Pakistan and China steadfastly supported each other on the issues of core interest.

He mentioned that Pakistan adhered to the ‘One-China’ policy, and supported China on issues such as Xinjiang, Hong Kong, South China Sea, Taiwan and Tibet.

He said China stood by Pakistan in supporting the key strategic, economic and developmental priorities.

“Maintaining its principled stance, China has unwaveringly supported Pakistan on the Jammu & Kashmir dispute,” he said.

On the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the foreign minister said the venture brought the relationship to new heights.

After the successful conclusion of its first phase, he said, CPEC had entered into the second phase with focus on industrial cooperation, trade, agriculture and socio-economic development. Ground-breaking of Rashakai Special Economic Zone last month had the potential to spur industrialization and enhance Pakistan’s exportable surplus, he added.

The foreign minister said in the wake of the emerging global and regional environment, Pakistan had recalibrated its priorities from geo-politics to geo-economics.

“The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), being the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), complements Pakistan’s renewed efforts of geo-economic shift with emphasis on economic integration and regional connectivity,” he said.

He said for generations, Pakistan and China had had the fine tradition of standing by each other through thick and thin.

After the outbreak of Covid-19 in China and Pakistan, both the countries extended material and moral support to each other in their respective efforts to contain the pandemic, he added.

On vaccines, he said the cooperation was also progressing very well as China gifted millions of doses of Covid-19 vaccine to Pakistan. Pakistan was also procuring Chinese vaccines on a commercial basis, he added.

“We remain grateful to the Chinese government and people for their steadfast support, which has been instrumental in saving precious lives in Pakistan,” he said.

Qureshi said Pakistan had robust engagement with China in economic and financial sectors.

The second phase of China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA), signed during the prime minister’s visit to Beijing in 2019, he added, had been operationalized since January 1, 2020. It had the potential to enhance Pakistan’s exports to China.

To facilitate financial transactions and arrangements, he said, Pakistan also had a Currency Swap Agreement with China.

He said both the countries had robust cooperation in banking sectors as well, besides Pakistani commercial banks had started operations in China. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), he said, as the regulator of the monetary and credit system of Pakistan, had a pivotal role in further deepening the relationship.

SBP Governor Dr Reza Baqir said it was an honour for the State Bank of Pakistan to be part of the tribute being paid by the Government of Pakistan by issuing the commemorative coin to celebrate the diplomatic relationship of the two countries.

He said it was the fourth time the SBP had issued a commemorative coin relating to Pak-China relations, and recalled that earlier coins were issued on the founding anniversary of People's Republic of China, establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and on the occasion to mark Pakistan-China Year of Friendship.

Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong said both the government and people of China loved their Pakistani brethren, and desired to see the country making progress in every sphere of life.

He said both China and Pakistan shared the same views on all-important international issues.

The coin will be issued through the exchange counters of SBP Banking Services Corporation from June 11 (Friday). The coin is in round shape milled with serrations on the edge, diameter of 30.00 mm, weight 13 grams, and has Cupro-Nickel metal contents (Copper 75% & Nickel 25%).

The first coin of Rs 10 denomination was issued in October 2009 celebrating the auspicious occasion of 60th anniversary of founding of People's Republic of China. The second coin of Rs 20 was issued in May 2011 to celebrate 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China as Year of Pak-China Friendship – 2011. The third coin was issued in 2015 to mark Pakistan-China Year of Friendly Exchange 2015.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/770899/rs-70-commemorative-coin-issued-on-70th-anniversary-of-pak-china-ties-2/>

Govt taking all possible measures to speed up industrialization under CPEC: Bajwa

Chairman China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority, Lieutenant General (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Thursday said all-out efforts are being made to speed up industrialization under CPEC, a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Promotion of industry is a key target for CPEC which is imperative for the economic development, revenue enhancement and job creation, he said.

Asim Saleem Bajwa said private investors would be encouraged for joint ventures; however, the maximum focus would be on the industries that could support import substitution or boost exports.

He was talking to a delegation of leading industrialists of Islamabad led by President ICCI Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan which called on him here. President Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) Tariq Sadiq, Senior Vice President IIA Omais Khattak, Khalid Javed, Sheikh Amir Waheed, Chief Coordinator IAA Malik Sohail Hussain were also present at the occasion.

Chairman CPEC said that the demand of the industrial community of Islamabad will be considered and a new industrial estate will be established for them after studying their proposal in detail.

Earlier Kh Khalid Javed, a noted industrialist, apprised Asim Saleem Bajwa of the problems confronted by their community. He said that there are no plots left in the Islamabad industrial area which is hampering expansion and new investments.

Therefore, he said, a new industrial estate should be established on CPEC route at Hakla D.I Khan Motorway so that new industrial units could be established there as land is already available there.

Tariq Sadiq said that we have identified a site at Hakla D.I Khan Motorway while CDA and RDA are also in the process of studying the proposals.

Asim Saleem Bajwa informed that CPEC Authority is already studying proposal regarding establishing Special Economic Zone in Islamabad and if found feasible, an industrial zone would be established to fulfill the demand of industrialists of Islamabad.

He informed that the government has allocated Rs87 billion in the upcoming budget for execution of CPEC projects and we are expecting increased Chinese investments.

Bajwa said China was also cooperating with Pakistan in the agriculture sector and supporting in cottonseed development while many Chinese investors are keen to invest in modern corporate farming.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/771059/govt-taking-all-possible-measures-to-speed-up-industrialization-under-cpec-bajwa/>

Pakistan Observer

What China's poverty reduction experience means to the world

EARLIER this year, China declared the eradication of extreme poverty. For anyone trying to assess what it means to the country, it would be useful to look at what persistent penury has done to some of its population. Even just 30 years ago, in desert-covered villages of northwest China, it was not unusual for brothers from the same family to share just one pair of pants. Some villagers lived inside earthy caves and slept on rock beds. Young women accepted arranged marriages for dowries worth the price of a donkey. Though hard to believe, this was the reality in Xihaigu, regarded by the United Nations as “one of the most unfit places for human settlement”. Xihaigu was not the only place in China plagued by humiliating poverty. Liangshan, a prefecture in southwest China, captured the nation's heart in 2016 with pictures of children climbing a cliff

with bare hands on a vine ladder, the only thing connecting their mountainous village with the nearest school at the foot of the hill — and the world beyond. By 2012, China had 832 counties and 128,000 villages just like Xihaigu and Liangshan. They were all listed as priority targets for the nationwide anti-poverty campaign. The enormity of the task is mind-boggling. So not unexpectedly, when China announced the end of extreme poverty, the news was met by scrutiny and disbelief in some quarters. Questions have been raised about the reliability of the figures, the adequacy of the poverty standard and the cost-effectiveness of the effort. Let me address each of these questions in turn.

Who has benefited?

According to Chinese President Xi Jinping, 98.99 million rural residents have been lifted out of poverty in the past eight years, bringing the total number of Chinese escaping poverty in the last four decades to 770 million, which accounted for over 70 percent of poverty reduction worldwide. This also means that China met the poverty reduction goal in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda ten years ahead of schedule. “We should not forget the fact that China has contributed the most in world poverty alleviation in the past decade,” noted UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Leaders of South Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka also expressed congratulations. Liu Yongfu, director of the government agency overseeing the effort, told reporters last year that the threshold for extreme poverty was set at 4,000 RMB yuan (\$628) per annum. Slightly above the World Bank benchmark of \$1.9 a day, it was “only part of the package”, according to Liu. “The government also guarantees proper food and clothing, safe housing, free education for children and essential medical services.” Apart from benefiting its own people, China’s poverty reduction experience has helped other developing countries as well, particularly its neighbors. For example, China hosted a seminar on poverty policy and practice for Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 2007. Similar exchanges and projects on development cooperation have been carried out with the five South Asian nations as well as under the China-SAARC framework, including sub-national poverty reduction exhibitions, construction of roads, airports and schools, and vocational and agro-tech training programmes.

Why it has worked?

China’s anti-poverty success can be explained by what may be called a L-E-A-P strategy (i.e., Leadership, Empowerment, All-sector participation and Paired assistance). Hopefully some elements of the strategy can help other developing countries move faster towards the Sustainable Development Goal of “ending poverty in all its forms” by 2030.

First, leadership.

A campaign on such an enormous scale would not have been possible without the mobilization and execution capacity that the Chinese system is best known for. Strong leadership is the key to delivering it. In 2017, the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) declared “war” on poverty. The choice of word made it abundantly clear to party officials that their leaders were

treating the issue with utmost seriousness and urgency. President Xi personally took charge of the matter. He promised that “no one will be left behind” and warned officials against deceptive efforts. Apart from setting an ambitious goal, President Xi also called for “targeted poverty alleviation”, demanding tailor-made solutions for different villages and groups. This strategy avoided the easy, one-size-fits-all solution that often created waste and discontent in a vast, diverse country such as China.

Second, empowerment.

As a Chinese saying goes, “Better teach people how to fish than just give them fish.” Experience shows that people who get rid of poverty by receiving handouts instead of training would soon fall back into poverty once the help is withdrawn. In Liangshan’s case, young adults were taught vocational skills to help them find jobs in cities. Agricultural experts were sent to pass on know-how about growing cash crops. Peasants who had only small potatoes for supper have become planters of organic strawberry, a business which brings over 20,000 yuan (\$3,140) per head a year.

Third, all-sector participation.

What was most remarkable is the human resource committed to this campaign. More than 255,000 teams of 3 million up-and-coming party officials were sent from across the country to join millions of local officials in the battle against poverty. They were asked to stay in their posts until their villages were declared “poverty-free”. Many of them were promoted or rewarded with national honours afterwards. The government channelled 1.6 trillion yuan (\$251 billion) into this endeavor, roughly one-sixth of the GDP created by the world’s second largest economy in 2020. Yet poverty alleviation shouldn’t and can’t be the business of the government alone. China’s corporate sector invested over 1 trillion yuan (\$157 billion) in the poverty-stricken areas. Many 3 companies made donations to rebuild ramshackle dwellings, create funds that rewarded work on village roads or set up convenience stores that sold daily necessities at reduced prices. What did they get in return? A debt of gratitude and millions of potential customers.

Fourth, paired assistance.

Richer provinces and cities from China’s eastern coast also stepped forward to form pairs with poor ones in the interior. For example, the coastal province of Fujian partnered with the northwestern province of Ningxia, of which Xihai is a part. When serving as Fujian’s deputy party secretary in the 1990s, Xi visited Ningxia to discuss how to help villagers in Xihai emerge from poverty. He was behind the momentous decision that led to relocating the villagers to more hospitable places at the government’s expense. Min-Ning, the place name coined by Xi from a combination of Min (another name for Fujian) and Ning (the usual shorthand for Ningxia), has since prospered with the help of farm experts travelling half the country to teach the locals how to grow grapes, wolfberries and raspberries and start their own winery business. Their rags-to-riches story had been adapted into a drama series which was aired early this year. It became an instant hit with viewers young and old and received a rating of 9.4 out of 10.

What next?

China has reason to be proud of what it has accomplished, but the battle is far from over. By delivering what it has promised, the CPC is driving up expectations.

<https://pakobserver.net/what-chinas-poverty-reduction-experience-means-to-the-world/>

Sino-Pak Centre for artificial intelligence

Dr Arif Mashkoor

WE are living in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Today, AI is prevalent and ubiquitous in every walk of life, such as in our means of transportation, our consumer electronics, and our healthcare products. However, this disruption did not come out of the blue; instead it was predicted a long ago by management consultancies like McKinsey and global accounting networks like Deloitte. According to a conservative estimate of these firms, the global market of AI was around 42.8 billion\$ back in 2018-2019. Incidentally, around this time, the Government of Pakistan also started realizing the potential of this domain. Though it was a little late, it's always better to be late than never. However, it was Dr. Atta-ur-Rehman, who accelerated the research and development activities in this field in Pakistan after assuming charge of PM's task forces on the knowledge economy and science & technology. One of the manifestations of his vision in this regard is the development of the Sino-Pak Center for Artificial Intelligence (SPCAI). The SPCAI is a state-of-the-art industrial research facility, which recently became operational at Pak-Austria Fachhochschule – Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (PAF-IAST), Haripur. The SPCAI is a unique project in many aspects. It realizes the trilateral partnership between Pakistan, China and Austria. Apart from its competent faculty, the SPCAI drives its main strength from academic and industrial liaisons with top-notch Chinese (e.g., Shenzhen Institute of Advanced Technology and the Guangdong University of Technology) and Austrian (e.g., Johannes Kepler University Linz and Software Competence Centre Hagenberg) universities, and research and technological organizations. All these institutes are world-renowned in AI, e.g., Prof. Sepp Hochreiter – the inventor of LSTM (one of the most well-known deep learning architecture) – is from Johannes Kepler University Linz. Another distinctive feature of the SPCAI is its proximity to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Special Economic Zones (SEZ) such as Hattar SEZ, Rashakai SEZ Nowshera, and ICT Model Industrial Zone, Islamabad. This proximity will enable industries to be a part of the value chain, thus directly benefiting from the innovative solutions developed at the SPCAI. The mission of the SPCAI is threefold: promotion of application-oriented AI-based industrial research, strengthening the region as a research site and skilling people. Application-oriented industrial research: The competent and internationally trained staff of the SPCAI supports local industry and their products both proactively, i.e., developing innovative ideas for them, and reactively, i.e., further refining and improving the existing initiatives. This engagement enables the seamless transfer of scientific know-how to industry. Furthermore, it fosters the dissemination of the latest technologies via high-quality solutions. This widens the horizon of partner industries, opens

future avenues for them and further cement their existing market positions. Strengthening the region as a research site: The SPCAI believes in the continuous expansion of methodological competence and application of knowledge in socially relevant vital issues. In strategic research, the SPCAI systematically studies specific thematic areas according to international scientific standards and creates the theoretical and methodological foundation for subsequent application-oriented projects. As an initiative of PAF-IAST, it contributes significantly to national and international networking with universities, research organizations and industry.

Furthermore, its associated technology park makes a significant contribution to the development of the Haripur region – an essential stop on the northern CPEC route and location of the Havelian dry port. Skilling people: Further pushing the overall aim of PAF-IAST, i.e., “Skilling Pakistan,” the SPCAI provides a first-class environment for the training of its staff in enhancing their problem-solving skills, which includes enhancement of their cognitive abilities, enabling them to think critically and encouraging them to tackle problems innovatively. National AI forum: Under the auspices of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT), the SPCAI is planning to hold the first national AI forum (NAIF) in Pakistan on September 02, 2021. The proposed forum will be the first of its kind in the history of Pakistan which aims to gather policymakers, regulators, practitioners, experts, innovators, end-users, investor groups, researchers, educators, entrepreneurs, interested public, and representatives from industries from Pakistan and abroad under one roof to initiate a grand national discourse about the importance and effectiveness of AI in socioeconomic settings. The forum is an effort to develop an awareness of the role and impact of AI in Pakistani society and industry, as well as industrial processes, social fabric and economic growth. The forum also aims to advance Pakistan’s AI ecosystem through connections, advocacy, growing talent, and collaboration. The AI forum promotes the economic opportunities raised by AI, supporting great applications of AI and emerging AI firms. It ensures that society can adapt to the rapid and far-reaching changes that AI technology will bring. The event would comprise plenary sessions and formal proceedings where industrial and academic experts would share their valuable ideas, insights and experience. An expo would also be organized where representatives from industries and academia will showcase their AI-based projects, products and solutions. World-renowned scientists and AI experts will address the forum, including Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rehman (Chairman PM Task Force Science & Technology), Prof. Dr. A Min Tjoa (Vice-Chairperson United Nations Commission on Science & Technology for Development), Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mujahid (Rector PAF-IAST), Dr. Bernhard Moser (President Austrian Society for AI), Prof. Dr. Qiang Qu (Shenzhen Institute of Advanced Technology), Dr. Atif Mashkooor (MD SPCAI), etc.

As aforementioned, although improving the competence of local industry through AI-based solutions is one of the primary objectives of the SPCAI, it has an equal footing on innovative research and national capacity building. This is to compete at the global level to increase the share of Pakistan in the AI market which is likely to reach approximately US \$ 190.61 billion by 2025. The idea is to establish the SPCAI as a centre of excellence with an international reputation, capable of conducting both fundamental and application-oriented research in AI, thus

realizing the vision of PM's Task Forces on the knowledge economy and science & technology. —The writer is Managing Director of SPCAI and a faculty member at Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria. He received Ph.D. from the University of Lorraine, France.

<https://pakobserver.net/sino-pak-centre-for-artificial-intelligence-by-dr-arif-mashkooor/>

Bajwa eulogises China

CHIEF of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Wednesday said that Pakistan greatly valued its friendly relations with “iron brother” China. He said this during a meeting with the Ambassador of China to Pakistan Nong Rong in which the two sides discussed matters of mutual interest, progress on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and regional security situation including the latest developments in the Afghan peace process. The frequent meetings between leaders of the two countries and visits of delegations are reflective of the closeness of ties between Pakistan and China and such interactions become all the more relevant in view of fast changing regional and global scenarios and new dimensions in bilateral relationship. Last month, General Wei Fenghe, Minister of National Defence of China met General Bajwa and on the occasion a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed for enhancement of defence cooperation between the armies of the two countries. It is significant to note that China has been extending its unflinching support to Pakistan on all issues at regional and international forums.

The meeting of the Chinese Ambassador with the COAS assumes greater significance as the United States is pulling out its troops from Afghanistan and regional countries have to make concerted efforts to harmonize their strategies to deal with the emerging situation as apprehensions are being expressed that the country might plunge into another vicious cycle of civil war with serious consequences of the strife and instability for neighbours.

Apart from strong defence ties, Pakistan Army is also playing a crucial role in providing a secured environment for CPEC-related projects and personnel, which is a big challenge due to declared policies of some powers to make efforts to sabotage this historic initiative. One must also acknowledge the pivotal role that the Chinese envoy Nong Rong is playing in bringing the two countries still closer in different areas to mutual advantage.

<https://pakobserver.net/bajwa-eulogises-china/>

The Nation

SEZs' 52pc industrial land allotted for establishing industry

Fawad Yousafzai

ISLAMABAD - Of the 10,029.64 acres of industrial land for 21 notified Special Economic Zones SEZs 52 per cent have been allotted to investors for setting up of industry with planned investments of Rs 633.9 billion.

The total notified 21 SEZs together account for approx. 10,029.64 acres of industrial land out of which 5,220.62 acres (52 per cent) have been allotted to investors for setting up of industry with

planned investments of Rs 633.9 billion, 43.6 per cent or \$1.73 billion of this comprises of FDI component.

It is also significant to mention that under the SEZ Act 2012, a zone enterprise is obligated to start construction within six months and to get into commercial production/operations within 24 months of its approval, whereas title to land is to be transferred only after it has performed regular operations for six months. Unless otherwise extended, upon expiry of the 24 months or the period so extended, if a zone enterprise remains unable to fulfill its obligation the status is to be withdrawn.

Lack of resource allocation constrained the earlier notified 7 SEZs from achieving their development milestones while making it difficult to solicit interest for CPEC SEZs. As a result of the joint efforts, funds amounting to Rs 19.9 billion were allocated from the PSDP for provision of power and gas for all the SEZs, to be released over the period of next 5 years, in a phased and prioritized manner. Out of these funds, amounting to Rs 5.6 billion were allocated in FY2019, whereas Rs 4 billion have been allocated for FY2021, out of which, Rs 3.4 billion have been earmarked for CPEC SEZs.

Out of earlier notified seven SEZs by 2016, except the Quaid-e-Azam Apparel Park (which was re-notified on 8th December 2020 as Quaid-e-Azam Business Park), all 6 earlier notified SEZs are at advanced stage of colonization. These SEZs together house 285 enterprise (excluding the Industrial Estate units in M3IC and VAC). Over 84 per cent of industrial area allotted, 46 per cent of investment has been realized with 50 per cent as FDI. The Federal Government has exempted Rs 49.39 billion of custom duties and taxes on the import of plant and machinery for setting up of units in these zones.

Till FY2018, only 7 SEZs existed, while 6 of them had converted from their earlier status as Industrial estates (IEs) or Industrial Parks (IPs). However, with the advent of CPEC SEZs, the establishment of SEZs across the country took up pace, showing investor confidence in the industrial regime. As of now, 22 SEZs have been approved, while 21 of them have been notified by the BOI. These include, 4CPEC SEZs, 3 Private SEZs (including two Sole Enterprise SEZs), and a Science and Technology Park that is being established by NUST in Islamabad.

During the 6th meeting of Pak-China Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) on CPEC held in Beijing, China; establishment of nine SEZs in Pakistan, seven Provincial and two Federal, were agreed under the framework of CPEC Industrial Cooperation (IC). All four provincial SEZs, namely, Rashakai SEZ in KP, Allama Iqbal Industrial City in Punjab, Bostan SEZ in Balochistan and Dhabeji SEZ in Sindh have been accorded approval by the Board of Approvals and are at various stages of development. In order to fast-track development of these SEZs, the federal government has ensured provision of utilities to the designated zero point of these SEZs and as such allocated Rs4 billion in the Federal PSDP FY2021.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-11/page-9/detail-7>

The News

A proud role-model worker of CPEC

BEIJING: Asadullah Larik is an interpreter for a coal-fired power station in the Thar Coalfield under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He is not only a fluent Chinese and English speaker, but also a model worker and a considerate helper.

According to a China Economic Net's report, Asadullah is proud to be part of a CPEC project. Driven by passion and a sense of mission, he aspired to do his best.

When he encountered any unfamiliar technical term during interpretation, he would figure it out by consulting experts or books and kept it in his notebook and his mind so that he can deliver accurate interpretation. In his spare time, he often took online lectures to broaden his knowledge and horizon.

As an interpreter by profession, Asadullah not only conveyed the instructions on the project, but also took initiative to supervise the tasks involved to ensure timely completion.

In terms of construction management, he echoed the Chinese philosophy of a "people-centered" approach.

Taking "safety" as the paramount staff welfare, he also put in efforts to make sure all the regulations are duly observed.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/847968-a-proud-role-model-worker-of-cpec>

Promotion of industry key target for CPEC: Asim Bajwa

ISLAMABAD: China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Chairman Lieutenant General (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Thursday said all-out efforts are being made to speed up industrialisation under CPEC a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Promotion of industry is a key target for CPEC which is imperative for the economic development revenue enhancement and job creation, he said.

Asim Saleem Bajwa said private investors would be encouraged for joint ventures, however, the maximum focus would be on the industries that could support import substitution or boost exports. He was talking to a delegation of leading industrialists of Islamabad, led by ICCI President Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan. President Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) Tariq Sadiq, Senior Vice President IIA Omais Khattak, Khalid Javed, Sheikh Amir Waheed, Chief Coordinator IAA Malik Sohail Hussain were also present at the occasion.

CPEC chairman said that the demand of the industrial community of Islamabad will be considered and a new industrial estate will be established for them after studying their proposal in detail.

Earlier, Kh Khalid Javed, a noted industrialist, apprised Asim Saleem Bajwa of the problems confronted by their community. He said that there are no plots left in the Islamabad industrial

area which is hampering expansion and new investments. Therefore, he said, a new industrial estate should be established on CPEC route at Hakla DI Khan Motorway so that new industrial units could be established there as land is already available there.

Tariq Sadiq said that they have identified a site at Hakla DI Khan Motorway while CDA and RDA are also in the process of studying the proposals.

Asim Saleem Bajwa informed that CPEC Authority is already studying proposal regarding establishing Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Islamabad and if found feasible an industrial zone would be established to fulfil the demand of industrialists of Islamabad. He informed that the government has allocated Rs87 billion in the upcoming budget for execution of CPEC projects and they are expecting increased Chinese investments.

Bajwa said China was also cooperating with Pakistan in the agriculture sector and supporting in cottonseed development, while many Chinese investors are keen to invest in modern corporate farming.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/847975-promotion-of-industry-key-target-for-cpec-asim-bajwa>

June 12, 2021

Daily Times

China, Pakistan to strengthen cooperation on TCM, TUM

China and Pakistan will continue to strengthen cooperation on Traditional Chinese Medicines (TCM) and Traditional Unani Medicines (TUM), said Moin ul Haque, Pakistani Ambassador to China.

He stated these remarks while addressing the First Sino-Pakistan Symposium on Traditional Chinese Medicine held in HuaiHua city in Hunan Province.

The unveiling of Sino-Pakistan Cooperation Center for Traditional Chinese Medicine (SPCCTCM) also took place on the sidelines of the symposium.

This online and offline combined event is also to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of China-Pakistan diplomatic ties.

The ambassador said that TCM plays a unique role in safeguarding and promoting people's health in combating COVID-19 pandemic. TCM will contribute to the development of human medicine.

“A platform will be built for China and Pakistan's scientists and entrepreneurs in traditional medicines.

So they can conduct joint research and development, personnel exchanges and product registration to boost the high-quality TCM products and techniques to enter Pakistan and other

countries and regions participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, said Pang Chunxue, Minister Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan via video link.

Khalid Iraqi, vice chancellor of University of Karachi, said, TCM is a treasure of Chinese civilization.

He pointed out that China and Pakistan should strengthen exchanges and mutual learning, sci-tech cooperation on traditional medicines, personnel exchanges, and complement each other's advantages to deepen cooperation and boost Pak-China friendship.

Addressing the ceremony, Dr Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary, Director of International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi, confirmed TCM's role in curing COVID-19 pandemic and protecting people's health. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman, director of SPCCTCM and also the Chairman of Pakistani PM's Task Force on Science and Technology, called for enhancing Pak-China sci-tech communication and cooperation.

Xinmin, Co-Director of SPCCTCM, a professor of Institute of Medicinal Plant Development, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences and a member of Expert Advisory Panel on Traditional Medicine, WHO.

He Qinghu, director of SPCCTCM and also President of Hunan University of Medicine, said the university and all staff will strive to boost the development of SPCCTCM, a cooperation platform between China and Pakistan on TCM.

Sun Da, Deputy Director of China's National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (NATCM) said so far, China has signed cooperation on TCM with 196 countries and regions.

He added that China has offered three effective TCM drugs and prescriptions to help the international community fight the novel coronavirus. The confirmed cases of COVID-19 who received TCM diagnosis and therapeutic solutions reached a cure rate of over 90 percent.

TCM's efficacy has been tested by practice. To date, 30 TCM centers have been established overseas, which will benefit more people.

At the symposium on TCM-TUM, Chinese and Pakistani scholars and experts introduced their latest research and new progress.

Participating universities, institutes, TCM hospitals and provincial government departments from the two countries have signed eight MOUs on the sideline of the symposium.

These signed Chinese parties are Hunan Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Sichuan Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Hunan University of Medicine, Institute of Food Science and Technology (CAAS), Beijing Hospital of TCM and Shihezi University.

Pakistani side includes the Health & Population Welfare Department, Government of Sindh, Hamdard University and the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi.

SPCCTCM will carry out various cooperation between China and Pakistan, including R&D of drugs and healthy and nutritious foods, academic and cultural exchanges, talents training, medical treatment, and industrial cooperation, according to Wang Qiong, vice director of SPCCTCM, professor of Institute of Food Science and Technology, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/771568/china-pakistan-to-strengthen-cooperation-on-tcm-tum/>

Pakistan Observer

Chinese vaccine diplomacy

Imtiaz Rafi Butt

AROUND February 2021, the WHO gave the green light to the use of Sinopharm as an emergency vaccine manufactured by Chinese Pharmaceutical companies. Even before this approval, the Chinese Government had initiated its supply and donations of Covid vaccines, masks and kits to so-called “friendly” nations, but it is clear that these friendly countries are basically middle- or low-income nations. The world is observing the expansion of Chinese Government in an area that was exclusive to western nations. The Chinese medicine industry is no longer a manufacturing hub but an R&D hub as well. Theorists and geo-strategists are calling it a new phase in diplomacy called Vaccine Diplomacy. An expanding superpower using its Vaccines as a bargaining chip to gain bilateral and regional dominance. There are multiple facets of this phenomenon and one that will play out into multiple ominous opportunities in the near future. One strong argument in favour of the stance that the donations of Sinopharm vaccine are not just humanitarian in nature but deeply political is the case of China-Bangladesh relations. Earlier in 2020, when the pandemic hit, India came forward as the supplier of Covid masks and kits to Dhaka. In time, this supply was taken over by China. When the vaccines came out, India became a source supplier of the Astra-Zeneca vaccine to Bangladesh but once again, as the supply dropped with growing Covid infections in India, the supply of Astra-Zeneca was replaced with Sinopharm Chinese donations. While Bangladesh Government gladly accepted donations and kick-started their vaccination drive, there was incentive to buy the Sinopharm vaccine by Private Pharmaceutical companies in Bangladesh. When the supply chain was developed, the Chinese Government using its position of donations and soft image, announced a statement that under these conditions, Bangladesh should refrain from joining any project or endeavour related to the Anti-China Quad Alliance. The Quad is basically the anti-China counter alliance with the US, India, Australia and Japan as its chief members. The Bangladesh Government was shocked at this statement by the Chinese Government but still continued to move ahead with the vaccination supply. The message was clear to them and to the world. Uptil today, around 600,000 doses have been provided to Bangladesh by China free of cost. In the case of Sri Lanka, a similar stratagem seems to be in place. After the strained relationships from the take over of Hambantota port incident, the Chinese Government sought to regain its positive image among the Sri Lankan people. And so, Sinopharm as in other cases was donated as a first instance. Sri

Lankan Government had no choice but to accept given the rising infections. The approval of the WHO gave easy policy options to the heads of state. Similarly, Covid masks, kits and oxygen cylinders came as a part of the deal and restored relations between Beijing and Colombo. But voices inside Sri Lanka are clear that this benevolence is not without a cost. Sri Lanka is very much a part of the Belt and Road Maritime project and in future, the Chinese are set to make more demands of the Sri Lankan Government and much before the expected end of the pandemic. This is conversion of soft power to hard power in the long run. In Afghanistan, the Taliban rising is back with a vengeance. The American troops are set to leave latest by November and China is already making inroads.

As in the case of Bangladesh, the initial support for Afghanistan came from India but now, the chief exporter of medical supplies and vaccination is China. Sinopharm donations worth 400,000 doses reached Kabul and once again, private companies in Kabul are already placing purchase orders to Chinese firms to quick supply. At a strategic level, Afghanistan is a part of the road to Central Asia channel and stability in the region and bilateral ties are imperative for Chinese influence in the region. It seems China is set to fill the vacuum left by American forces in Afghanistan, mostly through medical infrastructural projects.

Similar to development projects, vaccine supply and cementing of relations between Iran and Pakistan, the Chinese influence in Afghanistan can force it to improve its ties with Islamabad as well. In Pakistan, the Chinese Government was more forthcoming than to any other. Sinopharm and Sinovac trials were initiated in Pakistan as soon as the vaccine was rolled out in China. All three big cities, that is, Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi received trial doses and after completion of trials, the Pakistan Government began vaccinating its population in earnest. CPEC is already in full swing and the PTI Government in Pakistan has kept the economy running along with CPEC and OBOR projects which has been welcomed by the Chinese officials. A massive vaccination drive has bolstered Pak-China ties and gave an impetus to low-income countries to join China to reap the benefits of state-of-the-art medical and infrastructure projects. Now, Searle Pakistan is set to manufacture Sinovac in Pakistan under the name Pak-Vac which would have never been possible without Chinese assistance. Pakistan is the first step in the Chinese leap in South Asia and the Chinese diplomacy is strengthening it every passing day. From the above, one analysis tends to speak out. The Americans and the Europeans have been focusing inwards and engaging in the worst possible protectionism while China has prevailed through its vaccine diplomacy by becoming a supplier to low and under-developed economies. It is, therefore, in a way, a champion of the developing world and continues to grow its influence. The Chinese Government has termed the term “Vaccine Diplomacy” as baseless but is a fact that no educated journalist or analyst is ready to accept. But in that sense, it is still a much desirable outcome compared to selfish protectionist agendas. As time passes by, Chinese vaccines are making their way into MENA (Middle East North African) countries. New nations are entering into agreements for Sinopharm and Sinovac and it is the only viable option to check growing Covid infections. The Western countries are yet to come up with a counter to this Chinese influence. China is now a world leader and a provider of solutions to poorer countries and there is growing

impatience among its adversaries. In every sense of the world, Chinese Vaccine diplomacy is winning and it is also the only way as of now. While Western countries are clamouring it as debt traps or diplomatic stratagems and but the reality exists that Chinese vaccines are saving lives where there would be no vaccinations, if left to the United Nations or the Western countries. China is making its presence felt and the pandemic is another success story for Beijing.

—The writer is Chairman, Jinnah Rafi Foundation, based in Lahore.

<https://pakobserver.net/chinese-vaccine-diplomacy-by-imtiaz-rafi-butt/>

The Express Tribune

CPEC — fallacies and realities

In the last three columns, the agreed framework of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was laid out, mapping its immense scope and expanse; leading to latest progress, modestly reported. This column dispels following perceptual fallacies about this vital project of Sino-Pakistan national importance. First, that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with CPEC as its flagship project, is a tool of Chinese neo-imperialism. That China is using BRI/CPEC for advancing its global power and influence. True partially. No super power offers free lunches, but the Chinese mode generally and CPEC particularly is not exploitative; it offers a win-win situation for participating nations and is extensively sensitive to social development. BRI/CPEC is not about economy alone; it's about geo-economics, and establishing a parallel non-exploitative economic system... and that makes the West uncomfortable. The 129 or so mainly under-developed and developing nations on board will benefit from the regional development projects and enhanced connectivity under BRI. Most of these nations have no access to otherwise affordable capital. CPEC in particular has a strong component of social development, poverty alleviation and demographic uplift, unlike similar programmes under other international donors. For full-scale socio-economic development, CPEC is Pakistan's only choice, having tried others. Chinese conditionalities are comparatively milder and mostly without political caveats. Detractors refer to China using Gwadar as a strategic naval base in its 'string of pearls strategy', to alter global/regional geo-strategic status-quo, through its rising influence. This — critics cite — is a threat to global commerce passing through international sea lines of communications (SLOCs) closer to Gwadar. However, to the contrary, Gwadar is not leased, sold and/or surrendered to China or its companies. It firmly remains part of Pakistan, which has every right to develop it, as it pleases. Gwadar's comparison with the Hambantota Port financing model in Sri Lanka is also erroneous and not applicable; because CPEC as a proof of concept (POC) pilot project, is pivotal to the success of the more significant and global BRI.

Second, that CPEC lacks transparency. Not true, as all available information about the project is open-sourced and available on the CPEC Authority website. Project modalities, like terms and conditions for Chinese companies, investment options, availability of local partners/investors, international financing and profit repatriation, etc are amply covered in each contract. If there are

‘any’ supervisory lapses by the Pakistani interlocutors in individual contracts, CPEC and China cannot be held responsible as a whole.

Third, that CPEC would overburden Pakistan’s likely balance of payments, turning it into a ‘debt trap’. This is far from truth. One, the total committed amount under CPEC is over \$50 billion in two broad categories; \$35 billion allocated for energy projects while \$15 billion kept for infrastructure, Gwadar development, industrial zones and mass-transit schemes. About 70% (\$35 billion) of the original outlay was to be provided by Pakistan over an extended timeframe of 14-15 years (2017-2030). This makes the average annual investment under CPEC closer to around \$3-4 billion or 6-7 % of Pakistan’s annual investment budget. Export revenues (thanks to uninterrupted power supply as CPEC projects have already added around 11,000 MW) were modelled to rise up to \$40 billion by 2024, easily absorbing this additional amount without much stress on the balance of payment.

Two, as per an IMF report (2017), the peak outflows (by 2024/25) on account of CPEC debt servicing, profit and dividend repatriation and increased imports were not expected to go beyond \$3.5-4 billion, gradually declining thereafter. If our exports grow at least 10% annually (exports grew at 12% in 2017 and 14% for Q2 this year, thanks to decreased energy shortages), the potential earning (calculated at \$6-7 billion) would easily afford the peak outflows. Unforeseen circumstances like the corona pandemic, has strained Pakistan’s capital availability but this is expected to be short-term and transitory. Economy/exports are already showing signs of recovery.

Fourth, that the CPEC projects would only benefit Punjab. CPEC’s Punjab-centricity is negated as its projects, in all core areas, are spread nationwide, as articulated in three earlier columns.

Fifth and more sinister is the ‘anti-China campaign’ mainly by the US/Western media/governments and their local interlocutors in media and our ashhrafiyya (elite) in/out of power corridors. These elements cite China’s ultimate economic domination of Pakistan given Pakistan’s fragile, highly indebted economy, weak exports, dependency on foreign assistance and susceptibility to periodic external payment crises.

For greater clarity, infrastructure projects are financed by grants and long-term concessional loans with an average interest rate of 2% or so. Chinese state-owned companies — designated by Chinese government — are financing projects through ‘project loans’ from government-owned banks on concessional terms. And in several projects, Chinese and Pakistani companies are into joint ventures. And Chinese investment benefits Pakistan also through technology transfer, job creation and value addition etc. Easing energy shortages is to reduce import of capital goods, leading to saving on import bill. Reduced demand for imported fuel oil/diesel will ease-up POL imports. The above calculations do not take into account the ‘transit fees’ of the Corridor or associated economic activity generated in the CPEC command areas. These calculations also do not reflect the ‘second order bonus’, whereby greener projects make our industries more competitive for import substitutes and new export products. And sustained Chinese inflows are projecting Pakistan as an attractive investment destination. The cumulative effect of all this is not

only enabling Pakistan to repay its obligations under CPEC; Pakistan shall have surplus capital for investment in more projects. This is hard-nosed economics and not some gullible rosy picture-painting. So, the chance to break Pakistan's begging bowl is now or never. Chinese interlocutors are especially incensed by misrepresentation of facts by many Pakistanis and the constant barrage of doubts being created in the Pakistani population — from inter-marriages to economic enslavement etc. China is characterised as the erstwhile East India Company and Pakistan its likely satellite. Chinese companies are also irked by Pakistan's red tape, inconsistency of power tariffs and slower dispute resolution etc.

Sixth, that Pakistan has a risky security environment. Actually, Pakistan protects Chinese working on CPEC projects through an integrated security system, incorporating local police (Punjab has raised special CPEC police), paramilitary forces, intelligence apparatus and Pakistan Army. The army has raised two 'Security Divisions' (a division roughly has 20,000 personnel) for K-P/Punjab and Sindh/Balochistan respectively. There are over 80,000 Chinese nationals living in Pakistan including around 25,000 deployed on CPEC projects. Attack on any Chinese anywhere for any reason is exploited as attack on CPEC workforce.

In the final verdict, Pakistan should stay the course and China to maintain its amity through re-scheduling of loans on softer terms, being sensitive to corona-induced damage to Pakistan's economy. Expectations should be manageable and CPEC benefits spread equally far and wide.

If CPEC can boost Pakistan's industrial productivity, exports, and job creation, it should be a game-changer. It actually is.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2304775/cpec-fallacies-and-realities>

The Nation

PCJCCI for adopting Shanghai model for industrial revolution

LAHORE - Pak China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry has stressed the need for following Shanghai model for bringing industrial revolution in the country. "Pakistan has become a preferred country for foreign investors. Global City or Universal Hub concept has been widely used in the past by various countries including China to set goals for economic development", said President PCJCCI S.M Naveed on Friday. Senior Vice President PCJCCI Daud Ahmed said that the term involves vigorous participation of cities in the economic activities of the country. This process of making cities globalized also prevents brain drain and frustration among the youth for not finding jobs according to their qualifications. PCJCCI Vice President Khalid Raffique Choudhry said that the government should develop integrated industrial estates and industrial parks throughout the country by providing special incentives, infrastructure facilities, security and energy. He said that this idea would promote manufacturing sector in specialized areas which would allow Pakistan to lessen reliance on imports.

<https://nation.com.pk/12-Jun-2021/pcjcci-for-adopting-shanghai-model-for-industrial-revolution>

Pakistani mangoes to arrive in Lanzhou tomorrow

BEIJING - Lanzhou, a beautiful and developed capital city of China's Northwestern Gansu Province with over four million population, is all set to receive the first shipment of Pakistani mangoes tomorrow. The shipment, which consists of 18 tonnes of Pakistani Sindhri mangoes, will be dispatched from Lahore to Lanzhou and the city will receive a direct shipment of Pakistani mangoes first time in its history. Normally Pakistan sends its mangoes to Kunming City of China's southwestern Yunnan Province and then they are distributed to other parts of the country. Similarly, Kunming is also ready to receive a shipment of 2.8 tonnes of mangoes tomorrow and the city will receive more consignments in the coming months. Sindhri mangoes are very popular for their sweet flavour and fine fiber. They are mainly harvested in Hyderabad and Rahim Yar Khan of Pakistan. Supplied to the international market from mid-May to mid-July, Pakistan mangoes enjoy the reputation of "King of Fruit" in this country, and they are one of the leading fruits in terms of production in Pakistan. They are now planted in a vast area with an annual output of about 1.7 million tonnes, and Pakistan is the fourth largest mango producer in the world, CEN reported Friday.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-12/page-9/detail-0>

The News

Pakistan and China: the new US game

I had earlier suspected that the US was deliberately pushing Afghanistan towards chaos and civil war as well as creating troubles for Pakistan. However, I was not completely sure and hence I expressed some hopes regarding the possibility of peace and stability in Afghanistan in my column as well as in different talk shows.

But unfortunately, the recent events in Afghanistan – over the past few days – and the interviews of Afghan President Dr Ashraf Ghani and former Afghan president Hamid Karzai with the German Magazine Der Spiegel transformed my doubts into the firm conviction that the United States is deliberately undermining prospects of peace and stability in the region.

At the end of the Taliban's three-day ceasefire on Eid ul-Fitr, they resumed their violent offensive against the Afghan forces all over Afghanistan; this is indeed unprecedented, at least in the last ten to fifteen years. The Taliban's offensives were already underway in the southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan, and now they have launched fierce battles in the Kunduz province in the far north and the Jawzjan province in the far west of Afghanistan. Moreover, they have also started battles in the Nuristan and Badakhshan provinces in the northeast along the border of China, Pakistan and Tajikistan.

Currently, the Taliban's offensive against the Afghan forces is in full swing in different parts of more than twenty provinces of Afghanistan. The Taliban even attacked Mihtarlam – the 16th largest city in the Laghman province – which has been comparatively a very peaceful city in the

last few years. As a result of the Taliban's current battles, innocent Afghans have become refugees in different parts of the country.

Displaying a feeling of betrayal and helplessness, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani complained about American disloyalty in his interview with Der Spiegel on May 14, 2021. In the interview, he also tried to put the responsibility on Pakistan for peace and stability in Afghanistan post-US troop withdrawal – stating that “the US now plays only a minor role. The question of peace or hostility is now in Pakistani hands”. He also reiterated his stance on Pakistan's so-called control over the Taliban and alleged that “Pakistan operates an organized support system. The Taliban receive logistics there, their finances are there and recruitment is there”.

Though President Ghani blames Pakistan for instability, the conditions that he has put forward for negotiation with the Taliban show that he himself is not sincere in achieving meaningful solutions to the Afghanistan crisis. He knows well that such conditions are not acceptable to the Taliban. The gist of his interview is that the Taliban do not want a peaceful solution. His government will continue to fight against the Taliban and he wants the US and Europe to help Kabul against the Taliban and to pressurize Pakistan.

Similarly, former Afghan president Hamid Karzai, in his interview with Der Spiegel on May 22, 2021, has also taken a hard line on Pakistan and blamed Islamabad for its alleged link with and support to the Taliban. However, he also indirectly gave the message that the United States would not want peace in Afghanistan. At the same time, he has expressed high hopes “for the so-called Troika Plus, a diplomatic initiative launched by Russia which also includes China and the United States”. In response to the very first question about the Taliban, Karzai says that “I realized early into my tenure as president that this war is not our conflict and we Afghans are just being used against each other” by external forces.

Referring to his meetings with former US officials such as Brzezinski, Karzai stated that the Americans themselves accept that “America was deliberately promoting radical Islamist forces in Afghanistan and the region” so that they may “create as many conflicts zones around the USSR as possible, a so-called arc of crisis”. He believes that “now, in the 21st century, it's the United States and the new global superpower China, as well as Russia – all of which are playing out their rivalries in our country”

And it is not only Hamid Karzai who talks about the US-China rivalry but the Americans too openly consider China as their number one rival and main target. It is also crystal clear that Pakistan is a very close friend of China in the region. China, through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is reaching out to the Arabian Sea.

A peaceful Afghanistan will give easy access to China and Pakistan to reach Central Asia. So, China and Pakistan will be the main beneficiaries of peace and stability in Afghanistan as well as the main victims of any instability. Now the million-dollar question is: if the US could create the so-called 'arc of crisis' around the former USSR for its strategic interests, then why would it not

create such an 'arc of crisis' around China and Pakistan? That will also help the US create trouble for its other two rivals: Iran and Russia.

Previously, I had clearly pointed out that the USA's tactics and pressure are creating troubles for Pakistan and causing animosity with the Taliban. One clear example is that the US itself is withdrawing from Afghanistan but asking for military bases from Pakistan.

Pakistan has neither given a military base to the US nor seems to be in any mood to give one in the near future. But, regardless, baseless claims have been spread in the American and Afghan media that Pakistan has given military bases to Pakistan. As a result, we have seen a strong reaction from the Taliban on this issue of military bases, with the group warning the regional countries of consequences.

Through the Doha agreement, the US has secured the Taliban's guarantee that Afghan soil will not be used by Al Qaeda and others. Now the US does not care if there is chaos and bloodshed in Afghanistan and if that in turn causes trouble for China and Pakistan. Once the US troops leave, all this will not be of any concern to Washington. If 10 percent of the money that Washington was spending in Afghanistan is given to the different armed groups in Afghanistan, these groups could be easily used against any neighboring country.

In this context, my earlier suspicion has turned into a firm belief that the US deliberately has led Afghanistan into a devastating civil war. Pakistan, China, Russia, and Iran will bear the main brunt of the chaos and instability. That is why I suggest that China, Russia, Iran, and Pakistan should form a separate block and bring together Afghanistan's warring parties for meaningful reconciliation through aggressive diplomacy so as to thwart America's dangerous designs and cunning tactics.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/848122-pakistan-and-china-the-new-us-game>

Nawaiwaqt News

سی پیک کے 17 منصوبے مکمل، 21 ارب ڈالر سے 21 منصوبے جاری

اسلام آباد (نمائندہ خصوصی) وفاقی وزیر خزانہ نے بجٹ 2021-22 پیش کرتے ہوئے کہا کہ پاک چین اقتصادی راہداری (سی پیک) کے تحت 13 ارب ڈالر مالیت سے 17 منصوبے مکمل کیے جا چکے ہیں جبکہ 21 ارب ڈالر سے 21 منصوبے جاری ہیں۔ انہوں نے بتایا کہ اس کے علاوہ اسٹریٹجک نوعیت کے 26 منصوبے زیر غور ہیں جن کی مالیت 28 ارب ڈالر ہے۔ ایم ایل ون ایک اہم منصوبہ جس کی لاگت 9.3 ارب ڈالر ہے جسے تین مراحل میں مکمل کیا جائے گا پیکنگ ون کا آغاز مارچ 2020 شروع ہو چکا جبکہ پیکنگ ٹو جولائی 2021 اور پیکنگ تھری جولائی 2022 میں شروع ہوگا، انہوں نے بتایا کہ اہم نوعیت کے 26 پروجیکٹس اہم مراحل میں ہیں جن کی مالیت 23 ارب ڈالر ہے۔ اہم ترجیحات میں کراچی لاہور موٹروے کی تکمیل، حویلیاں تھاکوٹ 120 کلو میٹر فیروزون تکمیل کے قریب ہے اور شاہراہ قراقرم کی فیروزکے 118 کلو میٹر پر کام جاری ہے۔ ژوب کچلاک روڈ پر کام ہو رہا ہے۔ چترال بونی مستونج سندور روڈ کی مرمت اور توسیع، پاکستان ریلوے کی مین لائن ایم ایل ون کی بہتری کیلئے 6 ارب 20 کروڑ اور حویلیاں کے قریب فیروز ڈرائی پورٹ کی تعمیر اور چین اور دیگر ممالک سے براہ راست غیر ملکی سرمایہ کے ساتھ سپیشل اکنامک زونز کی آباد کاری ہے شامل ہیں۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-12/page-1/detail-19>

June 13, 2021

Daily Times

CFO of Three Gorges Wind Farm pledges to turn CPEC a role model

“I’m willing to contribute to the success of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pak-China friendship and Pakistan’s historic development,” said Adil Ashraf, Chief Financial Officer of Three Gorges Wind Farm Pakistan.

Ashraf made the remarks when he was awarded the “Outstanding Pakistani Employee” of CPEC, with the other 17 ones, according to China Economic Net.

Ashraf, with his outstanding professional ability, has dealt with many finance and taxation issues, defused relevant risks, saved expenses and safeguarded rights and interests for the company since he joined Three Gorges Wind Farm Pakistan.

In 2020, the COVID-19 epidemic was rampant in Pakistan. Though the company advocated staff to work from home, Ashraf and his team had to remain at their posts as financial staff had to conduct businesses at the office and in the bank to ensure the company could function well.

Once in a while, some teammates complained: why did the financial team worker have to brave the risk of infection and even work overtime, since most of the workers worked remotely and avoided going to the crowded areas?

Ashraf used to respond to these complaints with a little seriousness in a calm, orderly manner: The more difficult the company is, the more it can reflect our true value to the company.

“When Pakistan is at the most difficult times, our Chinese colleagues stood by us through thick and thin. There is no reason why we should not work harder and dedicate ourselves to our job,” he added.

The financial team had made great contributions and sacrifices for the company’s projects.

For his professional ability, high responsibility, and good performance, Ashraf has become one representative of the “Outstanding Pakistani Employees” of CPEC in 2020. For Ashraf, CPEC is not unfamiliar. He has in-depth understanding of the development of CPEC.

Ashraf thinks that CPEC will not only help Pakistan attract investment from China and other countries, but also boost the development of transportation, industry and trade, and create more job opportunities for Pakistanis.

Actually, Pakistan, like other developing countries, has been facing the dilemma of brain drain due to the lack of development opportunity. While the implementation of CPEC has ignited the hope of many Pakistanis, including Ashraf. He resolutely had given up the idea of emigrating abroad and was determined to contribute to the construction of his motherland by engaging on projects under the framework of CPEC.

“Thank you, our Chinese friends, for your selfless help and support to Pakistan. CPEC has brought tangible benefits to Pakistan. It’s a great honor for me to work for projects under CPEC. For me, it is not only serving a Chinese company but also serving Pakistan’s construction,” said Ashraf.

These words were from the bottom of his heart when he took the job interview of Three Gorges Wind Farm Pakistan in 2016.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/772092/cfo-of-three-gorges-wind-farm-pledges-to-turn-cpec-a-role-model/>

June 14, 2021

Daily Times

BRI-type project by G7 to promote competition, CPEC to continue: Qureshi

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said that China is working on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project and it will continue to do so, adding if the G7 countries want to initiate the same sort of projects, it will be a good competition.

The minister’s remarks came during a media talk on Sunday in response to a question about the Group of Seven (G7) countries’ announced plans for a major infrastructure project for developing nations in a bid to rival China’s trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), also known as “One Belt, One Road.”

Qureshi said that Pakistan will be glad to witness development in underdeveloped countries. “China has no threats from the projects pertaining to investment in the countries,” he added.

He blamed Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) for spoiling the case of convicted Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav for Pakistan. “We are implementing the recommendations of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and we took measures on their advice,” he added. He further stated that India didn’t want consular access to Jadhav, rather wanted to drag Pakistan to the ICJ once again. He hoped that the, “Opposition members will not exhibit a lack of understanding [on the issue] and will be cognisant of Indian’s wicked ways.”

Qureshi said the government didn’t believe in retaliation, but in clear and transparent accountability. “We don’t believe in subjecting someone to insult or accountability unnecessarily,” he said, adding that “those going through accountability will be given the opportunity to explain.” However, the minister made it clear that, “[Prime Minister] Imran won’t hand-out NROs or sign a deal [for personal gains].” Responding to opposition’s criticism on the budget, he said, “We are not going to bring a mini-budget” and added that, “The [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leader] Ahsan Iqbal should first review the budget book.”

Regarding the ongoing controversy about whether the government had decided to give airbases to the US in the wake of its troops’ pullout from Afghanistan, Qureshi reiterated that, “Pakistan doesn’t intend to give its airbases to the US.” To a question, the Foreign Minister said District

Coordination Committees are being constituted in all districts of Punjab on the direction of the prime minister.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/772533/bri-type-project-by-g7-to-promote-competition-cpec-to-continue-queshi/>

UET Lahore, Chinese Universities Faculty win research grants

The University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore, faculty has won two competitive research grants through Pakistan Science Foundation under implementation of the 18th protocol of scientific and technical cooperation between Pakistan and China. The collaborative projects will be carried out by research teams comprising both Pakistani and Chinese researchers. Research funds for the Pakistani teams will be provided by the Pakistan Science Foundation, whereas the National Science Foundation of China will provide research funds for the Chinese team.

In one project, the research team of Prof. Dr. Naveed Ramzan (Chemical Engineering, UET Lahore), Prof. Dr. Muhammad Shahid Rafiq (Physics, UET Lahore), Prof. Dr. Saima Yasin (Chemical Engineering, UET Lahore), and Dr. Ayyaz Ahmad (Chemical Engineering, MNS UET Multan) will work on “Structural control and application of nano-pesticide through flash nano-assembly” in collaboration with Prof. Dr. Yisheng Xu of the East China University of Science and Technology. The total funding for this project will be Rs. 7.2 Million. The objective of the research is to improve the delivery of pesticides to crops by optimizing its delivery, reducing its wastage, and protecting the environment.

The second project has been awarded to the research team of Dr. Amir Ikhtlaq (Institute of Environmental Engineering and Research, UET Lahore), Prof. Dr. Syed Mohsin Ali Kazmi (Chemical Engineering, UET Lahore), and Prof. Dr. Fei Qi from Environmental Science and Engineering Department, Beijing Forestry University, Beijing China. The team will work on “Application of reduced graphene oxide in combination with zeolites in a novel integrated in-Situ Electroflocculation/catalytic ozonation/ceramic membrane filtration.”

The total fund for this project will be Rs 3.74 Million. The research will focus on an innovative idea to treat pharmaceutical waste water for its reuse in a more efficient manner, bringing economic and environmental benefits.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/772427/uet-lahore-chinese-universities-faculty-win-research-grants/>

Tourism under CPEC in northern areas

Abdul Shakoor Syed

Tourism industry has contributed \$7.6 trillion to the global economy, which is 10.2 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product.

It generated 292 million jobs some years back. Tourism in Northern areas is increasing annually. Over 50 millions domestic tourists are forecasted by PTDC. It manifests a lot of potential in the

industry. According to WTTC, the tourism industry contributed 5.9 percent to national GDP creating 3.9 million jobs in 2019. If the tourism industry develops to the level of China, its contribution rate to GDP will increase by 5.1 percent to 11 percent and additional 2.37 million jobs will be created. CPEC has proven itself the Asian Giant. Along with other benefits, it will usher a new era of tourism. In the past, Pakistan did not attract too many international tourist arrivals. CPEC has changed the scenario. Pakistan received a 37 percent increase in tourism visa applications due to CPEC in previous years.

Our northern areas are unmatched in beauty. Kashmir is known as earthly paradise. It embodies the poetry of nature, which no human language can interpret in words. Northern Areas of Pakistan is a hub of tourism. Unique landscape, pristine nature and world's most famous mountain ranges are there. The Himalayas, Karakorum & the Hindukush, K2 World's second highest peak also lies here.

5 over 8000 Meters Peaks, 101 over 7000 Meters and 5100 Glaciers are located here. It carries 2200 Sq. Miles of Snow Covered area and 119 Lakes.

High altitude forests, 4 national parks, 09 game reserves, 3 wildlife sanctuaries, 230 species of Birds, 54 Species of mammals, 20 species of freshwater fish, 23 species of reptiles, 6 of amphibians, 6592 Sq. KM of Forests, which constitutes 9.1 % of the total area of GB. It offers 20 species of freshwater fish, 5 ethnic groups and 5 ethnic languages with 36 dialects. It tenders 7 Asia Pacific Heritage Conservation, UNESCO and British Airways award winning Historical Sites, 23 historical forts and 75 polo grounds. 65 archaeological sites, more 39,000 plus rock carvings and inscriptions are awaiting tourists from all over the globe. Year-long festivals in GB, indigenous music, centuries old culture of hospitality and acceptance of visitors are fascinations for tourists. There is much more than mentioned for tourists in Northern areas.

Five over 8,000 metres peaks, 101 over 7,000 meters and 5,100 glaciers are located here. It carries 2,200 square miles of snow covered area and 119 lakes

Annually, more than 1.5 million tourists visit AJK. It has more than 100 heritage and archaeological sites based on the footprints of Dogra, Sikh, Buddhist and Mughal. Religious tourism can be promoted if infrastructure bottlenecks are removed. Azad Tourism App and Tourism Smart Card have been introduced for tourists by AJK. Two museums in Muzaffarabad and Mirpur are under way. CPEC provides an opportunity to connect AJK and GB to the outside world. AJK has been designated 5 projects under CPEC. M4 under CPEC will increase the connectivity within Azad Kashmir and will open the avenues for the diasporas to invest in AJK. A highway connecting Gwadar with Xinjiang passes through four provinces of Pakistan, GB and AJK. It will be the shortest route from Central Punjab to CPEC, through AJK, shortening the existing route by 50 km and saving around 4 to 6 hr travel. Tourism will lead to industrial development by contributing to the economic development of Kashmir. Lack of infrastructure development and insufficient structures hinder tourism potential. CPEC will further reduce the distances and develop tourism through its various projects. AJK and GB will be equally linked to international trade, local and international tourists and the local market will also be brought into

the mainstream. Local mining, wood, food, fruits, herbs, mountaineering and cottage industries will flourish. Railway link between Dina, Jhelum and Mirpur under CPEC is under consideration which will boost tourism in Mirpur and linking districts. The new route via Khunjerab pass would be around 350km shorter than the existing one. It would pass through Shigar, Skardu and Astor districts of GB and connect to AJK capital. This route can be linked with Neelum Valley (AJK) via Shonter. An 'Industrial zone' like Mirpur is also under consideration for AJK capital. It will help tourism in the linked valleys of the capital.

Shonter Tunnel is another natural route to GB via the Neelum valley. It must be completed under the CPEC umbrella. Neelum Valley runs parallel to the Kaghan Valley. Both the valleys can be linked Under CPEC via local routes. A part of Nanga Parbat Massif falls in Neelum Valley which is dominated by "Sarwaali Peak" the high mountain in Azad Kashmir. We can link Baboon Top to Patlian and Rati-Gali Lake of Neelum Valley via mule-track. It will not only reduce the existing distance, but also create jobs for local people. We can also link Rati-Gali Lake to Naran Kagan valley via mule-Track. From Rati Gali tourists can move to Kaghan valley and vice versa. Through local routes we can offer a triple package to tourists from Naran Kaghan To Neelum Valley via Rati-Gali and then from Neelum to GB via Shonter pass. Shounter Tunnel will not only reduce the distance between GB. The route is also significant for trade and defense. The journey to GB via Neelum Valley, Shounter Pass is shorter than Via Rawalpindi. Sharda is the historical and cultural hub of tourism. Opposite to it is Surgan Nullah along which a track leads to Kaghan Valley. Via this route the visitors can also move to Naran Kagan after visiting Neelum Valley or vice versa. Kel is also a base camp for mountaineering activities up to "Sarwaali Peak" and "Sarwaali Glacier" (about 25 Kms long) which is said to be the highest peak and biggest glacier of Azad Kashmir.

Guris valley is also situated very close to the Burzil pass which leads into Astore district of the GB. Burzil pass is another natural route to link AJK to GB under CPEC projects. Muzaffarabad industrial zone under CPEC will boost tourism in the linking valley. Chikar is 46 Km from Muzaffarabad, we can promote tourism through newly born Zilzaal Lake. Kotli is linked with Mirpur Industrial zone and M4 under CPEC. Pearl Valley of Poonch is linked with Azad Pattan, where a hydro project under CPEC is finalized. It is also linked with Muzaffarabad, the expected industrial zone under CPEC will benefit Ponch dually. Rawalakot, Banjosa lake and Toli peer can be linked to CPEC via Azad pathan. Mangla Lake, Ramkot Fort and linking districts and valleys are directly linked to Mirpur Industrial Zone under CPEC which will boost tourism.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/772648/tourism-under-cpec-in-northern-areas/>

Pakistan Observer

40 Chinese companies participate in BoI symposium

More than 40 state-owned as well as private sector Chinese companies from diverse sectors participated, physically as well as online, in a four-hour long symposium organized by the Board of Investment, here in Islamabad in BOI, PMU Industrial Cooperation Office. Notable potential

and existing Chinese investors participated and appreciated the Board of Investment for the efforts undertaken to organize the event. The seminar aimed at firming up marketing strategy to lure-in Chinese businesses in Pakistan with an all-inclusive approach to engage relevant stakeholders in the public and private sectors alike. It becomes all more relevant for BOI, being the lead agency for industrial cooperation, to firm up policies related to investment promotion and facilitation aiming at improving the doing business environment in Pakistan. This exercise is part of the initiative undertaken by the Prime Minister's Office which is closely working on framing an effective strategy for Chinese industrial relocation in Pakistan.

In this regard, the Chairman BOI, Mr. Atif R. Bokhari and Secretary BOI, Ms. Fareena Mazhar, are personally supervising and collaborating the efforts to engage Chinese investors. Prominent and leading Chinese enterprises were invited to share their views on improving the business climate of Pakistan and to make it more conducive for Chinese investment. Also, it is pertinent to not that devising an all-inclusive marketing strategy will not only facilitate existing but also promote new Chinese businesses in Pakistan. The companies expressed keenness and exuberance as they were overwhelmed by the responsive approach of BOI in registering their experiences in Pakistan. All the business related issues faced by the Chinese companies were discussed with thread bare details. They candidly shared their input regarding the required policy interventions. The spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan Ms. Liu Rui also came up with certain plausible policy interventions for the consideration of the government agencies in Pakistan. Speaking on behalf of BOI, the Project Director of CPEC Industrial Cooperation, Mr. Asim Ayub, thanked the participants for gracing the event and stated that BOI is undertaking initiatives of high marginal impact to attract meaningful FDI in Pakistan. The Project Management Unit (PMU-CPEC-ICDP) of the BOI which is exclusively working to facilitate the Chinese investors in Pakistan will undertake all-out efforts in making it convenient for the potential and existing Chinese companies to invest and expand their operations in Pakistan.

<https://pakobserver.net/40-chinese-companies-participate-in-boi-symposium/>

The Nation

Hunan province to play greater role in CPEC building: Pak envoy

BEIJING - Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haq on Sunday said that Hunan province of China would play a greater role in building the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of Belt and Road Initiative.

“Pakistan and China are “iron brothers” and Chairman Mao Zedong has made a great contribution to the friendship between the two countries, and I am pleased to be in Chairman Mao's hometown of Hunan on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China,” he said in an exclusive interview with Hunan Daily.

The ambassador hoped to use his visit as an opportunity to promote all-round exchanges and cooperation between Pakistan and Hunan, and achieve more substantive results in economic and trade investment, cultural education, personnel exchanges and the conclusion of friendly city

relations. “Hunan is like a museum of revolutionary history without walls, some of which have stories about Pakistan,” Moin ul Haq, who came to Hunan for the first time, said. Yuan Longping, the ‘father of hybrid rice’ rooted in Hunan, helped develop rice cultivation in Pakistan, and many Pakistanis expressed their condolences and remembrance when they learned of his death.

The history of Hunan has made Ambassador Moin ul Haq feel at home, while the innovative and open new Hunan has made him ‘amazing’.

Moin ul Haq said that he attended the International Symposium on Traditional Chinese Medicine - Unani Traditional Medicine and the opening ceremony of the China-Pakistan Centre for Traditional Chinese Medicine, and inspected representative enterprises in the fields of medicine and health, engineering machinery, cultural media,.

“Hunan has made admirable achievements in pandemic prevention and control, precision poverty alleviation, and has made remarkable achievements in industrial development and other fields, creating many valuable experiences worthy of our learning.”

“In the future, we hope that Hunan will play a greater role and make greater contributions in the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor,” he said.

Ambassador Haque said that the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is now entering the second phase, focusing mainly on agriculture, industry and people’s livelihood cooperation. Hunan’s agricultural science and technology is more developed, engineering machinery, rail transit and other industries have great influence in infrastructure construction and other fields of strength. He hoped to strengthen project cooperation with Hunan, jointly promote the construction of the CPEC in the two countries all-weather strategic partnership to create more models.

In Ambassador Haque’s view, cultural education is also one of the key areas of future cooperation between the two sides. He said that there are many Pakistani students in Hunan, and these young people are the messengers of deepening friendship between Pakistan and China in the future, as well as a solid force to promote Pakistan-China scientific and technological cooperation.

He also invited the large number of Hunan enterprises to Pakistan to invest in business and said, “We also welcome the people of Hunan to visit Pakistan.”

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-14/page-8/detail-6>

June 15, 2021

Daily Times

Shanghai Electric begins major vaccination drive in Thar Block-1

Shanghai Electric, at the helm of a mega project of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, has started a massive drive to vaccinate thousands of its Pakistani employees in Thar Block-1.

According to a top official of Shanghai Electric, which is currently developing coal mines and a major power plant in Thar Block-1, more than 5000 employees who are associated with the CPEC projects are being vaccinated.

“For Shanghai Electric, safety of our workers comes first,” commented Wang Xiaofan, Chairman of Sino Sindh Resources Private Limited (SSRL), an overseas subsidiary of Shanghai Electric.

“The Covid-19 pandemic has affected lives and businesses all over the world and our projects in Thar are no exception. We have been making all out efforts to keep everyone safe and the current vaccination campaign is a major part of this drive,” he added.

SSRL has taken experienced doctors and paramedic staff from Karachi to vaccinate the local employees in Thar. Around 400 workers will be vaccinated daily during the ten-day drive which was inaugurated on Friday.

The vaccination campaign was inaugurated by Wang Xiaofan on Friday morning. Also present at the occasion were other senior officials of Shanghai Electric’s local subsidiary companies along with officials of the Sindh Health department.

Vaccination camps have been set up at the Shanghai Electric offices in Thar Block-1.

Since 1993, Shanghai Electric has provided electricity infrastructure services in Pakistan, and has a rich history of cooperation and friendship.

Sino Sindh Resources Private Limited (SSRL) was incorporated in Pakistan in 2011 as an overseas subsidiary controlled by Shanghai Electric (group) Corporation, specialising in coal mining. It belongs to the integrated coal and electricity project in Block 1 of Thar coalfield, which includes the construction and operation of an open-pit coal mine with an annual output of 7.8 million tons and a 2X660MW supercritical lignite power station. It is a priority project of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/773002/shanghai-electric-begins-major-vaccination-drive-in-thar-block-1/>

The Nation

China Tourism and Culture Week 2021 to be celebrated in June

ISLAMABAD - China Cultural Centre in Pakistan will launch a series of online activities to celebrate “2021 China Tourism and Culture Week” in mid-June.

The theme of the event is to promote the image of “Beautiful China,” and tell the story of China by focusing on three major sections, which are “Beautiful Countryside and Intangible Heritage Protection,” “Ice and Snow Tourism” and “Food Culture,” said a press release issued here on Monday.

It also aims to promote the Beijing Winter Olympics, and showcases the charm of Chinese Culture and Tourism.

In the following weeks, China Cultural Centre in Pakistan will share a variety of interesting virtual and online activities through short videos, trailers and posters covering performance, culture, cultural heritage, cuisine, beautiful landscapes and more.

Focusing on key projects of “Belt and Road” international cooperation in cultural and tourism industries, six distinctive tourism performing arts projects are selected and reproduced into short videos.

With the assistance of a H5 publicity program for mass communication, the broadcasting of the videos will mainly use the official website of cultural and tourist institutions abroad, and the local social media platforms designated for overseas promotion of these products during China Tourism and Culture weeks around the world.

Arts, Culture and Nature includes the best of art shows for tourism of China.

<https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2021-06-15/page-13/detail-8>

The News

SBP ex-official to lead China’s green investment

KARACHI: China-led Green Investment Principles, a group of global institutions promoting green investment in Belt-and-Road region has appointed State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) former governor Yaseen Anwar as the chairman of its first regional chapter.

“The core function of the chapter is to develop GIP knowledge and activities, build capacity for green and sustainable investment, and solve practical problems faced by investors and corporates who wish to make more green investments,” Anwar said during a webinar by the Global Green Finance Leadership Program. Green Investment Principles launched the regional chapter for Central Asia last month. The main aim of the regional chapter is to enhance engagement with local stakeholders, identify prospective GIP members and collect green projects to be shared among existing members as potential investments.

SBP Deputy Governor Sima Kamil said extensive financial resources would be needed to accelerate sustainability development and that they just launched a national program on environmental and social risk management.

More than 30 experts from Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, China and the UK were convened to share their insights on green investments, green taxonomies, environmental and social risk management, and biodiversity. The event was co-hosted by the Beijing Institute of Finance and Sustainability (BIFS), the Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC), and the Mongolian Sustainable Finance Association (MSFA), with support from the UK Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions (UK PACT) program.

Jenny McInnes, deputy director of International Climate Finance, UK BEIS said UK PACT works in partnership with countries to accelerate the global climate transition. “We need to raise the ambition and ability of all countries ahead of COP 26.”

The UK is to host the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 26) on 1 – 12 November 2021.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/849510-sbp-ex-official-to-lead-china-s-green-investment>

‘China may be Pakistan’s principal strategic ally’

LAHORE: China has never wanted Pakistan to break ties with the US. In case Pakistan was left with no other choice, it would like to keep China as its principal strategic ally. The US too would not insist on Pakistan to continue its relationship with it at the cost of China since both China and the US wanted to lower temperatures. In fact, China’s only issue was India nevertheless China and India were engaged in mutual trade to the tune of 100 billion dollars. Pakistan has categorically told the United States that it would always opt for a holistic bilateral arrangement instead of merely establishing mutual ties on “Afghanistan-first and other things to follow later on”.

This was the crux of the on-background discussion between one of the highly-placed government office-holders of the security system and a limited group of media persons here on Monday.

The official was asked as to what could be the possible aftermath of US forces’ withdrawal from Afghanistan. He replied that the process of the withdrawal was going on fast and was nearing conclusion and that Pakistan was fully alert about the possible, negative impact of Afghan situation if it goes from bad to worse. “There can be yet another flood of refugees coming from across the Pak-Afghan border and although the fencing on the border was almost complete, it would still become a big issue if the inflow of Afghans fleeing any possible Taliban takeover of Kabul, swells to a large number”.

He said the situation in Afghanistan nowadays is far more different from that of 1990s and now, the militarized outfits other than Taliban, were more equipped and stronger than before. So, one can’t predict that the post-withdrawal scenario would bring stability or peace in the region. In this manner, Afghanistan won’t be an easy prey for Taliban, despite the fact that the Kabul government and Afghan National Security Forces were not capable of resisting their advance. Even Pakistan did not possess the capacity to control and shape the events in Afghanistan so as to happen the way we want or exactly in accordance with the wishes of the US.

“We don’t have that leverage in Afghanistan although the US perception is otherwise. Despite these limits explained time and again to the US’ top brass in its security and administration structures, the latter are still of the considered opinion that Pakistan possessed more than sufficient clout to shape the events in Afghanistan, given its immense influence over Taliban”, he added.

The official confided to the media persons that Washington wanted Pakistan's role vis-à-vis Afghanistan in such a manner that Afghan issue should be addressed first, other matters of mutual interest to follow subsequently. However, Islamabad has unambiguously made it clear that it won't take to any such route because of which it (Pakistan) would be abandoned soon after it has been used as a tool. Hence, Pakistan's stress, time and again, on a holistic, bilateral arrangement involving all vital areas, viz, commerce and trade, counter-terrorism, military-to-military etc etc.

“But, our mutual cooperation should never be allowed to become a prey to propaganda”, he said. Talking about foreign policy priorities, the official added, “Any foreign policy founded on either/or considerations was not a good foreign policy and is likely to end as a failure”.

Explaining Pakistan's Afghan role, the official stated, “Whatever our capacity limits, Pakistan has already done more than enough for paving the way for Afghan peace”.

As regards the economic situation, the official said: “Things were not that good in Afghanistan at present and there is strong likelihood of things worsening further in future if a political settlement was not reached. Moreover, economic issue was all the more important in the days to come where China, Russia, Pakistan and other countries can play a good role in generating economic activity by investing in areas like minerals, construction of infrastructure and establishment of energy-producing industry, etc”.

The media persons were further informed that whenever Pakistan asked Kabul authorities to cooperate in the establishment of border markets and in the signing of enhanced trade agreements on new lines in the backdrop of the emerging scenario, they didn't respond to any of these peace-and-stability promoting moves. On India, in the backdrop of Kashmir situation, the official said Pakistan was making use of every opportunity to utilize the available space for further engagement.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/849821-china-may-be-pakistan-s-principal-strategic-ally>