



For Better Understanding on China–Pakistan and CPEC

Gleanings from the National & Chinese Press

January 01-15, 2023

An Online Publication of PICS



<https://su.edu.pk/gleanings-from-national-press>

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January 01, 2023

Business Recorder

Pakistan to be among first destinations of new Chinese FM

Muhammad Saleh Zaafir

ISLAMABAD: New Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang will be visiting Pakistan in the first quarter of this year as Islamabad would be among his first destinations for his external sojourn.

Earlier, Qin visited Pakistan as Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs during Nawaz Sharif government, highly-placed diplomatic sources told The News here on Saturday. Foreign Minister Qin is a close aide to President Xi Jinping and is viewed as an astute diplomat. He was serving as his country's envoy to the United States before assuming the top diplomat position in Beijing.

The sources in Islamabad reminded that the invitation to the Chinese foreign minister to visit Pakistan was pending with Beijing and an understanding had been conveyed that as soon as schedule of external visits of the new foreign minister was chalked out, a Pakistan visit would be among his first destinations.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari felicitated Qin Gang on his appointment as China's Foreign Minister. In a tweet on Saturday, the foreign minister said he is looking forward to working with him, taking China-Pakistan all-weather cooperative strategic partnership to greater heights. In his reply, Qin Gang thanked Bilawal for his warm congratulations and reciprocated the sentiments. Qin Gang was appointed as the new foreign minister, according to a decision made by the 13th National People's Congress Standing Committee on Friday. Qin Gang, the incumbent Chinese Ambassador to the US, has replaced Wang Yi, who is a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and State Councillor. Wang Yi, who served his country as foreign minister for about a decade and was known as a friend of Pakistan, has been elevated in the Chinese hierarchy and would continue to serve in a senior position overseeing foreign affairs.

The sources hinted that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would revive the invitation to his new Chinese counterpart for visiting Pakistan soon. Pakistan's Ambassador to China Moinul Haq will convey the invitation to the new Chinese foreign minister, the sources added.

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=162384>

Daily Times

Chinese company gifts stationary to students in Balochistan

As many as 571 students from Saindak Public Model High School, Nokkundi, Balochistan were gifted stationery including schoolbags by MCC Resources Development Co. Ltd. (MRDL), a subsidiary of the China Metallurgical Group Corporation (MCC Group) recently.

The donation ceremony was presided over by Vice President of MRDL. On the occasion, Wang Jicheng, Chairman of MCC Tongsin Resources Ltd (MCCT), handed out the school bags to the students, encouraging them to be future scientists, writers, entrepreneurs, and statesmen.

He pinpointed that the company would continue to support and promote the development of schools under the Saindak project and surrounding villages as always and provide a stage for all students to achieve their goals, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Saturday.

With the support of MRDL, Saindak Public Model High School has now been transformed into the only senior school in the district.

Saeed Ahmed, Principal of the School, expressed his gratitude for the long-term care and support for local education from MRDL.

He hoped that in the future, the School would be built into a model school in Balochistan and even in Pakistan.

At present, all school-age children around the Saindak project can receive education in Saindak Public Model High School for free. MRDL has invested about 10 million Pakistani rupees in the cost of teaching materials and teachers' salaries for the maintenance and operation of these schools every year.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1045854/chinese-company-gifts-stationary-to-students-in-balochistan/>

Huge potential for Pak-China cooperation in livestock sector

China and Pakistan enjoy great cooperation potential in animal husbandry and agricultural products. The two sides should continue to strengthen in-depth cooperation in the livestock industry and open a new chapter for China-Pakistan agricultural exchanges.

This was stated by Ghulam Qadir, Pakistan's Trade and Investment Counsellor in China, while addressing a seminar on Pakistani dairy buffaloes' major diseases control, Gwadar Pro reported it on Saturday.

The counsellor also stated that Pakistan has the capability of processing dairy products for export to Middle Eastern countries and expressed hope that more Chinese dairy companies would join the dairy industry chain.

He stated that "the two sides should continue to strengthen major animal disease prevention and control, establish foot-and-mouth disease-free zones, and promote the export of Pakistani buffalo genetic material, livestock, and poultry products to China and other international markets."

This week, the China-Pakistan Agricultural Science and Technology Innovation & Extension Center, China Agricultural University, and Royal Cell Biotechnology (Guangxi) Co., Ltd hosted a Cooperation Seminar on the prevention and control of major dairy buffalo diseases in Pakistan.

In her welcoming speech, Teng Cuijin, Chairman of Royal Cell welcomed the visit of the Pakistani Embassy and Chinese industry experts, and hoped that through the exchange of this

seminar, scientific research institutes and industry leading enterprises would jointly promote the prevention and control of major animal diseases of buffaloes in Pakistan, and meet the quarantine inspection technical standards of the Chinese Customs.

On the occasion, Zhao Deming, Director of the National Animal Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy Laboratory, China Agricultural University, underlined the prevention and control of animal diseases as a key issue to solve the bottlenecks in the trade between China and Pakistan.

He pointed out that the sensitive and specific diagnostic techniques introduced by Prof. Yang Lifeng from the university will help build disease-free farms and monitor BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) in Pakistan.

He Cheng, coordinator of the China-Pakistan Agricultural Science and Technology Innovation & Extension Center, presented the cooperation content, technical framework, and preliminary cooperation basis of major cattle and sheep epidemic prevention and control projects in Pakistan.

He also discussed the construction plan and schedule of the Pakistan buffalo embryo testing laboratory and major epidemic disease testing laboratory in 2023 with the project leaders of Guangxi Buffalo Research Institute and Royal Cell.

Xie Wenqiang, Technical Director of Inner Mongolia Bigvet Biotech Co., Ltd., introduced the requirements and testing standards of WOAHP for the construction of immune-free areas, and how foot and mouth disease marker vaccine was applied to the construction of immune-free areas in Pakistan.

About 20 delegates from Inner Mongolia, Shijiazhuang, and Guangxi attended the seminar.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1045960/huge-potential-for-pak-china-cooperation-in-livestock-sector/>

Pakistan Observer

Fully activate CPEC

MINISTER for Planning, Development and Special Initiative Prof Ahsan Iqbal revealed on Friday that work on CPEC during four years of the PTI government remained stalled.

Addressing an award-giving ceremony for “Outstanding Pakistani Staff of CPEC Projects” held at Chinese Embassy Complex in Islamabad, he said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif immediately after coming to power in April 2022 made it a point that work on CPEC would resume at a fastest pace as Imran Khan government did not build even a single brick in free economic zones during his entire rule.

This is official confirmation of the widely-held belief that almost all CPEC projects suffered hugely during those years and despite verbal assurances nothing substantial was done to initiate more projects despite willingness by China to help Pakistan’s economy in every respect.

The sincerity of China can be gauged by the fact that it became the first country with highest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in a short period of three years since the launch of the CPEC in 2015.

Out of several projects with investment of a total \$46 billion, projects worth \$29 billion were actualized in the first three years.

These are not paper projects but concrete ones with immense contribution to the overall growth of the economy.

Pakistan would not have faced the prevailing economic nightmare if all projects and programmes under the framework of the CPEC were pursued with initial zeal.

In fact, it was because of the real potential of the CPEC to change the destiny of Pakistan that it is being opposed by some powers that want the country to remain totally dependent on foreign aid and therefore, remain vulnerable to their pressure on different issues.

The Minister has aptly summed up the benefits of CPEC for Pakistan pointing out that it proved a source of tremendous support in diverse sectors like industry, agriculture, energy, infrastructure, port, highways and connectivity besides creation of job opportunities.

The Minister has plans to visit China in January and hopefully his interaction with Chinese leadership and officials would help CPEC regain its lost momentum.

<https://pakobserver.net/fully-activate-cpec/>

January 02, 2023

Daily Times

20 million phones assembled in Pakistan by Chinese companies

In 2022, with the leading role of Chinese manufacturing companies, Pakistan has locally assembled/manufactured about 20 million mobile phones in the country, which outnumbered phones imported from other countries.

Gowder Pro on Sunday quoting Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA)'s data, stated that between January and November, the locally assembled/manufactured phones include 11.5 million 2G sets while the number of smartphones is 8.2 million.

On average, manufacturing per month during the first 11 months of the year is 1.8 million phones; thus, the inclusion of December data will bring the overall data to over 20 million phones in 2022.

In 2022, like the previous two years, Chinese companies are amongst the top local manufacturing/assembling brands.

The PTA data shows that a Chinese mobile company manufactured/assembled 2.74 million; VGO TEL which is a subsidiary of Transsion Holdings manufactured 2.10 million phones; China's Vivo manufactured/assembled 1.66 million phones while Infinix, another subsidiary of Transsion Holdings, manufactured/assembled 1.61 million phones. Similarly, Oppo has

manufactured 1.30 million phones while TECNO has assembled/manufactured 1.05 million phones.

Due to the local assembly/manufacturing of mobile devices, Pakistan has saved foreign exchange reserves, which the country's economic system badly needs.

In 2022, Pakistan commercially imported 1.37 million devices while in 2021 the number of imported devices was 10.26 million while that of local manufacturing/assembling was 24.66 million. In 2020, the number of imported devices was 24.51 million, which was much higher than the 13.05 million locally assembled/manufactured mobile sets. Domestically manufactured/ assembled phones outnumber imported phones when PTA issued the Mobile Device Manufacturing Authorizations (MDMA) to several foreign companies to set up their manufacturing/assembling plants in Pakistan.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1046371/20-million-phones-assembled-in-pakistan-by-chinese-companies/>

Pakistan Observer

CPEC crucial to Pakistan's economy: Speakers

Speakers at a webinar opined that Pakistan needs to revisit its geopolitical strategic and economic framework in the context of the changing world landscape, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. They said that Pakistan will be marking ten years of CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) in 2023, which is pivotal to its economic security.

According to Gwadar Pro on Sunday, the webinar was organized by the Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) on Saturday, the New Year's Eve. The theme of the webinar was "Pakistan's geopolitical repositioning in 2023".

Munir Ahmed, Executive Director, Devcom-Pakistan said that China has established partnerships and projected its influence by utilizing the huge resources at its disposal.

"As an important pilot project for the joint construction of "Belt and Road Initiative", CPEC has achieved fruitful and remarkable results. It has brought US\$25.4 billion in investment to Pakistan and created a total of 190,000 jobs, it was learned.

In 2023, we should give full play to the role of CPEC as a critical engine of Pakistan's economic development."

On the occasion, Chairman Senate Standing Committee of Defense Production Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed highlighted that Pakistan must pursue its role as a hub for regional connectivity, while strengthening ties with its core partners like China, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

He added that "most importantly, Pakistan needs a 'political ceasefire' at home on key issues like economy, extremism, education, so that people get a respite from this unending polarization and continuing quest for power."

Former speaker Balochistan assembly Rahila Durrani, Senior Research fellow at East-East Institute (London) Dr Najam Abbas, and development expert Tahir Shamshad were also present.—INP

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-crucial-to-pakistans-economy-speakers/>

The Nation

CPEC creates 192,000 jobs for Pakistanis: Envoy

ISLAMABAD-China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has created 192,000 jobs, 6,000MW of power supply, 510km of highway, and 886km of transmission line, which laid a solid foundation for Pakistan's socio-economic development, according to Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong.

According to Gwadar Pro, he was speaking at the Awarding Ceremony for Outstanding Pakistani Staff of the CPEC Projects 2022, held in the Chinese Embassy. Ambassador Nong Rong said that a series of good news are coming from different sectors under the CPEC umbrella.

The China-aided Eastbay Expressway of Gwadar port has begun operation since June, enhancing connectivity of the port, which is now transporting two hundred thousand tonnes of fertilizer. Karot Hydropower started commercial operation in June as well, which provides cheap and clean electricity, and can reduce 3.5 million metric tonnes of carbon emissions annually. The TEL and Nova power plants in Thar also started operations with the local coal. The Shanghai Electric Thar coal-based power plant has been connected to the national grid. Six model farms under Pakistan-China Red Chilli Contract Farming Project are achieving a harvest in Punjab and Sindh provinces, with an estimated yield of 700 tonnes of dried chilly. This is just a portrayal of the great potential of agricultural cooperation between our two countries.

In fact, Pakistan's trade surplus of agricultural products for the year 2021 enjoyed an increase of 13 times. This year is expected to exceed a record high of \$1 billion. The ambassador said that the CPEC is not possible without the joint efforts of staff from both China and Pakistan. According to him, CPEC, as the pilot project of BRI and China-Pakistan cooperation in the new era, will always provide a broad stage for people to display their talents and realise personal values. It is hoped that the Chinese and Pakistani staff will cherish the opportunity, contribute to the construction of the CPEC with practical actions, and continue to consolidate the iron friendship between China and Pakistan.

10th anniversary of CPEC crucial to Pakistan's economy: Speakers

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"As an important pilot project for the joint construction of "Belt and Road Initiative", CPEC has achieved fruitful and remarkable results. It has brought \$25.4 billion in investment to Pakistan and created a total of 190,000 jobs, it was learned.

"In 2023, we should give full play to the role of CPEC as a critical engine of Pakistan's economic development." On the occasion, Senate Standing Committee of Defense Production Chairman Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed highlighted that Pakistan must pursue its role as a hub for regional connectivity, while strengthening ties with its core partners like China, Turkiye and Saudi Arabia.

He added, "Most importantly, Pakistan needs a 'political ceasefire' at home on key issues like economy, extremism, education, so that people get a respite from this unending polarisation and continuing quest for power." Former speaker Balochistan Assembly Rahila Durrani, Senior Research fellow at East-East Institute (London) Dr Najam Abbas, and development expert Tahir Shamshad were also present.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-02/page-8/detail-2>

The News

Pak-Sino-Saudi cooperation for food security

Shakeel Ahmad Ramay

Middle East is one of the most food scarce regions of the world. Geography and water scarcity limit the scope of agriculture and food production in the region. They have to rely on the imported food to meet the domestic demand.

The current statistics show Saudi Arabia have to import 80pc, Kuwait 90pc, UAE 85pc and Qatar 90pc food to satisfy the demand of local population. It is anticipated that food demand will increase in coming years due to population rise and diversification drive. Now, these countries are looking for reliable partners which can provide Halal food (being Muslim, Halal food is mandatory for them).

This situation provides Pakistan an opportunity to become food basket for the Middle East. However, present state of agriculture and food sector does not allow it to benefit from the opportunity. Agriculture and food sectors in Pakistan are facing multifaceted challenges. First, Pakistan was never been able to optimally utilise land through modern farming techniques and knowledge-based methods. As a result, Pakistan was not able to develop agriculture sector to create surplus in compliance with phytosanitary standards and regulations. Second, productivity of agriculture, fruit and livestock sectors is very low. Major reasons are poor infrastructure for research and development and low-quality inputs. Third, there is shortage of financial resources and non-interest (Riba free) loans. Fourth, supply

chain infrastructure is extremely poor. Fifth, Pakistan could not develop food-related industry.

Pakistan is still a commodity market which does not enjoy good business rational. The cooperation will help Pakistan modernise agriculture, food sectors and combat unemployment, food insecurity and poverty. It will also be a good source of foreign exchange earnings. Pakistan does not have financial or technological resources to solve these problems.

Thus, it should look for innovative ideas to benefit from the opportunity. One of them is that Pakistan can forge partnership with China and Middle East to create a win-win formula through a trilateral platform. There are many rationales which make proposition workable idea.

First, Pakistan is in the neighbourhood which will enable it to provide fresh and quality food commodities. Second, being a Muslim country, Pakistan can ensure Halal food. Third, it has diverse geography which helps it produce diverse food.

Middle Eastern countries will also benefit immensely from the cooperation. First, they will have reliable partners which do not put conditions for the cooperation. Second, they will get good quality, fresh and Halal food in neighbourhood. Third, due to short distance and low labour cost in Pakistan, they will get cheap food. Fourth, China and Pakistan will be reliable partners. It will help them secure sustainable food supply which will help them achieve goal of food security. For China, it will open window of opportunities to export the agriculture and food-related technology. Thus, Chinese technological companies will get good business opportunities. Second, China can also import some food commodities and products from Pakistan.

Besides, on top of everything, Pakistan is home to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which can be used as trilateral forum for cooperation. China and Pakistan are already looking for expansion of CPEC and inclusion of third parties. So, the proposed cooperation can be a starting point.

However, there is need to proceed in a stepwise manner and build trilateral cooperation with countries one by one. Although, regional countries, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Oman, and Bahrain, have great potential for cooperation, we suggest starting with Saudi Arabia, as it is the largest country in the region.

However, before entering business, a trilateral framework of cooperation should be developed by keeping in mind strengths of each partner. After signing the cooperation framework, Saudi Arabia, China and Pakistan should concentrate on four areas to make the venture successful. First, they should create a joint agro-food special zone in a designated geographical area. Special zone should be established by analysing the potential of agriculture and livestock in the selected area.

Moreover, food industry should follow strengthens of the area. For example, if the selected area is rich in livestock, then livestock and dairy-related industry should be established in the proposed special zone.

Second, the three countries should join hands to modernise the supply chain according to the global standards. They can start working by establishing a “Joint Transport Company”. Third, storage and lab facilities should be established. Storage facilities are required to preserve shelf life of agriculture and food commodities. Labs will help ensure phytosanitary standards for the export.

Fourth, a specialised “Trilateral Food and Agriculture Development Fund” should be established by pooling the financial resources. The fund should provide financial resources for agriculture practices, transport and food industry. The prime focus of fund should be investment in R&D for modernising agriculture and food sectors.

After the successful execution of proposed plan, China and Pakistan can establish new special zones for other regional countries. For that purpose, next best choice would be Kuwait and Qatar, as both rely heavily on imported food. It is good to note that Kuwait is very keen to invest in agriculture in Pakistan and enhance food trade with the same.

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=162863>

Jang News

ڈاؤلو نیورسٹی کا چین سے اینٹی رہیرویکسین درآمد کرنے کا فیصلہ

ڈاؤلو نیورسٹی آف ہیلتھ سائنسز نے پڑوسی ملک چین سے اینٹی رہیرویکسین درآمد کرنے کا فیصلہ کر لیا۔
ڈاؤلو نیورسٹی آف ہیلتھ سائنسز کے حکام کے مطابق چین سے کتے کے کاٹنے کی ویکسین منگوا کر یہاں بیک کریں گے۔
پروفیسر سعید قریشی کے مطابق چین سے اینٹی رہیرویکسین درآمد کر کے ’نوپرافٹ نولاس‘ کی بنیاد پر دیں گے۔
ڈاؤلو نیورسٹی آف ہیلتھ سائنسز کے حکام نے بتایا ہے کہ چین سے ویکسین درآمد کرنے میں ڈرگ ریگولیٹری اتھارٹی کی مزاحمت کا سامنا ہے۔
ان کا مزید کہنا ہے کہ پاکستان میں اس وقت بھارت سے بڑی مقدار میں اینٹی رہیرویکسین درآمد کی جا رہی ہے۔
ڈاؤلو نیورسٹی آف ہیلتھ سائنسز کا یہ بھی کہنا ہے کہ مقامی طور پر صرف قومی ادارہ برائے صحت محدود مقدار میں اینٹی رہیرویکسین بنا رہا ہے۔
واضح رہے کہ پاکستان میں ہر سال 10 لاکھ سے زائد افراد کو کتے کاٹ لیتے ہیں جس کے باعث رہیرویکسین ہر سال 5 سے 6 ہزار افراد انتقال کر جاتے ہیں۔

<https://jang.com.pk/news/1177515>

January 03, 2023

Daily Times

CPEC 2023: Hopes & Challenges

Yasir Habib Khan

The sun of 2023 has emerged with new hops and challenges for China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in the backdrop of uncapping China’s zero covid policy, fresh commitments to pump up more Chinese investment, rollout of new three CPEC corridors, resumption of cultural exchange programs, galvanization of China Pakistan free trade agreement (phase I and phase II), catalyzing Gwadar as logistic powerhouse, activation of Special Economic Zones, Pakistan’s economic turbulence, security hazards and global evil eyes on Sino-Pak relations. As the dawn of 2023 shines, CPEC is all set to take a center stage in 72 years Pak-

China diplomatic relations. After Pakistan Premier Shehbaz Sharif's Beijing visit and meeting with President Xi Jinping in 2022, it is highly likely of frequent high-profile exchange of visits between Chinese top dignitaries and Pakistan's eminent decision-makers in 2023. A total of 36 more CPEC projects, with a projected expenditure of \$27.5 billion, are in the works and it is believed that many of them will cross finishing line during 2023. According to information from the energy sector, 11 projects totaling \$12 billion in investment have already been finished, while four additional projects totaling \$6 billion in investment are now undergoing implementation and are anticipated to be finished soon.

In the infrastructure sector, seven projects totaling \$6.7 billion in investment have already been finished. Six additional projects totaling \$0.9 billion will be finished in coming years, and 12 projects totaling \$10.4 billion are anticipated to be finished as per their set deadlines from 2023 to 2030. Similarly, in Gwadar, where three \$200 million projects have already been finished, two \$230 million projects will be finished in the years ahead and two more \$150 million projects will be finished in accordance with their culmination period. Moreover, five Special Economic Zones (SEZs) will make tangible headways in 2023 with an investment of \$1 billion. Four of the nine identified Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would be completed in coming years with an expenditure of \$500 million. Six socioeconomic projects totaling \$10 million have so far been completed; 11 projects totaling \$90 million will be finished by 2025, and 10 projects totaling \$900 million will be finished by 2030.

Good news is that, 27 projects worth of \$19 billion have so far been completed under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) while 63 more projects with the investment of \$35.2 billion are scheduled to be completed in coming years.

Good news is that, 27 projects worth of \$19 billion have so far been completed under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) while 63 more projects with the investment of \$35.2 billion are scheduled to be completed in coming years. According to a report titled "Overview of Pakistan's Power Sector and its Future Outlook" issued by the China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Ltd (CSAIL), 27 projects are under implementation stages with the investment of \$7.7 billion that are scheduled to be completed by 2025. 2023 is also marking CPEC- Collaborative Research Grant (CPEC-CRG) which is one of the key component of recently launched HEC initiative namely "Academic Collaboration under CPEC Consortium of Universities". The overall objective of the said project is to understand and respond to the historic global geo-strategic and geo-economic transition and its impact on the region in general and Pakistan in particular, keeping in the view the broad Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and its Pakistan-specific component – CPEC. The national response to the strategic opportunity arising out of the emerging global dynamics is the CPEC Long Term Plan (LTP).

The CPEC- CRG is anticipated to support promising research partnerships between Pakistan and China, aiming at finding solutions to CPEC-related problems through joint research by the universities of Pakistan and China, drawing upon research potential of academia on both sides. Keeping in view the scope and foreseeable impact of CPEC, this initiative will go a long way in supporting collaborative research proposals, addressing problems and issues pertaining to Pakistan's socio-economic development in general and CPEC in particular. Few

weeks ago, while addressing to the China's intangible cultural heritage exhibition under the aegis of the Chinese Consulate at Alhamra Arts Council, Lahore, Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren tagged 2023 as year of "China-Pakistan Tourism and Exchanges." He also shared a wonderful news that, China was also scheduled to host the Gandhara Art Exhibition in Beijing. Similarly, Cultural Office of the Embassy of China and China Cultural Center in Pakistan organized a live 2023 Happy Chinese New Year Press Conference, in which the consulate announced that, in order to showcase Chinese history, culture, and tourism in the future, the Cultural Office of the Chinese Embassy and the China Cultural Center in Pakistan will fully utilise all human resources. They will also keep up their tireless efforts to open a new chapter in the friendship between China and Pakistan.

The collaboration of Pakistan and China on education and cultural cooperation and exchanges witnessed an upward trajectory with each passing day, as thousands of Pakistani students are currently studying in various universities in China. Similarly, exhibitions and Chinese cultural events in Pakistan are expected to increase further in 2023

This academic and cultural cooperation will further strengthen the bonding between the two brotherly countries. While briefing Pakistani media about the 2023 Happy Chinese New Year and upcoming events in connection with the celebrations of the Chinese Spring Festival, Xing Lijun, Second Secretary, Cultural Office of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan told the media that The Chinese government is expected to resume the cultural exchange programs in 2023 after it relaxed COVID-19 restrictions at home.

Similarly, currency agreement between both nations is not only an economic masterstroke but it is also tipped as a strategic move. It is hoped that, in 2023, Pakistan's dependence on dollar will decrease, as the central banks of Pakistan and China have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish yuan clearing mechanisms.

Despite tough economic challenges China remained at the top in the list of top foreign direct investor in Pakistan. The COVID-19 outbreak and the shift in Pakistan's government had both caused a slowdown in the CPEC. But those barriers are no longer present and work on CPEC is expected to pick up more pace in 2023 in terms of China FDI in Pakistan. The second phase of the CPEC has broadened its scope to include collaboration on projects related to socioeconomic development, education, tourism, industry, oil and gas, research, and technology. Since China Pakistan Free Trade Agreement phase II and phase II are in full-on operation, 2023 will see new depth in Pak-China trade landscape offering spiral leverage to Pakistan so that Pakistan increase its export to China to cure its economic imbalances and development trajectory.

In 2023, CPEC will be churning out massive employability for people of Pakistan. Recently Chinese ambassador Nong Rong said already China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has created 192,000 jobs in the projects of 6000MW of power supply, 510 km of highway, and 886 km of transmission line, that help consolidated Pakistan's socio-economic development. As 2023 will be progressing as many as 700,000 new job opportunities are estimated to be created by 2030 under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). A recent study conducted by CPEC Centre of Excellence, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform of

Pakistan showed that indirectly, CPEC could help create even 1.2 million jobs under its presently agreed projects.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1046775/cpec-2023-hopes-challenges/>

PIA introduces package for intending Umrah pilgrims from China

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has introduced a special package to facilitate Pakistani and other Muslims pilgrims who plan to travel from China to Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah.

Under the package, the pilgrims travelling on PIA from Beijing and Chengdu would be provided connecting flights from Islamabad to Saudi Arabia and back.

However, Pakistani passengers could enjoy a stopover of over one week in Pakistan while returning to China, a senior official told APP here on Monday.

The national flag carrier is currently operating weekly passenger flights on Islamabad-Beijing-Islamabad and Islamabad-Chengdu-Islamabad routes on Sunday and Wednesday respectively.

In wake of the Chinese New Year and winter holidays in China, PIA has already reduced fares for passengers travelling on Beijing-Islamabad route.

The new fare from Beijing to Islamabad is now RMB 4,681 including all taxes which will greatly facilitate those passengers wishing to travel to Pakistan to meet their families during holidays.

The national flag carrier has also introduced cut in the existing fare of Beijing-Islamabad-Beijing round trip and new price is now RMB 12,050 including all taxes.

China has already announced to scrap quarantine requirement for international arrivals starting from January 8. The passengers travelling to China need to take nucleic acid test within 48 hours before boarding their flights to China. The nucleic acid screening and centralized isolation after arrival will be cancelled, according to China's National Health Commission.

Talking to APP, some Pakistani nationals expressed happiness over introduction of Umrah package for Pakistani and other Muslims living across China and said they would be able to fulfil their religious obligation as well as meet their relatives on way back to China after performing Umrah.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1046705/pia-introduces-package-for-intending-umrah-pilgrims-from-china/>

Chinese anti-smog technologies introduced to Pakistan

In order to combat hazardous smog and air pollution across Punjab, home of more than 100 million people, Punjab government springs into action to use Chinese anti-smog technology by installing smog towers in Lahore and other parts of the province in 2023.

Development made headway in the backdrop of successful meeting between Punjab CM Ch Pervaiz Elahi and Chinese Consul General Lahore Zhao Shiren, Gwadar Pro reported it on Monday.

According to the Chinese Consul General Lahore Zhao Shiren, bearing in mind that good air quality is beneficial for people of Lahore, the Chinese Consulate Lahore has provided comprehensive documents regarding smog-eating towers built in China to Chief Minister Office Task Force Smog.

“We managed to collect all the required data and information by establishing connection with relevant authorities in China,” the Chinese Consulate Lahore official said. If the CM office needs further help, we will surely do accordingly,” he added.

CM secretariate official told Gwadar Pro that in the face of unhealthy air quality in Punjab, Chinese smog towers appear to be an antidote of air pollution.

“We noted that smog has become a global problem and the government wants to use Chinese technology to control it in Punjab, especially in Lahore. Chinese technology will be beneficial for installing air purification towers in Lahore and other cities. Air-purifying towers will be installed near border areas and industrial areas,” he added.

He said that in accordance with the information he learnt China’s Institute of Earth Environment has constructed the world’s largest air purifier in the northern city of Xi’an. “The smog-sucking tower stands at over 100 metres tall and is designed to improve air quality in the city, where standards regularly fall short of expectations set by the World Health Organization,” he added.

To monitor the tower’s impact, he said, pollution monitoring stations in the surrounding area discovered that levels of PM2.5 – the fine particles in smog considered most harmful – fell 15% during times of heavy pollution, compared to average.

Environmentalist Naseem Shahid said that as the Punjab government has declared an environmental emergency, smog-free towers are direly needed for Punjab.

“Around the base of the tower is a system of greenhouses that covers an area about half the size of a soccer field. It sucks polluted air in and heats it up with solar energy. The heated air then rises up through the tower and passes through multiple layers of cleaning filters.

The Xi’an tower has managed to produce more than 10 million cubic metres (353 million cubic feet) of clean air a day since its launch. Furthermore, on severely polluted days the tower was able to reduce smog close to moderate levels,” he added

He said that purpose of this project is to find an effective and low-cost method to artificially remove pollutants from the atmosphere. China has already housed what was previously thought to be the largest smog tower in China by Dutch artist Daan Roosegaarde at 798, a creative park in Beijing. That one was only seven meters (23-feet) tall and produced about eight cubic metres (282.5 cubic feet) of clean air per second, he added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1046713/chinese-anti-smog-technologies-introduced-to-pakistan/>

Pakistan Observer

Listen to experts on CPEC

SPEAKERS at a webinar opined that Pakistan needs to revisit its geopolitical strategic and economic framework in the context of the changing world landscape, especially in the Asia-Pacific region.

They said that Pakistan will be marking ten years of CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) in 2023, which is pivotal to its economic security.

They pointed out that in 2023, we should give full play to the role of CPEC as a critical engine of Pakistan's economic development.

As the present Government is fully motivated to reactivate CPEC and restore its original momentum, we hope that the proposal of the participants of the webinar to make CPEC as engine of economic development for Pakistan would receive positive response from the officials concerned.

This is important as the country is facing an acute economic and financial crunch and CPEC offers an opportunity to help address the woes of Pakistan in this regard.

Already, CPEC has brought US\$25.4 billion in investment to Pakistan and created a total of 190,000 jobs and Chinese are more than willing to invest more in different sectors of the economy.

We have been pointing out in these columns that expeditious and successful implementation of all agreed projects and programmes under the framework of CPEC would help accelerate economic growth and strengthen the country's ability to pay back its debts which are mounting with the passage of time.

The policy to take more loans to pay back previous ones is highly flawed and prudence demands a focus on improvement of the infrastructure, industrialization and optimum utilization of the country's agricultural potential.

<https://pakobserver.net/listen-to-experts-on-cpec/>

Opportunities in Balochistan

Manzoor Ahmed

WHENEVER we talk of opportunities in Balochistan, we have a strong tendency to highlight the traditional sectors, including minerals, horticulture, fisheries, livestock, handicraft, geostrategic locational advantage, and nowadays with much fanfare on CPEC and Gwadar seaport umbrella projects, as glaring areas to afford opportunities to the people of Balochistan.

Barring CPEC projects which can foster a growth process with a modicum of employment opportunities for (semi)skilled and the educated youth of Balochistan through Special Economic and Free Zones-based small to medium scale industrialisation and promotion of trade and commerce through wider connectivity.

The traditional (sub) sectors, cannot harbinger an inclusive growth process creating ample opportunities.

These sectors albeit are important in contributing and complementing local economy but can hardly provide any solid economic base to build a modern economy and vibrant society.

If we keep thinking on these lines, we will never be able to provide a viable and sustainable roadmap to create opportunities in Balochistan.

It is hard to create opportunities for a larger society from natural resources endowments, particularly the minerals, as any economy based on natural resources inherently remains exclusionary and extractive in nature and highly capital intensive.

In Balochistan, the entire mines and mineral sector, except large scale projects, is controlled by a few families with strong social and political clout in the province.

The fossil fuel, mainly the natural gas reserves are depleting at an unprecedented speed, as the current share of Balochistan in natural gas production has reduced to less than 17% of the total.

Except for Nasirabad division, rest of Balochistan cannot sustain large scale agriculture. The small and medium scale agriculture has historically been sourced through rain-fed canals and perineal water tunnels of Kareez could merely sustain only subsistence agriculture.

However, the heavy mechanisation of the agriculture at a massive scale through tub-wells on subsidised rate, and now solar-powered machines extracted the deep ground water drying up.

Fisheries and livestock sub-sectors are rapidly diminishing owing to high fish catch through illicit and unregulated big fishing vessels, frequent droughts and rural-urban migration.

Agriculture and fisheries should not be stretched further given the water scarcity and ever depleting fish stocks.

With current socio-political and power structure one can hardly expect that the province offers many opportunities to its people to prosper with a decent living, as the power structure is extremely extractive and controlled by a tiny class coming from top of the hierarchical social structure supplemented by the civil servants riding on the back of public resources.

Balochistan needs altogether a different model of development to create economic opportunities which is sustainable and eco-friendly.

The commodity producing sectors could offer very little growth prospects. The potential for sustainable growth with wider opportunities lie in services sector, including trade and commerce.

The new model of growth and development imperatively needs to be people centric. The fiscal space had been extremely narrowed in the past, leaving the province with limited options to invest on social sector, but the 7th NFC Award created a fiscal cushion.

However, empirical evidence suggests that in post-8th amendment and 7th NFC Award, the initiatives that relatively created a much larger fiscal space with certain administrative and legal autonomy, the province has made no progress at all in any important dimensions.

This alludes to the fact that it is not a matter of resource unavailability only, the onus on the contrary lies with lack of capacity, dearth of political accountability and an acute governance crisis.

With this current governance model and socio-political structure, the corridor of opportunities in Balochistan is not only narrow but getting narrower in every passing times.

Here I offer only two tangible suggestions to broaden the opportunity corridor to the people.

First, those who are at the helm of affairs, need to divert a chunk of the transferred resources of the divisible pool and strait transfers from the federal government to invest in people, through investing in their education and skill building, so that they can create opportunities for themselves.

Balochistan needs to expand the network of the education, mainly technical and higher education institutions, with wider access to quality education.

Access to good education is not only a key aspect of social justice, but one of the main drivers of development in a society.

I suggest that the government should commit to ensuring that quality education at all levels is universally accessible to all.

A vast literature shows a large premium in earning for people with technical and higher education.

The same a remarkable source of socioeconomic mobility. The availability of access to universal quality education is a strong instrument to escape poverty and create socioeconomic opportunities.

Second, Balochistan is in the grip of terribly mis-governance with dearth of accountability of both elected and unelected institutions, poor capacity of departments mainly responsible for critical social and economic services and lack of stringent and ruled-based check and balance.

Such mis-governance causes the diversion of precious resources to unproductive use, triggering a massive wastage, and allows for corruption and embezzlement.

To augment the competence of institutions and departments, the province needs to invest heavily in capacity building of its governance apparatus and put rigorous check and balance to plug the wastage of public resources.

Strong checks and balance will come through strong society with democratic norms which the province is yet to develop.

—The writer is a political economist and currently serves as Pro-Vice Chancellor, University of Gwadar.

<https://pakobserver.net/opportunities-in-balochistan-by-manzoor-ahmed/>

CGGC working nonstop on remedial works of Nelum Jhelum HP

China Gezhouba Group Company (CGGC) is carrying remedial works day and night at Tail Race Tunnel of the Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Project (NJHP), according to a report published by Gwadar Pro.

The Electricity generation from NJHP had to suspend in July 2022 due to blockage at one location of the Tail Race Tunnel, out of the project's tunneling system which is about 68 Kilometers long.

Chairman WAPDA Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) visited Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Project and reviewed progress on remedial works in Tail Race Tunnel of the project.

The Chief Executive Officer of Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Company (NJHC) and representatives of the CGGC and the consultants were also present on the occasion.

WAPDA had awarded the remedial contract to CGGC in August 2022 after seeking approval from the federal government. Since then, the remedial works are being carried out day and night at the site.

While witnessing the construction work at the site in the Tail Race Tunnel, the Chairman emphasized upon the project management to complete the remedial works in accordance with the schedule. He further directed that recommendations made by the International Panel of Experts be also adhered to in carrying out the remedial works.

Earlier in a briefing, Chief Executive Officer NJHC apprised the Chairman about progress achieved so far on the remedial works.

The 969 MW-NJHP started electricity generation in April 2018. Prior to suspension of electricity generation in July 2022, the project had provided more than 18 billion units of electricity to the National Grid.

<https://pakobserver.net/cggc-working-nonstop-on-remedial-works-of-nelum-jhelum-hp/>

Pakistan, China agree to maintain 'momentum' on high-quality development of CPEC in 2023

Islamabad: Pakistan and China have agreed to maintain "momentum" on the high-quality development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and "stronger people-to-people" contact between the two brotherly countries.

The consensus was reached during a meeting of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong.

Taking to Twitter after the meeting, FM Bilawal said that they reviewed the achievements of the China-Pakistan relations in the past year. They also discussed and agreed to accelerate the post-flood reconstruction of Pakistan.

Chinese embassy holds award ceremony for outstanding Pakistani staff of CPEC projects

Recognizing the contributions rendered by the Pakistani staff of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, the Chinese embassy held the annual awarding ceremony on Friday last week.

The ceremony was attended by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal and Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong, Deputy DG of the National Development and Reform Commission of China Pan Jiang, and Deputy CEO of the Council Member of APCEA Ying Minghao among other officials.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ambassador Nong Rong said that 2022 witnessed the deepening of all-around cooperation between the two countries, i.e Pakistan and China.

He said that against the challenge of the global economic downturn and historical floods in Pakistan, the CPEC projects had made a sound achievement.

Sharing about the upcoming projects, Ambassador Nong said that a series of good news were coming from different sectors under the CPEC umbrella. He said that during this year, China-aided Eastbay Expressway of Gwadar port, Karot Hydropower, the TEL and Nova power plants in Thar, and the Shanghai Electric Thar coal-based power plant became operational, among many other projects.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-china-agree-to-maintain-momentum-on-high-quality-development-of-cpec-in-2023/>

The Nation

KP govt directs to enhance security for Chinese engineers

PESHAWAR - The provincial government has expressed deep concern about the halting of work by a team of Chinese engineers working on ongoing hydropower projects in Swat and Shangla districts due to the deterioration of law and order and has asked security agencies to make the best security arrangements possible by developing an action plan. A high-level meeting held under the chairmanship of Secretary Energy and Power Nisar Ahmad was attended by Special Secretary energy Tashfeen Haider, Chief Executive Officer PEDO Engineer Naeem Khan, Deputy Commissioner Swat Junaid Khan, District Police Officer Shangla Aqeeq Hussain, SDPO Swat Akbar Hayat, Chief Planning Officer Ayaz Khan, and other senior officers. Chief Executive PEDO Engineer Naeem Khan stated that due to the grave security situation, the team of Chinese engineers working on the current 84 Mw Mitiltan hydropower project in the Swat area quit the job and relocated to Islamabad in July 2022. Similarly, a team of Chinese experts has stopped work on the 11.8 MW Karora hydropower project in the Shangla district, bringing construction to a halt. It is feared that the province will suffer significant damage as a result of the security threat situation and the delay in work caused by the project stoppage. During the conference, several possibilities were reviewed to improve security arrangements, and some crucial choices were also accepted, including the use of bullet-proof cars for foreign engineers and an emphasis on security agencies establishing more fool-proof arrangements. At the end of the meeting, Secretary Energy Nisar Ahmad emphasised that the provincial government should implement a well-planned security strategy, including close collaboration with the relevant district administration, police, and other agencies, so that project work does not suffer as a result of security arrangements.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-03/page-3/detail-1>

New year, new policy and opportunities

Nong Rong

Ushering in the new year of 2023, a retrospect of the previous year is precious. For both the world and China, the outgoing 2022 is critical in bridging the past and the future. Successfully convening the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), China embarked on a Chinese path to modernisation. China has made coordinated progress in COVID-19 response and economic and social development. China's GDP for the whole year is expected to exceed 120 trillion yuan. Since the onset of COVID-19, China has always been committed to a people-first and life-first philosophy. When the pandemic was at its worst, China mobilised all resources to protect the lives and health of every single person at all costs and achieved great success in pandemic prevention and control. China has kept both the COVID infection rate and the fatality rate way lower than the figures of other major countries. Keeping the COVID situation in check, China has been able to maintain its own economic growth and made an important contribution in keeping the global industrial and supply chains stable and unimpeded. In 2021, China's trade in goods exceeded 6 trillion US dollars, hitting another record, and this figure grew by 9.9 percent year-on-year in the first three quarters of 2022. China continues to provide quality products at good prices to the world. Its enormous market has also provided bigger and bigger opportunities to the international community. Facts have proved that China's COVID response and policy have been science based, correct and effective. Moreover, China promoted the building of a community of common health for mankind. It took the lead in making vaccines an international public good, providing 2 billion doses of vaccines and a large amount of anti-pandemic materials to the world. We are proud that Pakistan is the first country to receive the vaccine gifted by the Chinese government and military. China has formulated and implemented a COVID policy based on realities and changing conditions. With medical systems fortified, new variants getting tamer and 90 percent of its population getting vaccinated, China recently announced new measures to optimise its anti-pandemic policies, which include the removal of measures to control the number of international flights and further restoration of people-to-people exchanges. We consider it necessary to further facilitate the flow of personnel between China and other countries, ensure stable and smooth industrial and supply chains, and foster new drivers for global development. The new COVID policy will expedite the implementation of the important consensus reached between the leadership of the two countries during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China. The JWG meetings under the CPEC framework and the annual JCC meeting will be expectedly conducted face-to-face. The exchange of personnel at various levels from all circles would be enhanced. More Pakistani students are welcomed to China for further study. More delegations and business groups will pay an on-site visit to Pakistan naturally. The facilitation of investments between China and Pakistan will be the result. Our bilateral cooperation, including the CPEC projects, would enjoy more robust energy that will bring more benefits to the two peoples. As the world's second-largest consumer market, second-largest source of foreign investment and a major trading partner of over 140 countries and regions, China stays committed to promoting high-level opening up and accelerating efforts to foster a new development paradigm. The year 2023 marks the tenth anniversary of the Belt and Road

Initiative. Going forward, China will continue to carry out science-based and targeted COVID response measures, and actively promote high-quality development with a global vision, contributing to world economic recovery, and bringing more opportunities to China-Pakistan cooperation. The best way to embrace the future is to create an even brighter future. With joint efforts and iron brothers like Pakistan on our side, I am full of confidence and hope for the New Year!

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-03/page-6/detail-5>

First-ever Pak-China food festival soon

ISLAMABAD - President of All Pakistan Chinese and Overseas Youth Federation, Aasma Ismail Butt on Monday said the Federation would organize the first-ever Pak China Mega Food Festival from its platform to highlight the cultural cuisine of both friendly nations. She said the festival would have stalls containing traditional foods of Pakistan and China. The purpose of the festival was to further strengthen Pakistan-China friendship by introducing each other's food culture and traditional delights for public awareness. She expressed her prayers and best wishes for the success of Pakistan and the Federation at the beginning of the New Year 2023. "We have to work together for the security and development of the country. The decades-long friendship between Pakistan and China is getting deeper and stronger with every passing day," she added.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-03/page-14/detail-4>

Express News

چین سے درآمد کی گئی مسافر بوگیاں چلنے کے قابل نہیں

چین سے 149 ملین ڈالر کی لاگت سے درآمد کی جانے والی مسافر بوگیاں پاکستان میں چلنے کے قابل نہ ہونے کا انکشاف ہوا ہے۔ لاہور

ذرائع کے مطابق دوران سفر پریشنر بنانے کی وجہ سے بریک نہیں لگ سکتی ہے جس کی وجہ سے ٹرین حادثات بڑھ سکتے ہیں، بوگیوں کی انسپشن کیلئے ریلوے کے 88 افسران کی بڑی فوج دو، دو ہفتوں کے دورے پر چین گئے مگر سب فیل ہو گئے اور بوگیاں پھر نہیں چل سکی ہیں چین دورے پر گئے افسران کو فی یوم 1 سو ڈالر بھی ملے تھے۔ چیف میکینیکل انجینئر محمد حبیب کا کہنا ہے کہ بوگیوں میں کچھ چیزیں ٹیکنیکل رہ گئی ہیں ان کو ٹیکنیکل طور پر فٹ کیا جا رہا ہے ٹرین آپریشن کے لیے بوگیوں کو ٹیکنیکل طور پر اس قابل بنانے کے لیے اسکی میٹننس کی جارہی ہے۔

دوسری جانب ترجمان ریلوے نے کہا ہے کہ چین سے آنے والی تمام کوچز بالکل فٹ ہیں اور پاکستان کے ریلوے سسٹم کے ساتھ بالکل ہم آہنگ ہیں، ان کوچز کا مکمل معائنہ کیا گیا جس کے بعد انہیں آزمائشی بنیادوں پر چلانے کی منظوری دی گئی، کامیاب ٹرائل کے بعد اس وقت تمام کوچز چلنے کے لیے تیار ہیں۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2422972/6/>

January 04, 2023

Daily Times

Chinese delegation of Qingdao Law Society meets SEZA Chairman

A Chinese delegation led by Mr. Cheng Dezhi, President of Qingdao Law Society along with his other executive members conducted a meeting with S.M. Naveed, Chairman Special Economic Zones Authority (SEZA), here on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by Cheng Dezhi, President Qingdao Law Society, Li Huanting, Vice President of Qingdao Intermediate People's Court, Yin Jhing, Vice President Qingdao Law Society, Ding Anhui, D.G of Qingdao Municipal Foreign Affairs Office, Wang Caiyun, Director of Fazhigu, SCODA, Yan Hong, Director Qingdao Law Society, Moazzam Ghurki, President PCJCCI, Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General PCJCCI and many other businessmen. Cheng Dezhi said that Qingdao Law Society is a local branch of China Law Society and a people's organization under the leadership of the CPC Qingdao Committee. "Our aim is to enhance the relationship between the party, governments, and law professionals as well as the promotion of academic research and application, institutional innovation and rule of law, participation in legalization and supervision, providing legal services and increasing public awareness," he explained.

He added, "We should be mindful of the fact that international investors apart from evaluating economic, political and sovereign risk, also focus on legal and quasi-legal factors before investing overseas." The investors expect that a system of law should be capable of accommodating sophisticated and complex concepts, transactions and structures within its framework. He said that there is a dire need to address the legal issues and disputes of business community of both countries so that both could grow together. S.M. Naveed shared that SEZs are larger estates and could be considered cities on their own. They usually cover all industrial and service sectors and target both foreign and domestic markets. Alongside this, the legal structure should have an impartial and independent alternative dispute resolution (ADR) authority at each SEZ for expeditious adjudication of civil and commercial matters. He said, "We invite our Chinese brothers to come forward and invest as zone developers to attract Chinese investments in various fields."

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1047282/chinese-delegation-of-qingdao-law-society-meets-seza-chairman/>

Dasu project's diversion system to be completed in May 2023

Construction work is continuing simultaneously on 12 different sites of Dasu Hydropower Project. The critical diversion system will be completed in May this year, while electricity generation from the project will commence by end 2026. This was briefed to Chairman WAPDA Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) by the project management during his visit to Dasu Hydropower Project, which is being constructed by WAPDA on River Indus upstream of Dasu town in Upper Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The Chairman visited various sites of the project including diversion tunnels, stater dam area and the project colony. He was accompanied by the Commissioner Hazara Division. GM and PD Dasu

Hydropower Project, representatives of the Consultants and the Contractors were also present on the occasion.

During his visit to the project colony, the Chairman inaugurated the newly constructed office building of the project. He also had a meeting with grand jirga, comprising elders and notables of Kohistan region. Interacting with the jirga members, the Chairman said that the agreement, signed among the United Kohistan Jirga, civil administration and WAPDA last month, will prove beneficial for both locals of the area and the project.

It is worth mentioning that the 4320 MW-Dasu Hydropower Project is planned to be completed in two stages. At present, WAPDA is constructing stage-I with installed generation capacity of 2160 MW and annual energy generation of 12 billion units of low-cost and environment-friendly electricity. The stage-II, when implemented, will also provide 9 billion units to the National Grid. On completion of the both Stages, Dasu will become the project with highest annual energy generation in Pakistan i.e., 21 billion units on the average. WAPDA is spending Rs. 17.34 billion on the schemes relating to resettlement, environmental management and social development in the project area. About 3722 jobs, including 1945 for locals, have so far been created, which will increase to 8000 mark during peak construction period of the project.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1047302/dasu-projects-diversion-system-to-be-completed-in-may-2023/>

Pakistan Observer

A new era of strategic partnership among China, Arab States and Pakistan

Col Muhammad Hanif (R)

ON 7 December 2022, China's President Xi Jinping arrived in Riyadh to pay a state visit to Saudi Arabia at the invitation of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and attend the first China-Arab States Summit and the China-GCC Summit.

In Riyadh, Xi received an exceptionally warm welcome. During the visit, President Xi met King Salman and the Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman and also attended the aforementioned summits and met with other Arab leaders.

During their speeches and meetings with Mr.Xi, the heads of the GCC and Arab states showed their keen interest in building a long term strategic partnership with China and aligning their economic policies with China's "Belt and Road Initiative".

During the visit, Saudi Arabia and China signed a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement".

The officials also signed a memorandum of understanding on hydrogen energy, an "alignment plan" between China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Saudi Arabia's economic diversification plan, a petrochemical project, housing development and the teaching of the Chinese language.

President Xi has also stated that Saudi Arabia has a right to join/strengthen the BRICS forum to help create a multi-polar world.

The Joint Statement issued says, “Both countries will continue to firmly back each other’s core interests, support each other in safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and jointly defend the principle of non-interference in other countries’ internal affairs and the basic norms governing international law and international relations.

The New York Times says, “Saudi Arabia has long been a close ally of the United States, but its ties to China have been strengthened rapidly, turning from mainly oil-based relationship to arms sales, technology transfers and infrastructural projects.

Prince Mohammed has accelerated efforts to diversify Saudi Arabia’s alliances, trying to move beyond its reliance on the United States as its main security guarantor and weapons supplier to forge a more independent path”.

This change in Saudi policy is also because of recent tension in the US-Saudi relations due to Saudi led OPEC’s oil production policy and other policies, which President Biden thought went in Russia’s favour, although, the Crown Prince has vowed to also maintain his country’s existing defence relations with the US.

As stated by France 24 dated 9 December 2022, the Saudi Crown Prince sees China as a critical partner in his sweeping Vision 2030 agenda, seeking the involvement of Chinese firms in ambitious mega-projects meant to diversify the economy away from fossil fuels.

The visit has not escaped the attention of the White House which warned of “the influence that China is trying to grow around the world”, calling its objectives “not conducive to preserving the international rules based order”.

The above-discussed scenario of the deepening strategic partnership between China and the Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, including aligning their economic development plans with China’s BRI looks to be also largely beneficial for Pakistan.

As China-Arab countries’ trade and investment drive are likely to be routed through the CPEC, it will bring many economic/strategic advantages to Pakistan.

Arab countries will be more poised to keep better relations with Pakistan than India, as previously the GCC countries had shown a tilt towards India, both sides being close allies of the US.

Now, due to Arab countries’ flourishing strategic relations with China and India’s tension ridden relations with China, Arab countries would prefer to have deeper CPEC-related economic/investment relations with Pakistan than India.

As the US is not happy with India over its policy of not voting for the resolutions against Russia at the UNSC/UNGA forums regarding Russia-Ukraine war, despite that the US has allowed India to maintain its relations with Russia, in lieu of India’s so-called commitment to remain a US ally in its Indo-Pacific policy against China, the US now does not fully trust India.

Because, it has possibly realized that India is supporting its Indo-Pacific policy mainly to get US military technology/economic support to become a major world power.

Therefore, the US would like to keep good relations with Pakistan also to get Pakistan's assistance in fighting terrorism in this region and a land route for its trade relations with Afghanistan and Central Asia, as the US understands that while maintaining its strategic partnership with China, Pakistan also wants to have good relations with it.

Hence, now the US is not likely to oppose the construction of the CPEC as it was doing earlier to please India.

The US is also likely to resume its economic/military assistance to Pakistan and adopt a balanced policy to help resolve the Kashmir dispute through negotiations.

Moreover, in its bid to isolate Russia, as the US is trying to improve its tense relations with China, it will also not pressure Pakistan on its strategic partnership with China.

Also, as the US has allowed India and some EU member states to import cheaper oil and gas from Russia, the US may not now constrain Pakistan from getting cheaper gas from Russia.

In view of the above-discussed evolving strategic scenario, Pakistan will be able to get maximum strategic and economic advantages out of it to stabilize its economy and resolve the Kashmir dispute, if it quickly achieves domestic political stability through reconciliation or holding early general election, prepares a viable long-term economic revival plan based on political consensus on its implementation and practices a balanced foreign policy to maintain its strategic relations with China and good relations with the US and other major powers, Saudi Arabia and GCC countries, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and Indonesia and Malaysia.

—The writer is also a former Research Fellow of IPRI and Senior Research Fellow of SVI Islamabad.

<https://pakobserver.net/a-new-era-of-strategic-partnership-among-china-arab-states-and-pakistan-by-col-muhammad-hanif-r/>

CPEC & AMAN 2023: Socio-Economic, Geopolitical & Geostrategic Significances

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Phase-II has been approved and initiated in the country. Hopefully, with the completion, commencement, operationalization and channelization of Gwadar Seaport, the blue economy of the country, will be further developed in the days to come.

Due to rapidly changing and conflicting socio-economic partnerships nationalized geopolitical priorities and last but not the least contradicting geostrategic preferences in the region as well as around the globe, the role of Pakistan Navy (PN) has become permanently paramount in the region.

In this connection, the blockade of Ukraine seaports in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, subsequent wheat shipment through seaports, temporary non-functioning of Suez Canal, imminent Iranian threat to disturb the Strait of Hormuz in case of failure of ongoing Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), NATO Eastern expansion in the Black Sea and heavy presence in the Indo-Pacific Region, sieging of South China Sea/Taiwan by the

allied/anti-China forces, the US China containment policy in the shape of the formation and activation of Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) and the trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States (AUKUS) are strong manifestations of the US and allied forces in the Indo-Pacific region and last but not the least, India's increasing naval force and obsession of nuclear submarines has encouraged the PN to take all possible measures to protect its vested interests.

It seems that success of the CPEC Phase-II is directly correlated with the PN's "operationalization" and "channelization". On its part, the PN being custodian of blue economy, coastal areas, shores and waters of the country is utilizing all possible resources to safeguard the security and commercial interests of the CPEC. In this connection, holding of AMAN 2023 would be a value addition to further enhance the PN professional capabilities and tactical preparedness in the days to come.

Hopefully, AMAN-2023 will be a giant step in its future capacity building measures. The main theme of AMAN-2023 is "peace" which means through peace the "pace", "production" and "prosperity" of the Gwadar seaport will be further enhanced. Obviously, AMAN-2023 has multiple socio-economic, geopolitical and geostrategic implications. The Indian Ocean has been further fragile. The PN will host more than 40-45 countries in AMAN-2023. It will further consolidate the PN's strong commitment to protect its vested interests in the freedom of the seas. Moreover, it would eliminate Indian Ocean illicit activities in all their forms and manifestations. It also emphasizes developing combined potential for humanitarian assistance in the region.

The AMAN-2023 aims to collectively work against human trafficking, smuggling of narcotics and weapons and terrorism in the region. It has plans to intensify operational maneuvers against sea pirates and improve joint operations at sea through effective intelligence sharing mechanisms. Definitely, it will further enhance operational skills through contemporary experiences. It will ensure interoperability in a diverse threat environment. It will address the issue of climate change and highlight the significance of CPEC-I & CPEC Phase-II, including the Gwadar port, before the delegates of the participating countries.

The PN has been pursuing a holistic and comprehensive policy to achieve flawless maritime security. Since 2007 the PN has been holding a series of bilateral, trilateral and international naval exercises, especially AMAN due to which the PN has become an active partner in international naval coalitions.

Truly, 80-90 global trade is carried through water in which energy shipment and food security is also done through seas. The future of the blue economy is directly correlated with maritime security in which PN is scaling new heights of "productivity", "efficacy" and "vigilance". It has to face national as well as regional maritime threats for which it has been trained and motivated.

The PN is responsible to defend CPEC Phase-II projects, easy and smooth Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC) open and protection of Pakistan's Coast Areas (PCAs) as well as the ports of Karachi, Bin-Qasim, Ormara and Gwadar.

In this context, a special organization namely Task Force-88 (TF-88) has already been formed to the seaward security of Gwadar Port and protection of Associated Sea Lanes (ASLs) against both conventional and non-traditional threats.

It comprises 400 marines that specialize in defending marine assets/projects both on-shore and seaward, against threats emanating from sub-surface, surface and aerial. It has been equipped with suitable platforms comprising gunboats, frigates, Fast Attack Craft, aircraft and drones as well as other electronic surveillance means. Moreover, it takes care of harbour defence, shore-based anti-aircraft artillery, fast patrol craft and surveillance system comprising radars, drones and aerial surveillance systems.

The PN has been playing a vital role in the national security domain by “mitigating” a series of Non-Conventional Threats, such as climate change, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, illegal immigration, smuggling of arms and drugs, piracy and maritime terrorism. Furthermore, the PN also “combats” with Conventional Security Threats and defends more than a thousand-kilometer coastline. Now it is protecting” the “commercial”, “infrastructural development” and “logistic apparatus” of Pakistan by taking all possible measures to address the challenges originating from the maritime dimension of CPEC Phase-II projects.

The PN has adopted a multifaceted holistic approach to deal with the prevailing state & non-state threats and challenges such as beefing up security of Gwadar Port, conducting security patrols and coastal exercises, enhancing Maritime Domain Awareness and engaging in Collaborative Maritime Security with regional and extra-regional navies.

Now the Pakistan Navy is in charge of the security of Gwadar Port and its infrastructure. It has also stationed a Force Protection Battalion of Pak Marines along with requisite assets and equipment, both afloat and ashore, to ensure security of the Port.

It is hoped that economic prosperity brought about by the mega projects of CPEC Phase-II will defeat the motives of terrorists as, with the success of the project, more employment and business opportunities will be unlocked and people’s livelihood will be improved.

To conclude, AMAN-2023 is a multidimensional exercise. It consists of harbour, sea, underwater, aerial and Special Forces activities. It would be the biggest ever multinational naval exercise to be held in February 2023 at Karachi. In this regard, invitation to more than 110 countries has been sent. Hopefully more than 45 countries will participate in this international mega event. Previously, the PN has successfully hosted seven AMAN naval exercises in Karachi attended by foreign navies from around the world over the past 18 years. AMAN-2023 will also have its maiden Pakistan International Maritime Expo and conference in January and February.

According to reliable naval sources, the AMAN-2023 would be divided into harbour and sea phases. In harbour phase, maritime counter-terrorism demos would be performed by Pakistan Navy Special Services Group (SSG) troops and Pakistan international maritime expo and conference would be key events; while under sea phase, PN would perform rocket depth charge firing, surface firing on killer tomato, which are most liked and popular events.

According to the latest figures (December 2022), the Indian Ocean is connected with 29 littoral states and 6 island nations. It is the main artery of the world’s oceanic trade. About

80% of the world's oil trade passes through the Indian Ocean. Its shores are home to 23 of the world's top 100 container ports. Thus, the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean are vital for dry, liquid and gaseous cargoes and their worldwide supply chain. In this regard, AMAN-2023 stands for peace, stability and security in the Indian Ocean and is important for the world economy as well.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-aman-2023-socio-economic-geopolitical-geostrategic-significances-by-dr-mehmood-ul-hassan-khan/>

The Cultural Relevance of China's BRI

Engr Qaiser Nawab

With a recorded history and culture dating back 4000 years, China is recognized as one of the four great ancient civilizations, along with ancient Greece, Egypt and Babylon.

The history of China's food, tea traditions, poetry and art, medicine, calligraphy, opera, clothing and festivals are only a few of the many aspects that contribute to the country's richest cultural diversity.

It's only natural for a country with as much history as China to have tremendously diverse ethnic groups and customs that differ across regions. Everywhere you go, you will experience a unique combination of traditions, customs and heritage.

The Zhuang people's ancient wooden stilt houses, as well as the Yao women and their extraordinarily long hair, are among the sights to behold.

The famous Miao village can be visited to experience the traditional paper-making process and extraordinary mountain music.

You can also meet and chat with some dedicated Tibetan monks and explore several Lhasa mountain monasteries. Across the country, there are countless temples that adhere to Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism, as well as innumerable mosques, churches and even a few historical synagogues.

A trip to China is always an enlightening experience in terms of gaining knowledge about other cultures. The world's most impressive civilization, which has continued to this very day, has been a world power several times, so it's had millennia to perfectly refine its culture.

In my travels, I have found the Chinese to be among the most hospitable and warmhearted people I have met. People of all ages, whether you are in a bar or on the subway, are eager to strike up a conversation and learn more about you, and they are especially interested in hearing about your home country and your reasons for visiting China.

The cultural clout of China extends far beyond its borders in Asia, having a global impact in fields as diverse as the visual and performing arts, scientific inquiry, gastronomy, industry and international trade.

Over the past 50 years, Chinese culture has undergone a quick and profound shift, and it is still changing to fit the modern world.

In the past, the ancient Silk Road served as a conduit for the dissemination of ideologies, beliefs, languages, customs and traditions from one civilization to another, paving the way for the cultural exchange and cross-cultural hybridization of Chinese and other civilizations.

This custom's long and fruitful history resulted in a common harmonious heritage through the exchange of commodities.

Furthermore, it also led to achieving a significant milestone with the revival of the Old Silk Route, which rhetorically gives importance to the shared historical cultural heritage of the past and the new emerging China, the new "One Belt and One Road" Initiative, by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013.

China's goal in reviving the ancient Silk Road was not only to re-establish the ancient trade route but also to embrace the Silk Road's cultural significance as a soft basis for managing global and regional collaboration.

The spirit of the Silk Road, defined as "peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit," is the guiding principle of the BRI project, which aims to "promote practical cooperation in all fields and build a community of shared interests, destinies and responsibilities characterized by mutual political trust, economic integration and cultural inclusion."

Although the BRI's delivery of physical infrastructure is important, the Silk Road's cultural relevance lies in the fact that connectivity will also be dependent on intangible factors like established customs, accepted principles and formalized systems of knowledge transmission and dissemination. In other words, a renewed interest in culture is essential to the long-term success of BRI.

By launching BRI, China has been putting an unprecedented amount of pressure on itself in its quest to reach out to other countries.

No matter the nature of BRI's external relations (economic, political and technological); its success will always involve cross-cultural engagement with people from a variety of cultures and civilizations.

The Chinese government has indicated its willingness to establish a corresponding point so that more Sino-foreign collaboration can be developed amongst partners who articulate and pursue mutual interests.

China has been capitalizing on its legacy of mutual cooperation, respect and trust across Asia by constructing projects that will not only boost global competitiveness as well as revolutionize infrastructure growth, disseminate culture, promote people-to-people connections and refocus the countries' parties on this initiative.

Over the years, the image of the People's Republic of China has come to be strongly and favorably seen in every Asian nation.

In fact, two-thirds (2/3) or more of the people in predominantly Muslim Asian countries, including Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Bangladesh express a favorable

impression of China. In addition, South Korea's view of China has also become more positive.

China has expanded its sphere of influence significantly by implementing the BRI's regional and global goals, which include fostering cross-cultural understanding through increased opportunities for learning and travel, fostering greater participation in regional and international organizations and institutions, strengthening ties with neighboring states and coordinating regional development strategies.

China's aim to promote cultural assimilation is expected to lead to jobs, education, better technical and expert skills and educational exchange programs which will strengthen the country's cultural ties to Asia and its ability to support the hopes of other Asian nations. This will also lead to cultural interest and, ultimately, a more peaceful society.

The core premise is that promoting different cultures is an asset that may help bring people together and win hearts and minds.

China could increase its cultural impact, self-confidence and cultural deficit as well as its chances of gaining cultural acceptance by improving its ability to understand and interact with other cultures.

China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative will facilitate communication between different cultures and perhaps foster mutual understanding, advance humanity and maintain global stability.

<https://pakobserver.net/the-cultural-relevance-of-chinas-bri-by-engr-qaiser-nawab/>

The Express Tribune

New year, new policy, new opportunities

China's GDP for the whole year is expected to exceed 120 trillion yuan

Ushering in the Year 2023, a retrospect of the previous year is precious. For both the world and China, the Year 2022 was critical in bridging the past and the future. Successfully convening the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), China embarked on a Chinese path to modernisation. China has made coordinated progress in Covid-19 response and in economic and social development. China's GDP for the whole year is expected to exceed 120 trillion yuan.

Since the onset of Covid-19, China has always been committed to a people-first and life-first philosophy. When the pandemic was at its worst, China mobilised all resources to protect the lives and health of every single person at all costs, and achieved great success in pandemic prevention and control. China has kept both the Covid infection rate and the fatality rate way lower than figures of other major countries.

Keeping the Covid situation in check, China has been able to maintain its own economic growth and made important contribution to keeping the global industrial and supply chains stable and unimpeded. In 2021, China's trade in goods exceeded \$6 trillion, hitting another record, and this figure grew by 9.9% year-on-year in the first three quarters of 2022. China continues to provide quality products with good prices to the world. Its enormous market has

also provided bigger and bigger opportunities to the international community. Facts have proved that China's Covid response and policy have been science-based, correct and effective.

Moreover, China promoted the building of a community of common health for mankind. It took the lead in making vaccines an international public good, providing 2 billion doses of vaccines and a large amount of anti-pandemic materials to the world. We are proud that Pakistan is the first country to receive the vaccine gifted by the Chinese government and military.

China has formulated and implemented Covid policy based on realities and the changing conditions. With medical systems fortified, new variants getting tamer and 90% of its population get vaccinated, China recently announced new measures to optimise its anti-pandemic policies, which include the removal of measures to control the number of international flights and further restoration of people-to-people exchanges. We consider it necessary to further facilitate the flow of personnel between China and other countries, ensure stable and smooth industrial and supply chains, and foster new drivers for global development.

New Covid policy will expedite the implementation of the important consensus reached between the leaderships of China and Pakistan during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China. The JWG meetings under the CPEC framework and the annual JCC meeting is expected to be conducted face-to-face. Exchange of personnel at various levels from all circles would be enhanced. More Pakistani students are welcomed to China for further study. More delegations and business groups will pay on-site visit to Pakistan naturally. The facilitation of investments between China and Pakistan will be resulted. Our bilateral cooperation, including the CPEC projects, would enjoy more robust energy that will bring more benefits to the two peoples.

As the world's second largest consumer market, second largest source of foreign investment and a major trading partner of over 140 countries and regions, China stays committed to promoting high-level opening up and accelerating efforts to foster a new development paradigm. The Year 2023 marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative. Going forward, China will continue to carry out science-based and targeted Covid response measures, and actively promote high-quality development with global vision, contributing to world economic recovery, and bring more opportunities to China-Pakistan cooperation. The best way to embrace the future is to create an even brighter future. With joint efforts and iron brother like Pakistan on our side, I am full of confidence and hope for the New Year!

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2394019/new-year-new-policy-new-opportunities>

Dasu's diversion system to be completed by May

Power generation by project will commence by end of 2026

LAHORE: Construction work is continuing simultaneously on 12 different sites of Dasu hydropower project and the critical diversion system will be completed in May this year while electricity generation will commence by the end of 2026.

It was said in a briefing to Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) Chairman Lt General (Retd) Sajjad Ghani during his visit to the Dasu hydropower project.

It is being constructed by Wapda on Indus River upstream of Dasu town in Upper Kohistan district of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P).

Ghani visited various sites of the project including diversion tunnels, the dam area and the project colony. He was accompanied by the Hazara Division commissioner. Dasu hydropower project GM and PD, representatives of consultants and contractors were also present on the occasion.

During his visit to the project colony, the chairman inaugurated a newly constructed office building of the project. He also had a meeting with the grand jirga, comprising elders and notables of the Kohistan region.

Interacting with the jirga members, Ghani said that the agreement, signed among the United Kohistan Jirga, civil administration and Wapda last month, would prove beneficial for both locals of the area and the project.

It is worth mentioning that the 4,320 megawatt Dasu hydropower project is planned to be completed in two stages. At present, Wapda is constructing stage-I with installed generation capacity of 2,160MW and annual energy generation of 12 billion units of low-cost and environment-friendly electricity.

Stage-II, when implemented, will also provide nine billion units to the national grid.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2394123/dasus-diversion-system-to-be-completed-by-may>

The Nation

Ahsan for completing 300MW coal-fired power project in Gwadar by Jan 2025

Fawad Yousafzai

ISLAMABAD-Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday gave a nod to 300MW coal-fired power project in Gwadar and directed to complete the project by January 2025.

Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal has also directed Ministry for Maritime Affairs, Power Division, Gwadar Port Authority GPA and China Overseas Ports Holding Company Ltd (COPHCL) to ensure 100 percent power consumption of 300MW coal fired power project in order to avoid any financial loss to the national exchequer.

The minister made these remarks while chairing a meeting to review progress over 300MW coal fired power project on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by chairman COPHCL, chairman Gwadar Port Authority GPA and other relevant stakeholders. The project was conceived under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CEPC) in 2016 that would cater to the needs of some 150,000 local people by the end of 2023. During the meeting, the minister also directed the Power Division to review the project and address impediments within six months enabling the project to achieve COD in January 2025.

The project aimed at improving the reliability of the local power supply that would help gradually solve the problems in current economic development and urban construction in the Gwadar region, which is being restricted by the shortage of power. Earlier, the minister had directed the COPHECL to provide exact demand of the electricity for Gwadar Free Zone and share 10-year plan for electricity consumption by Gwadar Free Zone Company in order to establish exact electricity utilization of 300MW coal fired power project at Gwadar.

The minister further said that the government is already working on a project of two transmission lines from Iran that will increase the supply of the electricity to the port city.

It also merits mentioning here that earlier the Chinese company CIHC Pak Power Company Limited (CPPCL) working on 300MW Gwadar coal fired power project had termed the proposal for import of electricity from Iran to Gwadar and the proposed 600km 500KV transmission line from Hub to Gwadar as unreliable, susceptible to blackout due to technical or security concerns, which did not give investors the confidence to invest in the port city. The CIHC Pak Power Company Limited (CPPCL) had also termed the proposal of the PPIB regarding converting to local Thar coal instead of imported coal and relocation of power plant from Gwadar to Thar not feasible, official source told The Nation.

Ahsan Iqbal said that the incumbent government had revived all the CPEC projects since it came into power in April this year. The previous government had stopped all the CPEC projects. It is worth mentioning here that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif had already assured his Chinese counterparts that CPEC was the top priority of the govt.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-04/page-9/detail-0>

January 05, 2023

Daily Times

‘Year of Tourism’ to help boost Pak-China cooperation

Jiang Chao

The decision to hold the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges in 2023 will greatly help improving people-to-people contacts and especially promoting tourism cooperation, a Pakistani official said.

“China obviously is the country that produced the largest number of tourists for the rest of the world before the COVID-19 pandemic ... The recent policy of resuming outbound tourism for Chinese citizens in an orderly manner would help in restoring the confidence of the world in terms of the promotion of tourism while making a good contribution to the global economy,” Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab ur Rehman Rana told Xinhua in an interview.

Pakistan and China have a long friendly relationship, and people would love to meet each other and experience the countries of each other, he said, adding that Pakistan is not just looking at inviting Chinese tourists to Pakistan, but also looking at sending Pakistani tourists to China.

“Our tour operators have already started holding online meetings with their Chinese counterparts. Under the exchange programs, both countries are planning to help tour operators of both sides to meet personally so they can revive their contacts and design packages and products which could attract the right kind of tourists on both sides,” the PTDC official said.

Highlighting Pakistan has a lot to offer for Chinese tourists, he said that the wild mountains, lush green meadows, exquisite valleys, beautiful tracks for trekking, sites for adventurous sports and a number of ancient archeological places and other attractions in the South Asian country are waiting to mesmerize the Chinese tourists.

“For Pakistan, the opening of Chinese tourism is a very positive sign,” Rana said, adding that Pakistan has made a lot of preparation to welcome Chinese tourists.

The Pakistani government has been working on improving the availability of information on both sides as well as producing new literature on major tourist destinations in the Chinese language, so that the Chinese tourists know well about Pakistan, he said.

“Pakistan International Airlines has recently announced the restarting of flights between Islamabad and Beijing. If there’s any travel expo taking place in China, we’ll send our delegation there,” Rana said.

Besides providing new prospects in Pakistan’s tourism industry, the official said China has helped transformed the country’s tourism by building road infrastructure under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Launched in 2013, CPEC is a corridor linking Pakistan’s Gwadar Port with Kashgar in northwest China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which highlights energy, transport and industrial cooperation.

“We have seen the new motorways, highways and side roads all the way from south to east to north, and the improvement of the road network is very important for tourism promotion. CPEC has not only improved the access to different business hubs and various cities in Pakistan, but also facilitated the access to various tourist sites,” he said.

With improved accessibility, there will be quite a lot of new developments including the establishment of tourism zones, new hotels and tourist resorts along the CPEC routes in the coming years, he said.

Rana believed that CPEC would help further improve the local tourism sector and help attract more investment into the tourism infrastructure of Pakistan, accelerating the country’s development.

As the year 2023 is being designated as the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges, Rana said numerous tourism-related activities will be happening between the two neighbors during the new year.

“We will hold a Gandhara Buddhist heritage exhibition in Beijing very soon. There is a plan to send our cultural delegations of youth and tourism professionals to China and obviously, we welcome delegations from China also coming to Pakistan in promoting Chinese culture in

Pakistan and vice versa,” he said, adding that the PTDC will coordinate with other departments to strengthen cultural and tourism exchanges and promote people-to-people contacts between the two countries. “The year 2023 is going to be a good beginning,” Rana added. Xinhua

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1047602/year-of-tourism-to-help-boost-pak-china-cooperation/>

China keen to enhance cooperation with Pakistan: Mao Ning

China is ready to work with Pakistan, follow through on the important common understandings between the two leaders, and make solid progress in comprehensive and high-level strategic cooperation in the new year, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said on Wednesday.

“China is also ready to stay committed to building an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era, and make even greater contribution to the two peoples’ well-being and peace and development of the region and the wider world,” she said in response to a question asked by APP correspondent during her regular briefing.

Mao Ning said that China and Pakistan were all-weather strategic cooperative partners and iron-clad friends. “Over the past year, our two countries have rendered each other mutual understanding and mutual support, addressed challenges together and marched forward shoulder-to-shoulder,” she added.

The spokesperson said that the two countries have strengthened high-level guidance, consolidated strategic consensus, jointly promoted the sound development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and expanded friendly exchanges and cooperation in various areas, sustaining high-quality development of bilateral relations.

It may be mentioned that during a recent meeting, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong reviewed achievements of Pakistan-China relations and agreed to maintain momentum through development of high quality CPEC and stronger people-to-people exchanges.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1047637/china-keen-to-enhance-cooperation-with-pakistan-mao-ning/>

Investment under CPEC to reach \$62bn by 2030: report

The total planned investment under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is \$62 billion between FY2015 and FY2030, out of which \$27.4 billion projects have been realized, with energy sector (power generation, coal mining and transmission lines) representing 76 percent. It covers power generation projects, both fossil fuel and renewable, of about 11 GW. To date, about 5,520 MW energy projects have been completed. More than half of these projects are coal-based power plants, according to an annual report on renewable energy released by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). The report says the completed projects under the corridor include 1320 MW Sahiwal Coal-fired Power Plant, 1320MW Coal-fired Power Plant at Port Qasim, Karachi, 1320MW China Hub Coal Power Project, Hub, Balochistan, 660 MW Engro Thar Coal Power Project, 1000 MW Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park, Bahawalpur, 50 MW Hydro China Dawood Wind Farm, Gharo, 100 MW UEP Wind Farm,

Jhimpir, Thatta, 50 MW Sachal Wind Farm, Jhimpir, Thatta, 100 MW Three Gorges Second and Third Wind Power Project, Matiari to Lahore ±660 KV HVDC Transmission Line Project, and 720 MW Karot Hydropower Project, AJK/Punjab. The projects that are under construction include 1320 SSRL Thar Coal Block-I (2×660MW), 330MW HUBCO Thar Coal Power Project, 330MW HUBCO ThalNova Thar Coal Power Project, 884MW Suki Kinari Hydropower Project, KP, and 300 MW Coal-Fired Power Project, Gwadar. Similarly the CPEC projects that are under consideration include 1124 MW Kohala Hydropower Project, AJK, 700.7MW Azad Pattan Hydropower Project, AJK/Punjab, 1320 MW Thar Mine Mouth Oracle Power Plant, 50 MW Cacho Wind Power Project, and 50 MW Western Energy (Pvt.) Ltd. Wind Power Project.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1047597/investment-under-cpec-to-reach-62bn-by-2030-report/>

Pakistan Observer

China and the Western world toward Pakistan

Prof Engr Zamir Ahmed Awan

PAKISTAN has been in the Western bloc since its establishment. It was an active partner of the US-led block against the communist threat.

Proactive and front-line state with the US against the former USSR's intervention in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Non-NATO close ally in the war on terror. Yet, it has faced severe sanctions, coercion, and immense pressure.

It is grateful for Western world assistance and help, what so ever it has received. There was around US dollars 40 billion-plus investment during the 7 decades from the whole western world.

There was some aid too. Most of the aid was distributed through blue-eyed NGOs to achieve their agendas.

A major part of aid was returned back to them in the form of consultants and procurements.

Only a fraction of aid was utilized in Pakistan. There was no trickle-down impact on the public and beneficiaries were only elite.

The Western aid was mostly focused on Human rights, Women's Rights, Gender equality, democracy, etc.

This is not the problem of the masses in Pakistan, but, it is imposed agenda and they used selected NGOs to achieve it.

The role of foreign-funded NGOs was very negative in Pakistan. One of the NGOs made a video showing the use of child labour in Football industry and bared Pakistan from access to the Western world.

Another NGO reported the exploitation of women in the carpet industry and bared the export of handmade Pakistani carpets to the Western world.

Another NGO recently reported that the majority of school children are drugs addict, and so on. All such NGOs were funded by Western to achieve their agendas.

Yes, Human Rights, Women's Rights, democracy, and Child protection are very important, but, roti (food) is even more important to most of the Pakistani public.

The rapidly growing poverty in the country has led us toward disaster and collapse. Human Rights are very important, if we are alive if people are starving and the Western world is preaching for various rights, in meaning less.

There has been no investment from the Western world for decades. No business activities, no industrialization, no economic activities and no creation of wealth from the Western world in Pakistan.

Only coercion, pressures, dictations, demands and sanctions are what we are witnessing recently.

Do more, and intervene in domestic affairs, what we have experienced. On the other hand, China is investing in Pakistan heavily.

Since 2015, under CPEC, it has already invested around US dollars 30 billion and pledged around 62 billion.

During the last decades or more, total Chinese investment into Pakistan has exceeded US Dollars 50 Billion, much more than the whole western world invested in seven decades.

There is some aid from China like Gwadar airport, a few hospitals, schools, etc. But most of the Chinese funds are investment in commercial projects.

For example, the construction of power plants, producing electricity, meeting the requirements of the masses of Pakistan, and generating revenue and jobs for Pakistani youth.

The construction of Motorways and highways is for public use, it makes the transportation sector boost up and generates commercial activities and creates wealth.

The laying of optical fibre linkage is boosting internet connectivity and upgraded bandwidth and reliability created unlimited opportunities for the IT sector to boost up.

It is the most effective sector to enhance exports and overcome the badly needed foreign exchange.

Looking at Chinese investment and projects in Pakistan, one can conclude that the objective of all such is to promote commercial activities and create wealth for Pakistan, create jobs for youth.

The beneficiaries of Chinese investment are the general public, either in the form of ending load shedding of electricity, reducing travel distances among cities, reducing travel time and transportation cost, etc.

Chinese investment in the agriculture sector and industrial sectors will be even more useful for the masses in Pakistan.

There has been a visible increase in agricultural products in Pakistan due to Chinese assistance and industrialization is underway too.

These two sectors of the economy are vital to eradicate poverty. During the early days of the breakout of COVID, China assisted Pakistan out of the way to overcome the crisis.

China has become the number one destination for Pakistani youths for higher education. Currently, there is 32000 Pakistani youths studying in China in various programs from Undergraduate, Master, PhD, and Post Doc, in various fields of emerging technologies.

China is raising a qualified workforce for Pakistan to face the challenges of the future. Yet, China has never imposed sanctions on Pakistan, no dictation, no do more, no coercion, no pressure and no interference, just a fair and sincere friendship.

The difference in Chinese relations is very much obvious and visible. In return, there exists immense goodwill for China in Pakistan.

Shortly after the birth of New China, Chairman Mao Zedong stated on many occasions that China was ready to establish diplomatic relations with all countries which are willing to observe the principles of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty.

This principle was expounded in the common Program adopted by the First Session of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference on 29 September 1949 as well as the Announcement of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China made by Chairman Mao Zedong at the proclamation Ceremony Marking the Founding of the People's Republic of China.

It embodied the major content of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence. China is still committed to this policy and based on win-win cooperation is expanding its relations.

The Mega initiatives of Belt and Road (BRI) is a practical demonstration of the Chinese visionary approach to global relations.

More than 150 nations have already joined BRI and Pakistan being the closest friend is the largest beneficiary of it.

CPEC is the flagship project of BRI and one of the most advanced staged projects. Its fruits are enjoyed by the people of Pakistan.

CPEC is serving as Oxygen for the ailing economy of Pakistan. It is aimed to take off economically and reduce the dependency on borrowing from IFIs.

Pakistan maintained close relations with China while remaining in the Western club in the past.

It was beneficial for China as well as for the West. It has played a significant role in bridging the relations between China and the Western world.

Sino-US relations were established through hard work and appropriate diplomacy of Pakistan.

Chinese are grateful to Pakistan for playing a positive role in establishing formal diplomatic relations between China and the US.

Pakistan has also played a vital role in bridging the relations between China and the Muslim world.

The recent visit of Chinese President Xi to Saudi Arabia and the Middle East is the outcome of Pakistan's hard work.

Pakistan has the potential to dilute the tension between the US and China. It is desired, Pakistan will do so. One can Love China or Hate China, but one cannot ignore China.

The West understands the importance of China and cannot undermine it. It is in the best interest of the West too, to keep Pakistan close to China so that whenever it is required, they can utilize a common platform for dialogue, negotiations and understanding.

Pakistan kept a pretty balance with the West and China and is capable to do so in the future.

Our policymakers need to be smart, visionary, and open-minded. Opportunities are there it is a matter of how we utilize them.

Pakistan has no anti-West sentiments and would like to keep balance. It cannot afford to maintain relations with either one of them at the cost of another.

Decision-makers must understand the sensitivity of geopolitics and make the right policies at the right time.

—The writer is Founding Chair GSRRA, Sinologist (ex-Diplomat), Editor, Analyst and Non-Resident Fellow of CCG.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-and-the-western-world-toward-pakistan-by-prof-engr-zamir-ahmed-awan/>

The Express Tribune

‘New Chinese coaches to start chugging soon’

PR has received around 46 of the total 230 high-speed modern carriages

Railways Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique on Wednesday said that all the coaches imported from China were perfectly fit and would be seen running on the railway tracks in a couple of days.

"The coaches will be operated with Green Line which was set to be started during the current month," said the minister in a tweet.

After the successful trial, Saad Rafique said all the coaches were ready to run.

The minister said that Pakistan Railways would take legal action against the pages spreading fake news about the department.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Railways has received the first batch of around 46 of the total 230 high-speed modern coaches from China.

The new coaches will have the capacity to run at a speed of 160 kilometers per hour whereas the current maximum speed limit of trains is about 120 kilometers per hour. These coaches will significantly improve train service.

The modern coaches would offer an improved train travel experience in the country to 220 million people, many of whom rely on trains for long journeys.

The new coaches comprise economy, AC standard, and AC parlour classes for passengers.

Pakistan Railways had carried out a test run of the new coaches on the Main Line-I (ML-I) starting from Karachi to Peshawar via Rohri, Sukkar, Bahawalpur, Khanewal, Lahore, and Rawalpindi before beginning the commercial travel.

After receiving 46 completely built units (CBUs) manufactured in China, Pakistan Railways would soon begin manufacturing 184 similar coaches at its carriage factory in Islamabad with the assistance of Chinese engineers under the technology transfer agreement.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2394320/new-chinese-coaches-to-start-chugging-soon>

The Nation

Forex reserves to improve with Saudi, Chinese inflows this month: Dar

Imran Ali Kundi

ISLAMABAD - Finance Minister Ishaq Dar once again ruled out the possibility of country's default saying that Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves would improve with the help of inflows from friendly countries including Saudi Arabia and China.

"The PTI presentation [white paper] was selective, misrepresented and economic indicators were misleading," the minister said while addressing a press conference along with cabinet members. He was flanked by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Energy Khurram Dastgir, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ayaz Sadiq, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb and State Minister for Finance and Revenue Ayesha Ghaus Pasha. Talking about economic situation, the finance minister said that current economic situation is the outcome of PTI's 42-months policies. He informed that the country's foreign exchange reserves would improve as the Saudi Arabia is all set to help Pakistan. The government is expecting to receive inflows from Saudi Arabia within current month. Meanwhile, China has also assured to help Pakistan in building its foreign exchange reserves. He claimed that country's foreign exchange reserves would far improve by the end of June this year as compared to the current position. He said that the government is following the privatization programme of LNG plants and shares of some public sector entities with the friendly countries. The minister said that the government is considering mini budget. The government may impose a flood levy ranging from one to three percent on all imports. Meanwhile, a windfall tax on lofty profits in the banking sector is also under consideration. The government is bi-furcating the profits earned by the banks in the form of alleged currency manipulation with their normal income to impose the additional tax. He said that the government has faced tax collection shortfall in December mainly due to the court's decision to withdraw super tax on affluent class, which was supposed to generate massive revenue.

Ishaq Dar said that the government is committed to complete the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s programme for the second time. Earlier, the PML-N was the only government

who completed the IMF's programme in country's history. He said that there is no issue with 9th IMF review. However, the Fund has asked to share the data of second quarter of current fiscal year and flood related expenditures. He said that country's credibility was eroded due to the policies of PTI's government. He was of the view that IMF might club the 9th and 10th review. However, the IMF would take the final decision in this regard. "[Our government] saved the country from default. And with complete conviction, I can say that Pakistan will never default," Dar said. "We will repay all the debts and people should not worry about it. [The PDM] came into power to save the state, not for mere politics," the finance minister stressed. Dar asked the PTI to stop "propagating" misleading reports of Pakistan's default as he said that due to the party's governance, all international rating agencies had downgraded the country.

The finance minister also admitted that inflation increased in the country, which is painful. However, he claimed that the government is taking measures to control the inflation. He said that the government has reduced the oil prices upto Rs30 per liter since October 2022. Ahsan Iqbal blamed the PTI's economic policies for the increase in inflation rate in the country. He further said that the coalition government had to increase fuel prices to honour the commitments made by the PTI to IMF. The country was brought back from the brink of default through import management, resurrection of the IMF programme and reduction in current account deficit. He said friendly countries have announced their support which will help manage forex reserves in the country.

Earlier, Ishaq Dar said PTI's presentation of selective and misrepresented economic indicators is an attempt to mislead the citizens of Pakistan. He said the economic situation since April last year is strongly influenced by PTI's mismanagement of the economy in last four years and its negative effects continue to impact the economy even now. He said it ignores the impact of difficult international economic situation caused by commodity super cycle, Russia-Ukraine War and one of the biggest natural catastrophe 2022 floods in Pakistan.

He said investment as a percent of GDP was higher during PML-N government as compared to PTI tenure. He said inflation rate during the PML-N Government was 8.6 percent to 2.9 percent while in PTI tenure, maximum inflation index reached 12.2 percent. He said budgetary allocation of BISP has been increased to Rs364 billion and the government planned to expand the scope of BISP and increase the number of beneficiaries up to 10 million.

Ishaq Dar said that they oversaw a period where the gross domestic product (GDP) of the country improved from \$244 billion to \$356 billion. During our tenure, we increased the size of the country's economy by \$112 billion in comparison to the PTI raised \$61 billion in their last tenure from 2018 to 2022," he added.

Quoting reports of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Dar said that the economic growth rate this year will be 2.7 percent. He said that the deficit when they left in 2018 was at 5.8 percent. But onwards the end of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) tenure, it had swelled to 7.6%. The interest rate in 2018 was 7.5%, and in July 2019, the interest rate rose to 13.25%.

He added that the PML-N government kept the monetary policy at 7.5%, but the PTI increased it to 13.25% in July 2019. Dar added that the PML-N ended load shedding, but PTI's government could not carry the legacy forward and load shedding hit the masses once more.

The finance minister said PTI added Rs19,000 billion in loans, while it left total loans worth Rs53,544 billion for the coalition government.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-05/page-1/detail-4>

The News

Pakistan taps Chinese credit for railway upgrade despite debt crisis

Islamabad/New Delhi: Since the 19th century, Pakistan's clattering railways have carried passengers and cargo from the Arabian Sea to the Himalayas. But the colonial-era network is in severe disrepair, with decrepit trains and some tracks left unusable by devastating flooding last year.

Together with its close ally China, Pakistan is now preparing at least a partial solution: a \$10 billion revamp of its 1,700km arterial Main Line 1 railway to be paid for with loans from Beijing, FT reported.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Xi Jinping agreed in November to begin work on the line, which links the southern port city of Karachi to Lahore and the capital, Islamabad. The project is expected to increase maximum train speeds on the route to 160kph.

But the ML1 upgrade has raised questions about whether heavily indebted Pakistan should be borrowing billions of dollars more for expensive infrastructure at a time of severe financial strain.

Some analysts believe Pakistan, which owes about \$100 billion in external debt to lenders including the World Bank and China, is at risk of defaulting after a plunge in its foreign exchange reserves.

Ahsan Iqbal, Pakistan's planning minister, said the ML1 upgrade was vital to keep trains running and an example of the transformative work that Chinese credit had made possible.

"If we do not undertake this project, in a couple of years Pakistan will lose its railway logistics," Iqbal told the Financial Times.

"The whole railway system will break down, this main line will break down. It will be very risky to run commercial operations on this track. It is no longer a choice. It is an imperative."

But critics said taking on more debt for the ML1 project was an example of the kind of bad borrowing decisions that had led Pakistan into successive economic crises in recent years. Pakistan's foreign reserves have sunk to below \$6 billion, or equivalent to less than one month of imports.

Iqbal, who oversees Pakistan's involvement in the Belt and Road Initiative, China's international infrastructure scheme, said it would take six to nine years to complete the ML1

upgrade. The work will include replacing track, modernising signaling, converting level crossings into underpasses or flyovers and building fences to stop cattle crossing the line.

The planning minister said the project would proceed in phases “to make it more manageable”, with an initial cost of \$3 billion. The loan from China would be repayable over 20 to 25 years and would be “concessional”, he said, without providing further details.

The ML1 upgrade is part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a BRI centre piece with an estimated total cost of \$60bn. The CPEC also includes Chinese development of a deep-sea port at Gwadar in south-western Pakistan, among other projects. A western diplomat in Islamabad said that for such projects to have continued even as Beijing saw growing financial distress in BRI recipient countries pointed to the importance it put on ties with Pakistan.

“Even if the rest [of BRI] lags behind, China wants to stay the course with Pakistan,” the diplomat said, adding that the relationship had “important military aspects developed over the long term”. Projects such as ML1 have also fuelled analyst concerns over whether excessive Chinese lending is exacerbating strains on Pakistan’s precarious finances. Chinese state lenders are together among the largest creditors to Islamabad, accounting for about \$30bn of its outstanding debt.

Sakib Sherani of advisory firm Macro Economic Insights said it was unfair to single out China’s role in Pakistan’s debt woes, with the largest repayments in the current financial year actually due to multilateral lenders.

Even as it taps Beijing for the ML1 project, Pakistan is looking elsewhere for funds to help stabilise its shrinking reserves. The finance ministry is in talks with the IMF to secure the next tranche of a \$7 billion assistance programme, and has said it will approach “friendly” countries such as Saudi Arabia for more loans. Sharif’s government is betting it can steady the economy in time for parliamentary elections that must be held before the end of this year.

Iqbal said he was confident the country would pull through. “Pakistan is facing economic [and] fiscal difficulties, but it is not in the range that it is a default economy yet. We are managing very prudently.”

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=163522>

Express News

پاکستان چینی سرمایہ کاروں کیلئے محفوظ کاروباری ماحول فراہم کرے گا، وزیراعظم

وزیراعظم شہباز شریف نے چینی وزیراعظم کو یقین دلایا کہ پاکستان چینی سرمایہ کاروں کے لیے مکمل طور پر محفوظ اور سازگار کاروباری ماحول فراہم کرے گا: اسلام آباد

وزیراعظم آفس سے جاری اعلامیہ میں کہا گیا کہ وزیراعظم شہباز شریف کی اپنے چینی ہم منصب سے ٹیلی فونک گفتگو میں دو طرفہ امور اور علاقائی صورتحال پر تبادلہ خیال کیا گیا۔ اعلامیہ کے مطابق دونوں رہنماؤں کے درمیان بات چیت میں پاکستان چین آل ویدر اسٹریٹجک کوآپریٹو پارٹنرشپ پراٹھینان کا اظہار کیا گیا۔ وزیراعظم نے چین کے ساتھ قریبی تعلقات کو فروغ دینے کے لیے پاکستان کے عزم پر زور دیا اور چین کے بنیادی مفادات پر پاکستان کی غیر متزلزل حمایت کا اعادہ کیا۔ علاوہ ازیں رابطے میں باہمی دلچسپی کے علاقائی امور پر بھی تبادلہ خیال کیا۔

اعلامیہ کے مطابق وزیراعظم شہباز شریف نے چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری منصوبوں کی بروقت پیش رفت پر آگاہ کیا اور چینی وزیراعظم کو یقین دلایا کہ پاکستان چینی سرمایہ کاروں کے لیے مکمل طور پر محفوظ اور سازگار کاروباری ماحول فراہم کرے گا۔

جس پر چینی وزیراعظم نے کہا کہ پاک چین کو نہ صرف ایک اسٹریٹجک دوست بلکہ ایک ایسے ملک کے طور پر دیکھتا ہے جس کا استحکام اور معاشی بہبود خطے اور چین کے لیے انتہائی اہمیت کا حامل ہے اور چین ہمیشہ پاکستان کے ساتھ سچپتی کے ساتھ کھڑا رہے گا۔

وزیراعظم نے وزیراعظم لی کو پاکستان میں سیلاب کے بعد کی تعمیر نو اور بحالی میں تازہ ترین پیشرفت کے بارے میں آگاہ کیا، سیلاب کے لیے چین کی فوری اور فراخ دلانہ مدد پر پاکستان کا تہہ دل سے شکریہ ادا کیا۔

اعلامیہ کے مطابق وزیراعظم نے وزیراعظم کو چین کی جانب سے پاکستان کی تعمیر نو کی کوششوں اور کانفرنس کی کامیابی کے لیے مسلسل حمایت کا یقین دلایا اور دونوں رہنماؤں نے 2023 اور اس کے بعد پاکستان اور چین کے دو طرفہ تعاون کے ایجنڈے کو تیزی سے آگے بڑھانے کے لیے قریبی رابطے برقرار رکھنے پر اتفاق کیا۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2424088/1/>

Nawaiwaqt News

چین سے درآمد مسافر کو چوزریلوے سسٹم سے ہم آہنگ ہیں: سلمان صادق

لاہور (سٹاف رپورٹر) چیف ایگزیکٹو افسر پاکستان ریلوے سلمان صادق شیخ نے کہا کہ چین سے درآمد شدہ مسافر کو چوزریلوے سسٹم سے مکمل طور پر ہم آہنگ ہیں۔ کو چوز کا تفصیلی معائنہ کیا گیا اور ڈی پراسیڈنگ کی گئی جس کے بعد آزمائشی بنیادوں پر چلانے کی منظوری دی گئی۔ کامیاب ٹرائل کے بعد اس وقت تمام کو چوز چلنے کے ذریعہ تیار کروائی ہیں۔ ان Transparent Competitive Bidding لیے تیار ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ یہ بوگیاں ہم نے بین الاقوامی شہرت کی حامل کمپنی سے کو چوز کی وارنٹی کی مدت دو سال ہے اور یہ پہلے چھ ماہ چینی ماہرین کی زیر نگرانی آپریٹ کریں گی۔ نئی کو چوز کو بین الاقوامی ریل روڈ سٹیشنڈرڈز اور سیفٹی کے انٹرنیشنل سٹینڈرڈز کو مد نظر رکھتے ہوئے تیار کیا گیا ہے۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-01-05/page-2/detail-11>

January 06, 2023

Business Recorder

CPEC: PM speaks to Li, iterates PDM govt's commitment

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday held a telephonic conversation with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang wherein he emphasised Pakistan's unswerving focus on timely progress of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

During the "comprehensive telephone conversation," the PM assured the Chinese premier that Pakistan would provide a completely secure and conducive business environment for Chinese investors.

"The two leaders' discussion was characterised by warmth and cordiality, in keeping with the best traditions of the Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership," a PM Office statement said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz and Premier Li exchanged New Year greetings, noting that bilateral relations had grown to new heights in 2022, and agreeing to maintain the steady momentum of bilateral cooperation in 2023.

Recalling his visit to China in November 2022 and wide-ranging conversations with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li, the prime minister underscored Pakistan's commitment to fostering closer relations with China.

He reiterated Pakistan's unstinting support on China's core interests.

Both the leaders also discussed regional issues of mutual interest.

Premier Li Keqiang assured the prime minister that China viewed Pakistan not only as a strategic friend but as a country whose stability and economic welfare was of utmost importance to the region and to China.

China would always stand in solidarity with Pakistan, Premier Li added.

Noting the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan being held in Geneva on January 9, PM Shehbaz briefed Premier Li on the latest progress in post-flood reconstruction and rehabilitation in Pakistan.

He conveyed Pakistan's profound gratitude for China's prompt and generous support for the flood-affected people.

Premier Li assured the prime minister of China's continued support for Pakistan's reconstruction efforts and the success of the Conference.

Both leaders agreed to maintain close communication to fast-track the bilateral cooperation agenda for mutual benefit of the people of Pakistan and China in 2023 and beyond.—APP

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2023/01/06/1-page/951735-news.html>

Dawn News

GB apex body decides to beef up Chinese citizens' security

Jamil Nagri

GILGIT: A security committee, comprising high ranking civil and military officials, on Thursday decided to enhance the security of Chinese citizens working in Gilgit Baltistan.

The Gilgit Baltistan Apex Committee also agreed to develop a comprehensive communication strategy to counter misinformation and disinformation in the media that might create a law and order situation.

According to a press release issued by the GB chief secretary's office, the meeting was chaired by GB Chief Minister Khalid Khurshid.

The meeting decided to increase vigilance to ensure the security of Chinese officials and personnel working on a number of projects in the region under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

It was attended by FCNA Commander Major General Kashif Khalil, GB Chief Secretary Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, GB IGP Saeed Wazir, Secretary Home Iqbal Hussain Khan, GB Scouts DG, Military Intelligence and ISI sector commanders and Intelligence Bureau's deputy DG.

The committee reviewed the existing security environment in the region and resolved to ensure peace and stability.

It also decided to reactivate the National Action Plan (NAP) and ensure its enforcement in letter and spirit.

The meeting was informed that the issue of capacity building and reinforcement of the police in general and the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in particular has been taken up with the federal government.

The meeting expressed concerns over the delay in reaching out to the Centre and directed the officials concerned to take up the matter at the highest level as the CTD was “an essential component” in the fight against terrorism.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1730205/gb-apex-body-decides-to-beef-up-chinese-citizens-security>

Pakistan Observer

China will always stand in solidarity with Pakistan: Li

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, held a comprehensive telephone conversation on Thursday.

The PM office said the two leaders’ discussion was characterized by warmth and cordiality, in keeping with the best traditions of the Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

The Prime Minister and the Chinese Premier exchanged New Year greetings, noting that bilateral relations had grown to new heights in 2022, and agreeing to maintain the steady momentum of bilateral cooperation in 2023.

Recalling his visit to China in November 2022 and wide-ranging conversations with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li, the Prime Minister underscored Pakistan’s commitment to fostering closer relations with China, and reiterated Pakistan’s unstinting support on China’s core interests. They also discussed regional issues of mutual interest.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-will-always-stand-in-solidarity-with-pakistan-li/>

The Nation

Chinese envoy assures support for promoting education in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD - Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong appreciated the initiative taken by Tang International education Group Pakistan subsidiary for promoting technical/skills education and vocational training programs in the country.

He promised to provide all possible assistance to achieve this task. He was talking with Max Ma, executive president of the group during a meeting held here at the embassy.

About the meeting, Max Ma told WealthPK that it was very productive and we exchanged views as to how to expand the educational network in Pakistan through the support of

Chinese institutions. Max Ma highlighted their work that was carried out over the past decade and said, they have adhered to the principle of servicing the educational industry.

Utilising internet technology to enhance teaching and learning efficiency, he said the organisation is steadfastly committed to assisting people from all walks of life to study the Chinese language and comprehend Chinese culture.

About the main disciplines of Tang International education Group, Max said, the ongoing Sino Foreign Joint school Dual Diploma Joint education programme of the China Cooperation, Chinese Commerce Culture, Technology Training, education employment (CCT e) is designed for international students who wish to obtain additional China education experience and certificates while continuing their national higher education.

This programme is given by international schools with the cooperative effort between Pakistani and Chinese institutions. The majority of the disciplines are chosen to recruit students. These disciplines are extremely popular in the world, promoting a strong connection to transcultural careers at schools both in China and Pakistan.

About their work in Pakistan, he said they promote technical education, languages and vocational training. This is our initial task and the purpose is to get acquainted with one another through culture, language, and social activities.

He said, Pakistan and China are iron brothers and we have a strong connection because of CPEC which is the initiative of BRI, so our venture in Pakistan to promote educational training and programs is most beneficial for both countries.

Max Ma said I have been in Pakistan for almost seventeen years. Beginning in 2023, we celebrated a night of cultural exchange, having a delightful gathering of Pakistani and Chinese families and friends. These factors have made this evening truly remarkable and unforgettable.

Highlighting the depth of Sino-Pak relations, he retreated phrases often mentioned in our relations that, the bond between Pakistan and China is stronger than the Himalayas, deeper than the Arabian Sea, and sweeter than honey. he viewed Cultural activities are the only and most effective means of bringing people together, and were doing that on our part.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-06/page-4/detail-5>

CPEC presenting new hopes for Pakistan's rapid economic growth

ISLAMABAD - The sun of 2023 has emerged with new hopes for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) against the backdrop of fresh commitments to pump up more Chinese investments, rollout of three new CPEC corridors, resumption of cultural exchange programmes, and activation of Special Economic Zones. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday, in 2023, CPEC is all set to take a centre stage in the 72 years of Pak-China diplomatic relations. As per a report titled 'Overview of Pakistan's Power Sector and its Future Outlook' issued by the China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Ltd (CSAIL), a total of more than 36 CPEC projects, with a projected expenditure of \$27.5 billion, are in the works and it is believed that many of them will cross the finishing line by 2030. The CSAIL report said that 11 energy projects and seven infrastructure projects with a

total investment of \$18.7 billion have already been finished, while ten additional projects – four in energy and six in infrastructure – are now undergoing implementation and are anticipated to be finished in coming years. “Moreover, five Special Economic Zones (SEZs) will make tangible headways in 2023 with an investment of \$1 billion. Four of the nine identified Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would be completed in coming years with an expenditure of \$500 million,” the report said. The year 2023 is also marking CPEC-Collaborative Research Grant (CPEC-CRG) which is one of the key components of recently launched HEC initiative namely “Academic Collaboration under CPEC Consortium of Universities”. The overall objective of the said project is to understand and respond to the historic global geo-strategic and geo-economic transition and its impact on the region in general and Pakistan in particular, keeping in the view the broad Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and its Pakistan-specific component – CPEC. The national response to the strategic opportunity arising out of the emerging global dynamics is the CPEC Long Term Plan (LTP). The collaboration of Pakistan and China on education and cultural cooperation and exchanges witnessed an upward trajectory with each passing day, as thousands of Pakistani students are currently studying in various universities in China. Similarly, exhibitions and Chinese cultural events in Pakistan are expected to increase further in 2023. While briefing Pakistani media about the 2023 Happy Chinese New Year and upcoming events in connection with the celebrations of the Chinese Spring Festival, Xing Lijun, Second Secretary, Cultural Office of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan said that the Chinese government is expected to resume the cultural exchange programmes in 2023.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-06/page-10/detail-3>

Jang News

سیلاب متاثرین کی بحالی، چین، پاکستان کو 9.9 ارب امداد دیگا

جنیوا (جنگ نیوز) پاکستان کو ماحولیاتی تبدیلیوں کے اثرات اور سیلاب کی تباہ کاریوں سے نمٹنے کیلئے 16 ارب ڈالر سے زائد امداد کی ضرورت ہوگی۔ اقوام متحدہ کے مطابق اس سلسلے میں وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف اور یو این سیکریٹری جنرل انتونیو گوتریس آئندہ ہفتے جنیوا میں ایک روزہ عالمی کانفرنس کا انعقاد کریں گے جس میں کئی سربراہان مملکت اور درجنوں ممالک کے اعلیٰ مندوبین شرکت کریں گے۔

ادھر چین نے پاکستان کو سیلاب سے بحالی کیلئے بڑی امداد دینے کا فیصلہ کر لیا، چین کی جانب سے 30 کروڑ یو آں (9 ارب 90 کروڑ روپے) جلد پاکستان کو موصول ہوں گے۔

ذرائع نے بتایا ہے کہ چینی حکومت نے پاکستان کو امداد کی فراہمی سے متعلق آگاہ کر دیا ہے۔

ذرائع کے مطابق فیلڈر سپانس کو آر ڈی نیشن سینٹر نے فزیکل اسٹیڈی پلان تیار کر لیا ہے جو صوبوں کی مشاورت سے بنایا گیا ہے۔ ذرائع نے کہا ہے کہ چین کی امداد صوبوں میں سیلاب سے بحالی و تعمیر نو سمیت شعبہ صحت کے منصوبوں پر خرچ ہوگی۔

<https://jang.com.pk/news/1179003>

January 07, 2023

Daily Times

Chinese coaches fit and functional in Pakistan: CRRC Tangshan

As of Dec 8, the 46 CRRC Tangshan coaches had undergone four successful trial operations in Pakistan, and they will go into commercial operations in the next few days, Mr Zhang, deputy general manager of the overseas business department at CRRC Tangshan told Gwadar Pro in an exclusive interview.

The 46 Chinese coaches, which arrived in Karachi on Nov 27, were arranged into trains for trial operations by Pakistani engineers and a group of CRRC Tangshan experts.

As per Zhang, the trial operations started on Dec 1 with a short-distance journey from Karachi to Rohri. The second operation ran from Karachi to Lahore between Dec 2 and Dec 4. On Dec 8, the coaches travelled from Lahore to Rawalpindi (Islamabad) and then to Peshawar, and the following day, the trains made a return trip from Peshawar to Lahore.

“The successful trial operations are a testament to the quality and operationalisation of the CRRC Tangshan coaches, especially the bogies,” the deputy general manager told Gwadar Pro. As per Zhang, a team of six Chinese experts are assisting Pakistani engineers in the commissioning and trial operations of the 46 coaches.

“As a rule, we will run rounds of tests and trial operations on the coaches to make sure the coaches run smoothly before they go into commercial operations,” Zhang told Gwadar Pro, adding that the tests range from inside facilities checks including the air conditioners and the passenger information system etc. to experiments on the brakes and bogies.

Zhang noted, Pakistani engineers are expected to run tests and trial operations according to the technical documentation provided by CRRC Tangshan. Technical issues that occur in the process will be discussed and resolved by the Chinese technicians, who will be stationed at the site for after-sale services.

Apart from the trial operations, technology transfer and personnel training are also ongoing. As per Zhang, another team of six experts are now stationed in an Islamabad railway plant for the local manufacturing of the remaining 184 coaches, as required by the agreement.

“More Chinese experts will be deployed in Pakistan to pass on technological know-how to Pakistani engineers,” Zhang said.

A group of 60 Pakistan Railways engineers and workers have received training on the high-speed coaches in China, Zhang told Gwadar Pro.

Under a \$140 million contract, CRRC Tangshan is expected to supply 230 high-speed coaches to Pakistan. Forty-six coaches have been imported from China while the remaining 184 coaches will be manufactured in Pakistan by Pakistan Railways engineers and technical staff under the supervision of Chinese experts.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1048474/chinese-coaches-fit-and-functional-in-pakistan-crrc-tangshan/>

Pakistan Observer

Pak Optical Fiber Cable Project inked between Chinese Companies

A Nationwide Optical Fiber Cable Network Project has been signed between PowerChina and Hunan Sunwalk Group, according to Gwadar Pro on Friday.

Phase 1, Lot 1 of the said project will aim to improve Pakistan's telecommunication infrastructure for better interconnection with its neighboring countries.

Talking to Gwadar Pro, business manager Sunwalk Group said that the company plans to spend several billion dollars on Pakistan's Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities to establish telecom infrastructure and fiber industry.

The nation's broadband adoption will be increased for the digital revolution, which will benefit not only the business-to-business sector but also the government, enterprise firms, and end consumers, the official added.

Previously, Sunwalk Group CEO Pakistan, Lan held a meeting with Federal Minister of IT and Telecom, Syed Amin ul Haque. Lan informed the Minister regarding investment plans for establishing a statewide optical fiber network and facilitating the growth of broadband in Pakistan.

He stated that his organization is prepared to invest approximately \$2 billion over the next 8 to 10 years.

<https://pakobserver.net/pak-optical-fiber-cable-project-inked-between-chinese-companies/>

The Nation

CPEC 2023: Hopes and challenges

Yasir Habib Khan

2023 has emerged with new hopes and challenges for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in the backdrop of uncapping China's zero covid policy, fresh commitments to pump up more Chinese investment, the rollout of new three CPEC corridors, resumption of cultural exchange programmes, galvanisation of the China Pakistan free trade agreement (phase I and phase II), catalysing Gwadar as a logistic powerhouse, activation of Special Economic Zones, Pakistan's economic turbulence, security hazards and global evil eyes on Sino-Pak relations. CPEC is all set to take centre stage after 72 years of Pak-China diplomatic relations. After Pakistan Premier Shehbaz Sharif's Beijing visit and meeting with President Xi Jinping in 2022, it is highly likely of frequent high-profile exchanges of visits between Chinese top dignitaries and Pakistan's eminent decision-makers in 2023. A total of 36 more CPEC projects, with a projected expenditure of \$27.5 billion, are in the works and it is believed that many of them will cross the finish line during 2023. According to information from the energy sector, 11 projects totalling \$12 billion in investment have already been finished, while four additional projects totalling \$6 billion in investment are now undergoing implementation and are anticipated to be finished soon. In the infrastructure sector, seven projects totalling \$6.7 billion in investment have already been finished. Six additional

projects totalling \$0.9 billion will be finished in coming years, and 12 projects totalling \$10.4 billion are anticipated to be finished as per their set deadlines from 2023 to 2030. Similarly, in Gwadar, where three \$200 million projects have already been finished, two \$230 million projects will be finished in the years ahead and two more \$150 million projects will be finished by their culmination period. Moreover, five Special Economic Zones (SEZs) will make tangible headways in 2023 with an investment of \$1 billion. Four of the nine identified Special Economic Zones (SEZs) would be completed in the coming years with an expenditure of \$500 million. Six socioeconomic projects totalling \$10 million have so far been completed; 11 projects totalling \$90 million will be finished by 2025, and 10 projects totalling \$900 million will be finished by 2030. The good news is that 27 projects worth \$19 billion have so far been completed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) while 63 more projects with an investment of \$35.2 billion are scheduled to be completed in coming years. 2023 also marks the beginning of the CPEC-Collaborative Research Grant (CPEC-CRG) which is one of the key components of the recently launched HEC initiative namely “Academic Collaboration under CPEC Consortium of Universities”. The overall objective of the said project is to understand and respond to the historic global geo-strategic and geo-economic transition and its impact on the region in general and Pakistan in particular, keeping in view the broad Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and its Pakistan-specific component—CPEC

The collaboration of Pakistan and China on education and cultural cooperation and exchanges witnessed an upward trajectory with each passing day, as thousands of Pakistani students are currently studying in various universities in China. Similarly, exhibitions and Chinese cultural events in Pakistan are expected to increase further in 2023. This academic and cultural cooperation will further strengthen the bonding between the two brotherly countries. While briefing Pakistani media about the 2023 Happy Chinese New Year and upcoming events in connection with the celebrations of the Chinese Spring Festival, Xing Lijun, Second Secretary, Cultural Office of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan told the media that The Chinese government is expected to resume the cultural exchange programs in 2023 after it relaxed COVID-19 restrictions at home. Similarly, a currency agreement between both nations is not only an economic masterstroke but is also tipped as a strategic move. It is hoped that, in 2023, Pakistan’s dependence on the dollar will decrease, as the central banks of Pakistan and China have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish yuan clearing mechanisms.

Despite tough economic challenges, China remained at the top of the list of top foreign direct investors in Pakistan. The COVID-19 outbreak and the shift in Pakistan’s government both caused a slowdown in the CPEC. But those barriers are no longer present and work on CPEC is expected to pick up pace in 2023 in terms of China FDI in Pakistan. The second phase of the CPEC has broadened its scope to include collaboration on projects related to socioeconomic development, education, tourism, industry, oil and gas, research, and technology. Since China Pakistan Free Trade Agreement phase II and phase II are in full-on operation, 2023 will see new depth in the Pak-China trade landscape offering spiral leverage to Pakistan so that Pakistan can increase its export to China to cure its economic imbalances and development trajectory. A recent study conducted by the CPEC Centre of Excellence,

Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform of Pakistan showed that indirectly, CPEC could help create even 1.2 million jobs under its presently agreed projects.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-07/page-6/detail-3>

The News

Governor lauds China role in Pak development

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Governor Ghulam Ali on Friday lauded China for always standing by Pakistan and launching China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which will bring about economic development to the country.

He said this while speaking as a chief guest at a ceremony arranged in the China Window -- a Chinese Cultural Centre – in connection with the Chinese New Year celebrations. Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) President Muhammad Ishaq, Bishop Ernest Jacob, newly elected president of Peshawar Press Club Arshad Aziz Malik and people from other walks of life turned up at the function.

Addressing the ceremony, Governor Ghulam Ali said that Pak-China relations are higher than the Himalayas, sweeter than honey and deeper than the sea. “These are not just words but feelings of every Pakistani. The main reason for this is the mutual relationship spanning over seven decades which has brought the people of the two countries closer to each other and strengthened the bond of friendship,” he added.

The governor said China has supported Pakistan in every situation. “Today, although we are facing a difficult economic situation, but the economic plan that China has started as CPEC will usher in a new era of economic development in Pakistan,” he hoped, adding this cluster of projects will stabilize the Pak economy.

Ghulam Ali said that although the pace of work on CPEC was slow during the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his team are trying their best to speed up the pace of work so that its fruits reach the people as soon as possible.

Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong in his online address said the New Year celebrations are a big festival for the Chinese people which is marked not only in China but all over the world. He said China has become the second-largest economic power in the world.

The envoy said China wants economic and economic development in Pakistan. He said China has completed 47 projects under the CPEC with an investment of 25 billion dollars, while in the next phase, the development of industries in Pakistan and increasing its export competitiveness will be done through cooperation in the fields of industry, agriculture, science and technology.

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=164425>

Nawaiwaqt News

چین اور سعودیہ پاکستان کے معاشی استحکام کے اہم شراکت دار

پاکستان اور چین نے عوامی مفاد کے لیے دو طرفہ تعاون کو آگے بڑھانے کے لیے قریبی رابطے برقرار رکھنے پر اتفاق کیا ہے۔ وزیر اعظم محمد شہباز شریف نے چین کے ساتھ قریبی تعلقات کو فروغ دینے اور چین کے بنیادی مفادات کی غیر متزلزل حمایت کا اعادہ کیا ہے۔ جبکہ چینی وزیر اعظم نے کہا ہے کہ چین ہمیشہ پاکستان کے ساتھ یکجہتی کے ساتھ کھڑا رہے گا۔ وزیر اعظم آفس کے میڈیا ونگ سے جاری بیان کے مطابق وزیر اعظم محمد شہباز شریف اور عوامی جمہوریہ چین کی ریاستی کونسل کے وزیر اعظم لی کی چیانگ نے جمعرات کو ٹیلی فون پر بات چیت کی۔ دونوں رہنماؤں کے درمیان ہونے والی بات چیت میں پاکستان اور چین کے درمیان ہر موسم میں آزموہ تزویراتی شراکت داری کی بہترین روایات کو مد نظر رکھتے ہوئے گرم جوشی اور دوستی کا اظہار کیا گیا۔ وزیر اعظم محمد شہباز شریف اور چینی وزیر اعظم نے ایک دوسرے کو نئے سال کی مبارکباد دیتے ہوئے کہا کہ 2022ء میں دو طرفہ تعلقات نئی بلندیوں پر پہنچ گئے تھے۔ دونوں رہنماؤں نے 2023ء میں دو طرفہ تعاون کی مستحکم رفتار کو برقرار رکھنے پر اتفاق کیا۔ وزیر اعظم نے چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری (سی پیک) منصوبوں کی بروقت تکمیل پر پاکستان کے غیر متزلزل عزم کو دہراتے ہوئے چینی وزیر اعظم کو یقین دلایا کہ پاکستان چینی سرمایہ کاروں کے لیے مکمل طور پر محفوظ اور سازگار کاروباری ماحول فراہم کرے گا۔ وزیر اعظم چین نے بھی پاکستان کے ساتھ تعاون جاری رکھنے کے عزم کا اعادہ کیا۔

ادھر پاک فوج کے سپہ سالار جنرل عاصم منیر نے سعودی وزیر دفاع شہزادہ خالد بن سلمان سے ریاض میں ملاقات کی۔ سعودی وزیر دفاع نے جنرل عاصم منیر کو پاک فوج کا سربراہ بننے پر مبارکباد پیش کی۔ آرمی چیف بننے کے بعد جنرل عاصم منیر کا یہ پہلا غیر ملکی دورہ ہے۔ ملاقات کے دوران دونوں ملکوں کے دو طرفہ تعلقات کی مضبوطی اور پاسداری پر زور دیا گیا۔ سعودی عرب کے وزیر دفاع اور پاکستان کے سپہ سالار نے اہم ترین علاقائی اور بین الاقوامی امور پر بھی بات چیت کی۔ افواج پاکستان کے شعبہ تعلقات عامہ (آئی ایس پی آر) کے مطابق آرمی چیف جنرل عاصم منیر 4 سے 10 جنوری تک سعودی عرب اور متحدہ عرب امارات کے سرکاری دورے پر ہیں۔ آرمی چیف نے سعودی افواج کے چیف آف آرمی سٹاف جنرل فیاض الرویلی سے بھی ملاقات کی اور دفاعی و عسکری شعبوں میں پاک سعودیہ تعلقات کا جائزہ اور باہمی دلچسپی کے معاملات پر تبادلہ خیال کیا۔

عوامی جمہوریہ چین اور سعودی عرب دنیا کے دو ایسے ممالک ہیں جن کے ساتھ پاکستان کے مثالی تعلقات قائم ہیں۔ دونوں ممالک نے پاکستان کی مشکلات میں ایک ہمدردی کی طرح ساتھ دیا۔ مسائل کے حل کے لیے بھرپور تعاون کیا اور آزمائش و ابتلا کی ہر گھڑی میں ہمارے ساتھ کھڑے دکھائی دیئے۔

پاکستان میں فوجی حکومت برسر اقتدار ہو یا سول حکومت، چین اور سعودی عرب کے بلا امتیاز و تمیز پاکستان کے ساتھ تعلقات نہ صرف برقرار رہے بلکہ ہر دور میں پہلے سے زیادہ مضبوط اور مستحکم ہوئے۔ ایک ہمسایہ ملک ہونے کے ناتے چین کے ساتھ علاقائی صورت حال میں بھی پاکستان کے ساتھ تزویراتی تعلقات کی ایک تاریخ ہے۔ خطے میں دونوں ممالک کے مفادات میں یکسانیت پائی جاتی ہے۔ پاکستان نے تائیوان کے ایشیائی چین کا ہر فورم پر ساتھ دیا ہے جبکہ کشمیر کے معاملے میں چین نے پاکستان کی مکمل حمایت کی ہے۔ پاکستان اور چین بھارتی توسیع پسندانہ عزائم کے توڑنے کے لیے بھی ایک صفحہ پر ہیں۔ دونوں ممالک کے درمیان تجارت کے علاوہ دفاعی امور میں بھی مثالی تعاون ہے۔ دونوں ممالک دو طرفہ تعلقات کے حوالے سے بہت سے ایشیائی متعدد معاہدوں میں شریک ہیں۔ گزشتہ چند برسوں سے چین کے ون بیلٹ ون روڈ کے عظیم الشان منصوبے کے تحت چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری (سی پیک) کے حوالے سے بھی پاکستان اور چین کے درمیان پارٹنرشپ قائم ہے اور بہت سے منصوبے زیر عمل اور زیر تکمیل ہیں۔ سی پیک کا عظیم الشان منصوبہ دونوں ممالک کو اقتصادی طور پر مضبوط و توانا دہانے میں گیم چیلنجر کا درجہ رکھتا ہے۔ جس کے نتیجے میں نہ صرف پاکستان کی معیشت توانا ہوگی بلکہ خطے کے ممالک پر بھی معاشی طور پر خوشگوار اثرات مرتب ہوں گے۔ جہاں تک سعودی عرب کا تعلق ہے دونوں ممالک روز اول سے مسلم برادر ہڈ کے عظیم اور بے مثال رشتے ہیں بندھے ہوئے ہیں۔ سعودی فرمانروا پاکستان کو جبکہ پاکستان کے سربراہان مملکت سعودی عرب کو اپنا دوسرا گھر

تصور کرتے ہیں۔ سعودی عرب نے بھی پاکستان کی ہر موقع پر مدد کی اور پاکستان نے جب بھی دستِ تعاون دراز کیا سعودی عرب نے پہلے سے بڑھ کر تعاون کیا۔ حالیہ برسوں میں بھی جب پاکستان کی معیشت ڈانواں ڈول ہو رہی تھی۔ زر مبادلہ کے ذخائر خطرناک حد تک کم ہو چکے تھے۔ عالمی مالیاتی ادارے (آئی ایم ایف) نے قرض کی ادائیگی مشروط بنادی تھی۔ ایسے مشکل وقت میں سعودی عرب اور چین ہی وہ ممالک تھے جنہوں نے ہماری مالی امداد کی اور ہمیں آئی ایم ایف سے قرضہ حاصل کرنے کے قابل بنایا۔ اب پاکستان کے چیف آف آرمی سٹاف جنرل عاصم منیر سعودی عرب کے سرکاری دورے پر ہیں۔ جہاں وہ سعودی اعلیٰ حکام اور دفاعی ماہرین سے دونوں ممالک کے باہمی دلچسپی کے امور پر تبادلہٴ خیالات کریں گے۔ خاص طور پر دفاعی و عسکری حوالے سے تعاون کو مزید فروغ دینے کے سلسلے میں بات چیت ہوگی۔ جس کے یقینی طور پر دو طرفہ تعلقات کے حوالے سے مثبت اثرات مرتب ہوں گے۔ پاکستان کو سیلاب کی تباہ کاریوں کی بنا پر اس وقت شدید مالی مشکلات کے سامنا ہے۔ اس سیلاب کے نتیجے میں پاکستان کی معیشت کو جو دھچکا لگا ہے اس کی وجہ سے اسے دوست ممالک کے تعاون کی اشد ضرورت ہے۔ 9 جنوری کو جینوا میں بین الاقوامی کانفرنس کا انعقاد اسی سلسلے کی کڑی ہے جس میں امیر اور ترقی یافتہ ممالک پاکستان میں سیلاب کے بعد کی تعمیر نو اور بحالی میں مالی امداد فراہم کریں گے۔ چین اور سعودی عرب پہلے ہی اس ضمن میں پاکستان کی مالی امداد جاری رکھے ہوئے ہیں۔

آج خطے میں بھارتی بالادستی کے عزائم کے پیش نظر جو صورت حال درپیش ہے۔ چین اور سعودی عرب کے ساتھ پاکستان کی ٹرانزیکٹ اس حوالے سے مثالی کردار ادا کر سکتی ہے۔ تینوں ممالک کے درمیان علاقائی تعاون کا مضبوط بلاک خطے میں توازن کو برقرار رکھنے میں مدد دے گا اور تینوں ممالک کے عوام کی ترقی و خوشحالی کا بھی ضامن ہو گا۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-01-07/page-10/detail-11>

پاور چائنا، ہنان سن واک گروپ میں آپٹیکل فائبر کیبل منصوبہ، معاہدے پر دستخط

لاہور (این این آئی) پاور چائنا اور ہنان سن واک گروپ کے درمیان ملک بھر میں آپٹیکل فائبر کیبل نیٹ ورک منصوبے کیلئے معاہدے پر دستخط کر دیئے گئے۔ پاور چائنا کے مطابق مذکورہ منصوبے کے فیئر 1، لاٹ 1 کا مقصد پاکستان کے ٹیلی کمیونیکیشن انفراسٹرکچر کو اس کے پڑوسی ممالک کے ساتھ بہتر انٹر کنکشن کیلئے موزوں بنانا ہے۔ بزنس نیچر سن واک گروپ نے کہا کہ کمپنی ٹیلی کام انفراسٹرکچر اور فائبر انڈسٹری کے قیام کیلئے پاکستان کے ٹائر 2 اور ٹائر 3 شہروں پر کئی بلین ڈالر خرچ کرنے کا ارادہ رکھتی ہے۔ آفیشل نے مزید کہا کہ ڈیجیٹل انقلاب کیلئے ملک میں براڈ بینڈ اپنانے میں اضافہ کیا جائے گا۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-01-07/page-12/detail-10>

January 08, 2023

Pakistan Observer

The way China excels

Naveed Aman Khan

FOR both the world and China, the year 2022 remained critical in bridging the past and the future.

As the world is undergoing historic changes of profound and far-reaching impact, Pakistan needs more than ever a vision to guide its way forward, a viable way to address its challenges, and greater strength to build consensus. To interact with entire world China moves ahead following its consistent multidimensional foreign policy.

This way China has explored new, political, diplomatic and economic horizons during last two decades.

In the new global context, any attempt of conflict, confrontation, containment and decoupling runs against the prevailing trend and is doomed to fail; peace, development, cooperation and win-win represent the popular will of the people and are international trends.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) with President Xi Jinping at its core has united the whole Party and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups and led the nation in rising to challenges of high winds and choppy waters in the global environment pressing ahead with formidable tasks in advancing reform, promoting development and maintaining stability at home.

Under the personal guidance of President Xi Jinping and the effective planning of the CPC Central Committee, China's head-of-state diplomacy has played a guiding role.

Chinese diplomatic work has focused on ensuring the success of the 20th CPC National Congress as top priority and on building a community with a shared future for mankind.

China has adapted to changes, addressed adversities and broken new ground.

The leadership has conducted major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics in an all-round way, making new contribution to upholding world peace and promoting development of the masses.

The home-ground event is the Beijing Olympic and Paralympics Winter Games.

With the concerted efforts of China and the international community, the games were a resounding success.

The opening ceremony brought together 31 heads of state, government and international organizations from five continents who joined China in the celebration of the games.

The international community has experienced a China more confident, striving, open and inclusive.

The Beijing rendezvous on ice and snow marked a new milestone in the endeavour of the peoples across the world to embrace new hopes and pursue a shared future together.

The two major initiatives are the Global Development Initiative (GDI) and the Global Security Initiative (GSI).

In April 2022, President Xi Jinping unveiled the (GSI) at the Bao Forum for Asia, offering a Chinese proposal for addressing global security challenges and achieving durable peace and security in the world.

The international community has responded to the (GSI) favourably. In the matter of six months, as many as 70 countries have expressed endorsement and support for the initiative.

As the Chair of the first high-level Dialogue on Global Development held in June on the margins of a BRICS Summit, President Xi Jinping announced 32 major measures China would take to implement the (GDI); an open-ended pool of (GDI) projects and the Global Development Promotion Centre were created.

To date, more than 100 countries and a number of international organizations, including the UN, have committed support to the (GDI); 70 countries have joined the Group of Friends of the (GDI).

The three major visits refer to those made by President Xi Jinping from September to December 2022, since the pandemic outbreak.

They include the Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Samarkand, the G20 Summit in Bali and the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Bangkok, the first China-Arab States Summit (CASS) and the China-Gulf Cooperation Council (CGCCS) Summit in Riyadh.

In the period before and after the 20th (CPC) National Congress, President Xi Jinping attended five multilateral summits and held meetings with leaders of more than 40 countries, creating three peaks for head-of-state diplomacy in 2022 and making a good start to the work of the (CPC's) new collective central leadership in China's foreign affairs.

China has firmly rejected the US' erroneous China policy and has been exploring the right way for the two countries to get along with each other.

President Xi Jinping has had two phone calls with President Joe Biden at the request of the latter.

The two presidents also had a face-to-face meeting in Bali, the first of its kind in three years.

President Xi Jinping analyzed the essence of China-US relations and drew China's bottom line and red line.

Xi, stressed the need to abandon the zero-sum mentality where one's gain and rise mean the other's loss and decline, to define China-US interactions by dialogue and win-win cooperation, not confrontation and zero-sum competition, and to bring China-US relations back on the right track of healthy and stable development under the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation.

The US President Biden reaffirmed his statement, and further indicated that the US does not support "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan", does not seek to use the Taiwan question as a tool to contain China, and has no intention to seek "decoupling" from China.

Under new circumstances, the common interests between China and the US have increased, not decreased which is a great success.

Firstly, China will better serve head-of-state diplomacy and central tasks. Secondly, it will expand all-round diplomacy in a coordinated manner.

Thirdly, it will continue to look for the widest possible convergence of interests in global governance.

Fourthly, it will actively serve high-quality development and opening-up. Fifthly, it will build a stronger line of defence to protect its national interests.

Lastly, it will focus on strengthening its international communication capacity and make its voice heard, loud and clear.

—The writer is editor, book ambassador political analyst and author of several books based in Islamabad.

<https://pakobserver.net/the-way-china-excels-by-naveed-aman-khan/>

Train coaches imported from China to uplift Pakistan railway image, enhance technical skills: official

Train coaches imported from China are completely compatible with the local track, and have been approved for a commercial run after the initial trial at one of the fastest tracks in Pakistan, a Pakistani official said. It is a standard protocol to test any new induction in the railways before putting it into commercial operations, Muhammad Hanif Gul, divisional superintendent of Lahore division at the Pakistan Railways under the Ministry of Railways, said, adding that the same practice has been done to the coaches imported from China and they have successfully passed the trails. “These are very good coaches with some enhanced features, the ergonomics are very good, technology is very good and when we use them in train services, people of Pakistan will have a very good experience,” Gul told Xinhua in his office in Pakistan’s eastern city of Lahore.

From the contract to acquire 230 coaches from China, the first batch of 46 coaches arrived in Pakistan at the end of last November, and are currently parked in Lahore and are expected to start operations in the coming weeks.

Under the technology transfer agreement, the remaining coaches will be imported to Pakistan in the form of components and manufactured in Pakistan with China’s technical assistance to enhance Pakistan’s ability to produce trains independently.

The coaches were acquired through transparent bidding in which the Chinese company was preferred among all others from different countries, he said, adding that Pakistan provided a list of specifications according to local standards, and the track and the trains were accordingly designed, Gul said.

Talking about the quality of the new addition from the perspective of passenger comfort, he said that they are very cozy with good seat width, corresponding to the anthropometric analysis of the population of Pakistan, and have an on-board washroom facility for mobility-impaired passengers, which is a new feature in Pakistan railways.

The coaches will be used as premier trains with special staff and maintenance facilities, Gul said, adding that “it will substantially enhance the image of Pakistan railways and it will provide comfort to the passengers as to be another feather in the cap of the Pakistan-China collaboration.”

Talking about the transfer of technology from China for the manufacturing of trains in Pakistan, he said that it is a step forward to help Pakistan develop a strong industrial base as the two countries have an old collaboration in terms of technology.

“It will enhance the technological capability of Pakistan and in the future, Pakistan may develop a capacity in our carriage factories where we will be able to manufacture these coaches on our own,” he added.

The local engineers are very capable but their talent goes wasted due to a lack of proper training and direction, and the absence of industrial units in Pakistan, the official said, adding that the technology transfer project will also enable Pakistan to tap the potential of the young engineers in the future.

The China-imported coaches to Pakistan have the capacity to run 160 km per hour, but they will be operated at a speed of up to 120 km per hour until the planned upgradation work of the railway track is done.

“Acquiring of these trains is a step towards the planned upgradation of the railway track, advancement of technology, and enhancement of human resource,” he said.

Gul said that Pakistan is geographically an important place and through enhanced regional connectivity, the country has the potential to be a hub of transshipment and interregional trade. —Xinhua

<https://pakobserver.net/train-coaches-imported-from-china-to-uplift-pakistan-railway-image-enhance-technical-skills-official/>

The Nation

Pak-China year of tourism to greatly boost tourism coop, says PTDC MD

Xinhua

ISLAMABAD-The decision to hold the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges in 2023 will greatly help improving people-to-people contacts and especially promoting tourism cooperation, a Pakistani official said.

“China obviously is the country that produced the largest number of tourists for the rest of the world before the COVID-19 pandemic ... The recent policy of resuming outbound tourism for Chinese citizens in an orderly manner would help in restoring the confidence of the world in terms of the promotion of tourism while making a good contribution to the global economy,” Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab ur Rehman Rana told Xinhua in a recent interview.

Pakistan and China have a long friendly relationship, and people would love to meet each other and experience the countries of each other, he said, adding that Pakistan is not just looking at inviting Chinese tourists to Pakistan, but also looking at sending Pakistani tourists to China. “Our tour operators have already started holding online meetings with their Chinese counterparts. Under the exchange programs, both countries are planning to help tour operators of both sides to meet personally so they can revive their contacts and design packages and products which could attract the right kind of tourists on both sides,” the PTDC official said.

Highlighting Pakistan has a lot to offer for Chinese tourists, he said that the wild mountains, lush green meadows, exquisite valleys, beautiful tracks for trekking, sites for adventurous sports and a number of ancient archeological places and other attractions in Pakistan are waiting to mesmerize the Chinese tourists. “For Pakistan, the opening of Chinese tourism is a

very positive sign,” Rana said, adding that Pakistan has made a lot of preparation to welcome Chinese tourists.

The Pakistani government has been working on improving the availability of information on both sides as well as producing new literature on major tourist destinations in the Chinese language, so that the Chinese tourists know well about Pakistan, he said. “Pakistan International Airlines has recently announced the restarting of flights between Islamabad and Beijing. If there’s any travel expo taking place in China, we’ll send our delegation there,” Rana said. Besides providing new prospects in Pakistan’s tourism industry, the official said China has helped transform the country’s tourism by building road infrastructure under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Launched in 2013, CPEC is a corridor linking Pakistan’s Gwadar Port with Kashgar in northwest China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which highlights energy, transport and industrial cooperation. “We have seen the new motorways, highways and side roads all the way from south to east to north, and the improvement of the road network is very important for tourism promotion. CPEC has not only improved the access to different business hubs and various cities in Pakistan, but also facilitated the access to various tourist sites,” he said. With improved accessibility, there will be quite a lot of new developments including the establishment of tourism zones, new hotels and tourist resorts along the CPEC routes in the coming years, he said.

Rana believed that CPEC would help further improve the local tourism sector and help attract more investment into the tourism infrastructure of Pakistan, accelerating the country’s development. As the year 2023 is being designated as the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges, Rana said numerous tourism-related activities will be happening between the two neighbors during the new year. “We will hold a Gandhara Buddhist heritage exhibition in Beijing very soon. There is a plan to send our cultural delegations of youth and tourism professionals to China and obviously, we welcome delegations from China also coming to Pakistan in promoting Chinese culture in Pakistan and vice versa,” he said, adding that the PTDC will coordinate with other departments to strengthen cultural and tourism exchanges and promote people-to-people contacts between the two countries. “The year 2023 is going to be a good beginning,” Rana added.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-08/page-9/detail-0>

January 09, 2023

Daily Times

Chinese envoy’s services lauded for fostering diplomatic relations

President of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation Aasma Ismail on Sunday said Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong’s services in enhancing Pakistan-China relations were of great value as through his efforts, Pakistan-China friendship and diplomatic relations have become stronger and more stable. She expressed these views on the occasion of a special event for the celebration of the Chinese New Year organized by the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China here, a news release said.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1048995/chinese-envoys-services-lauded-for-fostering-diplomatic-relations/>

Construction work on 69MW Lawi Hydropower Project resumed

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has taken a bold step by keeping the Pakistan-China friendship as a priority and resumed construction work on the Lawi Hydropower Project 69 MW in Chitral district that has been suspended due to some security and financial issues since last 9 months.

A financial package has also been announced and security issues have been resolved. Similarly, the 40.8 MW Koto power project in Lower Dir district has also entered in the final stage of completion.

The cheap electricity generated by the project will generate an annual income of more than Rs. 2 billion to the province and create new employment opportunities.

These views have been expressed by the Secretary Energy and Power Nisar Ahmad Khan and Chief Executive PEDO Engineer Naeem Khan during an emergency visit to the project sites of ongoing Lawi HPP, Shishi HPP and Koto HPP in Dir Lower and Chitral districts, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

On this occasion, Project Director Koto Engr. Sultan Room and Deputy Director Engr. Muqem uddin informed about the progress on the project and said that due to security reasons, several workers of Chinese engineer's team working on the project had left their work and returned back to their country.

He expressed that now after security situation has improved Chinese staff is working fast again and the machinery has been brought back while the project is in the final stages of completion.

The Secretary of Energy Nisar Ahmad Khan, while inspecting the Lawi Power Project site at Chitral, issued strict instructions to the project's contractors, consultants and field staff, saying that the project should be completed early by covering the past delaying months of project working.

The security and financial issues faced by the Chinese team have been resolved, and now the excuse for any kind of delay is unbearable.

The Chief Executive Officer PEDO Engr. Naeem Khan said that it is in everyone's interest to complete the Lawi project soon by benefiting from the package of the provincial government.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1049026/construction-work-on-69mw-lawi-hydropower-project-resumed/>

Pakistan Observer

Imran delayed CPEC projects for four years, claims Kaira

PPP leader and Advisor to PM on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira has said that if PTI Chairman Imran Khan was not removed from power, he would have

caused more damage to the country. The PPP leader alleged that Imran Khan delayed the CPEC projects for four years.

Kaira was addressing a launching ceremony of development projects in Lala Musa on Sunday. Lashing out at former prime minister, he said that inflation was at its peak in his tenure. He said that Imran angered friendly countries and as soon as he got power, he vitiated ties with China.

The PPP leader rued that Imran regarded it as his success that a storm of indecency was unleashed on social media. “Now Imran is attacking the Election Commission of Pakistan. He is talking against the state institutions. He has enraged Pakistan’s friends and isolated the country in the comity of nations.

<https://pakobserver.net/imran-delayed-cpec-projects-for-four-years-claims-kaira/>

The News

Chinese support to Pak economy will continue: Nong Rong

Mian Saifur Rehman & Asif Mehmood Butt

ISLAMABAD: Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have agreed on health, industrial, digital and green corridors, ML-1 and Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) besides signing 21 documents of cooperation. Pakistan, China military-to-military ties are mainstay of neighbouring countries friendship. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has enhanced Pakistan’s exports and development capacity and is providing 1/4th of total electricity. Beijing will continue to provide what it can for Islamabad’s economic stability.

These views were expressed by Ambassador of China to Pakistan Nong Rong in an exclusive interview with The News and Daily Jang.

The News: The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was held in October last year. How do you assess the significance of the Congress and General Secretary Xi Jinping’s ‘Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era’ for world development?

Chinese ambassador: On October 16, 2022, the 20th National Congress of CPC was held successfully in Beijing. Pakistan’s President Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and other leaders from Pakistani political parties sent congratulatory messages, which fully demonstrates the iron relationship between China and Pakistan. In his report, General Secretary Xi Jinping mentioned Chinese modernisation for the first time, which has a positive impact on the peaceful development of Asia and the friendship and cooperation between China and Pakistan, and will bring certainty, stability, new dynamics and new opportunities for Asian countries, including Pakistan. China is willing to strengthen exchanges and mutual understanding with Pakistan on their respective concepts, experiences and initiatives for modernisation, so as to achieve common development and prosperity and move towards modernisation together.

TN: What is the present volume of China’s investment in CPEC? How much is direct investment by Chinese companies and what is the rate of return?

Ambassador: CPEC has brought a total of \$25.4 billion direct investment to Pakistan, paid \$2.12 billion of taxes and created 192,000 jobs for the Pakistani people all these years. Chinese companies and projects operating in Pakistan are transparent in doing business. A significant portion of the projects under CPEC are China-aided projects or enjoying preferential loans. CPEC energy projects also follow Pakistan's electricity tariff policy. The policy was formulated before the construction of CPEC IPPs, and was publicly announced to the world to attract international investment. However, at that time, no investor from other countries showed interest except the Chinese enterprises only who made investments. CPEC IPPs provide nearly 1/4th of the electricity supply to Pakistan at its peak, greatly alleviating power shortage and laying a solid foundation for Pakistan's socio-economic development.

TN: Pakistan is grateful to iron brother China for the gift of CPEC. Pakistan is already faced with the worst economic crisis, especially after massive, countrywide floods. Has China rescheduled (or rolled over) loans given to Pakistan for CPEC projects?

Ambassador: China shared with Pakistani brothers the same feelings on heavy floods and has pledged to give more than \$160 million in aid to Pakistan, which is the highest amount pledged by any other country of the world. This aid has come not only from the Chinese government and military, but also from Chinese enterprises in addition to the Chinese community's generous donation. With Pakistan entering the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, the two sides are in close communication regarding the allocation of aid to the most needed areas. Through a long period of cooperation, China has provided what it can to secure Pakistan's financial stability. Last year, China has rolled over 15 billion RMB commercial loans and two billion US dollars deposits to Pakistan. China will continue to provide what it can for the Pakistan's economic stability.

TN: Did the Chinese government and Chinese banks give direct loans to Pakistan government? Did China ever give aid or grant to Pakistan? If so, what are the figures?

Ambassador: China has always supported Pakistan in developing its economy, improving people's livelihood and maintaining financial stability, as our two countries have carried out pragmatic cooperation in the financial field. Pakistan is an important recipient of China's international aid. Taking Gwadar as an example, the new Gwadar International Airport under construction is the largest single foreign aid project of China so far, and the completed Faqeer School, Boai Medical Emergency Centre, Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute are all built with China's aid, and Gwadar East Bay Expressway with preferential loans. The Chinese-aided Gwadar hospital will be completed this year, and the Chinese-aided Gwadar Desalination Plant is under construction and is expected to be completed in June. China has also provided a total of 7,000 sets of solar panels for households in Gwadar over the past two years. Another 10,000 sets of solar panels are under active preparation and will be allocated to poor people in Balochistan. At the same time, Chinese Embassy in Pakistan is also donating household solar units and other assistance to the people of Balochistan.

TN: Are some new projects coming under the CPEC banner following Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit to China? What will be the total volume of new projects? And which types of projects are coming?

Ambassador: Prime Minister Shehbaz's visit to China is the first foreign head of government to visit China after the 20th Party Congress. During the visit, the two sides issued a joint statement and signed 21 cooperation documents. The two sides agreed to advance the implementation of the ML-1 project at an early date in accordance with the leaders' consensus besides actively promoting the KCR project. In accordance with the consensus of the two leaders on accelerating cooperation in agriculture, mining, information technology and social-livelihood areas, the two sides agreed to further build the health corridor, industrial corridor, digital corridor and green corridor. China also encourages Chinese investment in Pakistan's renewable energy sector.

TN: Have Pakistan and China jointly achieved near-perfection level in the assembly/manufacturing of combat and bomber aircraft which match latest air force technology of US, UK, France or Russia?

Ambassador: China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperative partners, true friends and iron brothers that share weal and woe. China is willing to work with Pakistan to accelerate the building of a closer China-Pakistan community of shared future in the new era, join hands to promote the Global Development Initiative and Global Security Initiative. The military-to-military relations, serving as the mainstay of the China-Pakistan friendship, have played an important role in the development of bilateral relations for a long time. The two militaries have achieved fruitful results in fields such as high-level visits, joint training and exercises, anti-pandemic cooperation, equipment and technology, constantly enriching the connotation of bilateral strategic cooperation. The JF-17 and J-10CE fighter jets cooperation that China and Pakistan have continued to promote are progressing smoothly, which is an important achievement of the equipment cooperation between the two sides.

Going forward, under the guidance of the leaders of the two countries, the Chinese and Pakistan militaries stand ready to expand practical cooperation in various fields to a new level and inject a new impetus into the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries, so as to make a new contribution to maintaining regional peace and stability.

TN: What are the reasons that expectations of Pakistanis do not stand fulfilled from CPEC so far? Common people in Pakistan were of the opinion that Beijing's close partnership with Islamabad would help build new transportation and power infrastructure across the country, setting Pakistan's economy on an improved trajectory but this destination is yet to be achieved. Kindly explain.

Ambassador: The first phase of CPEC has made remarkable achievements in the fields of energy, transportation and other infrastructure, adding 6,040 megawatts of electricity, 886 kilometers of transmission line and 510 kilometers of highways, laying a good foundation for Pakistan's socio-economic development. The CPEC is entering the second phase to help Pakistan realise its transition of modern agriculture and industrialisation. "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime," says the old Chinese proverb. China attaches importance to helping Pakistan expand employment and improve labour quality through cooperation, so as to better transform Pakistan's geopolitical, resource and labour advantages into export competitiveness and economic growth. We also

hope that the Pakistani side will provide a safe and stable business environment for Chinese enterprises to invest.

TN: According to a point of view, CPEC programme has sparked a rise in the country's debt. The International Monetary Fund has also warned that CPEC has contributed to a widening current-account deficit in Pakistan, as the country imported billions of dollars of materials for the projects. Pakistan also experienced a balance-of-payments crisis and had to approach IMF for bailout.

Ambassador: China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic partners who are with each other through thick and thin, and share both the honour and disgrace. CPEC, with the spirit of win-win cooperation, is welcomed by the government and people of Pakistan. CPEC not only includes self-financing investments by Chinese enterprises such as IPPs, but also includes low-interest loans and aid projects provided by the Chinese government. Through cooperation, Pakistan has strengthened its development capacity and expanded its exports. For example, CPEC energy projects provide 1/4th of Pakistan's electricity supply and secure sufficient energy for export industries in cities such as Lahore and Faisalabad. With the help of CPEC project, the Thar coal has started benefitting the country. Prime Minister Shehbaz's publicly stated that the comprehensive development of Thar could save Pakistan \$6 billion foreign exchange. To facilitate the development of Balochistan, China has completed Gwadar East Bay Expressway, and granted Gwadar New International Airport, Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute, as well as China-Pakistan Friendship Hospital. China has also provided medical supplies, intelligent classrooms for primary and secondary schools in Pakistan under the framework of social-livelihood Joint Working Group under CPEC. CPEC also drives the development of related industries in Pakistan. Before Ceramics and other nine Chinese-invested enterprises stationed in Faisalabad M3 Industrial Park, Pakistan spent about two billion US dollars a year to import ceramic tiles. With this investment, Pakistan significantly reduced imported of high-quality ceramics, helping Pakistan to save foreign exchange reserves.

The second phase of CPEC will increase investment in industry, agriculture, science and technology and information technology, particularly the huge potential and growth of Pakistan's agricultural exports surplus with China, which grew nearly 13 times in 2021.

This year, Pakistan's agricultural exports to China are expected to exceed \$1 billion. Among them, other agriculture and other new business models are fruitful, and Pakistan's sesame exports to China have exceeded \$100 million this year. At the same time, China provides loans to Pakistan for the purpose of financial stability and economic development, and the two sides have maintained good communication and coordination. China has never been compulsive in this regard. As far as we know, Western financial institutions are the largest creditors of Pakistan. We hope that all parties can help the Pakistani economy to strengthen its foundation and do something solid, rather than blaming the other party (China) which is doing the real things.

TN: Pakistanis are also concerned about the slow pace of completion of CPEC projects which were put on hold and then rebooted in a slimmed-down package.

Ambassador: CPEC has maintained its momentum even during the epidemic. Last year, Kalot hydropower plant, Thar TEL power plant, Gwadar East Bay Expressway have begun operation. The Sino-Pakistani joint statement issued during Prime Minister Shehbaz's visit to China pointed out that the two leaders agreed to advance the implementation of the ML-1 project, actively promoting the KCR project, accelerating Gwadar Port and the Free Zone, building the Health Corridor, Industrial Corridor, Digital Corridor and Green Corridor with related cooperation. CPEC is making solid progress towards becoming a benchmark project for the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative.

TN: China's policy is of non-intervention plus shared prosperity. If China reconciles with India and then brokers peace between India and Pakistan, it can form a big bloc in Asia to counter United States' hegemony. Do you agree?

Envoy: Both India and Pakistan are friendly neighbours of China and big developing countries at a critical stage of development. China is committed to growing friendly relations with both countries. China would also like to work with Pakistan and India to inject more positive energy into regional peace and stability as well as development.

TN: US-led West is now fully focused on Asia and the surrounding region where Russia and China are apparently their competitors/ adversaries/ challengers/ potential threat to the West's hegemony. India and Australia are undeniably being nurtured and cultivated to be used against Russia and China. LEMOA, COMCASA and BECA agreements are clear manifestations. Confrontation is fraught with dangers of nuclear war. Your comments please.

Ambassador: China holds that any regional cooperation framework should conform to the trend of the times for peace and development and enhance mutual trust and cooperation among regional countries. It should not target third parties or undermine their interests, and should not be decidedly selective or exclusive.

China advocates the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, and holds that the future of the world should be decided by all countries together. Countries should build partnerships featuring equal treatment, consultation and mutual understanding. Major countries should take the lead in charting a new course of international engagement of dialogue and partnership rather than confrontation and alliance. Creating "small cliques" is reversing the course of history. Forging "small groups" is against the trend of history. The US creates the so-called "Indo-Pacific strategy" to rope in regional countries to encircle and contain China, and claims to "shape the strategic environment around Beijing". This move to gang up on China will get no support and is doomed to fail.

TN: US Ambassador Donald Blome, in an interview, said investment in Pakistan, whether of United States or China, should be transparent and subjected to same scrutiny. Your views, sir?

Ambassador: China and Pakistan have had fruitful economic and financial cooperation. The Pakistani people know it best. Instead of passing unwarranted criticism against China-Pakistan cooperation, it is better to do something real and beneficial for the people of Pakistan.

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=164802>

Jang News

معاشی استحکام کیلئے پاکستان سے ہر ممکن تعاون کریں گے، مغربی مالیاتی ادارے الزام تراشی نہیں ٹھوس مدد کریں، چینی سفیر

۔ لاہور (آصف محمود بٹ، میاں سیف الرحمن) پاکستان میں چین کے سفیر نوگ روگ نے کہا ہے کہ چین کو گھیرنے کیلئے امریکی انڈیپینڈنٹ حکمت عملی ناکام بنائیں گے۔

معاشی استحکام کیلئے پاکستان سے ہر ممکن تعاون کیا جائے گا، مغربی مالیاتی ادارے بھی الزام تراشی نہیں ٹھوس مدد کریں، پاکستان نے سی بی کے تونائی منصوبوں سے ترقی کی صلاحیت کو مضبوط کیا، گوادریز زیر تعمیر ایئر پورٹ چین کا ایک کاسب سے بڑا غیر ملکی امدادی منصوبہ ہے۔

پاکستان میں سیلاب متاثرین کیلئے 160 ملین ڈالر امدادی، اسلام آباد اور نئی دہلی کے ساتھ علاقائی امن و استحکام اور ترقی کیلئے کام کرنے کے خواہش مند ہیں، امریکا، بھارت اور آسٹریلیا کو چین، روس کی خلاف استعمال کرنے کیلئے ان کی مدد کر رہا ہے۔

تجارتی قرضے اور دو بلین امریکی ڈالر فراہم کیے ہیں، دونوں ممالک اسٹریٹجک پارٹنر ہیں جو تمام اچھے برے حالات میں RMB گزشتہ سال، چین نے پاکستان کو 15 بلین ساتھ کھڑے ہیں، سی بی کے نے کورونا وبا کے دوران بھی اپنی رفتار برقرار رکھی ہے، چین نے سی بی کے میں مجموعی طور پر مجموعی طور پر 25.4 ارب ڈالر کی براہ راست سرمایہ کاری کی، 2.12 ارب ڈالر ٹیکس ادا کیا اور پاکستانی عوام کیلئے ایک لاکھ 92 ہزار ملازمتیں پیدا کیں، پاکستان میں کام کرنے والی چینی کمپنیوں کے کاروبار سمیت دیگر تمام منصوبے شفاف ہیں۔

روزنامہ ”جنگ“ اور ”دی نیوز“ کو خصوصی انٹرویو میں نوگ روگ نے کہا کہ امریکہ نے چین کو گھیرے میں لینے اور اس پر قابو پانے کے لیے علاقائی ممالک میں ایک نام نہاد ”انڈیپینڈنٹ حکمت عملی“ بنائی ہے، اور بیجنگ کے ارد گرد اسٹریٹجک ماحول کو تشکیل دینے کا دعویٰ کرتا ہے۔ چین کے خلاف گروہ بندی کرنے کے اس اقدام کو کوئی حمایت نہیں ملے گی اور اسے ناکام بنا دیں گے۔

چین نے پاکستانی بھائیوں کے ساتھ شدید سیلاب پر بھی اظہارِ یکجہتی کرتے ہوئے اپنے جذبات دکھائے اور پاکستان کو 160 ملین ڈالر سے زائد کی امداد دینے کا وعدہ کیا ہے جو کہ دنیا کے کسی بھی ملک کی طرف سے سب سے زیادہ رقم ہے۔ یہ امداد نہ صرف چینی حکومت اور فوج کی طرف سے آئی ہے بلکہ چینی کاروباری اداروں کی طرف سے بھی چینی کمیونٹی کے فراخ دلانہ عطیہ کے علاوہ ہے۔

انہوں نے کہا کہ چین نے ہمیشہ پاکستان کی معیشت کو ترقی دینے، پاکستانی لوگوں کی زندگی کو بہتر بنانے اور مالیاتی استحکام کو برقرار رکھنے میں مدد کی ہے کیونکہ دونوں ممالک نے مالیاتی شعبے میں عملی تعاون کیا ہے۔ نوگ روگ نے گوادریز کو مثال کے طور پر لیتے ہوئے کہا کہ گوادریز کا نیا بین الاقوامی زیر تعمیر ہوائی اڈہ چین کا اب تک کاسب سے بڑا واحد غیر ملکی امدادی منصوبہ ہے۔

انہوں نے کہا کہ مکمل شدہ فقیر اسکول، بوئی میڈیکل ایمرجنسی سنٹر، پاک چائنا ٹیکنیکل اینڈ ووکیشنل انسٹی ٹیوٹ سب چین کی امداد سے تعمیر کیے گئے ہیں اور گوادریز بے ایکسپریس وے ترجیحی قرضوں کے ساتھ چینی امداد سے چلنے والا گوادریز ہسپتال اس سال مکمل ہو جائے گا، اور چینی امداد سے گوادریز سسٹیننس پلانٹ زیر تعمیر ہے اور توقع ہے کہ جون میں مکمل ہو جائے گا۔

چین نے گزشتہ دو سالوں میں گوادریز میں گھرانوں کے لیے سولر پینلز کے کل 7000 سیٹ فراہم کیے ہیں۔ سولر پینلز کے مزید 10,000 سیٹ فعال تیاری کے تحت ہیں اور انہیں بلوچستان کے غریب لوگوں کے لیے مختص کیا جائے گا۔

اس کے ساتھ ساتھ پاکستان میں چینی سفارتخانہ بھی بلوچستان کے لوگوں کو گھریلو سولر پورٹ اور دیگر امداد فراہم کر رہا ہے۔

وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف چین کی 20 ویں پارٹی کانگریس کے بعد چین کا دورہ کرنے والے پہلے غیر ملکی سربراہ حکومت ہیں۔ دورے کے دوران دونوں فریقوں نے ایک مشترکہ بیان جاری کیا اور تعاون کی 21 دستاویزات پر دستخط کیے۔

منصوبے کے نفاذ کو جلد 1-ML دونوں فریقوں نے کے سی آر (کراچی سرکلر یلوے) منصوبے کو فعال طور پر فروغ دینے کے علاوہ قائدین کے اتفاق رائے کے مطابق از جلد آگے بڑھانے پر اتفاق کیا۔

زراعت، کان کنی، انفارمیشن ٹیکنالوجی اور سماجی زندگی کے شعبوں میں تعاون کو تیز کرنے پر دونوں رہنماؤں کے اتفاق رائے کے مطابق، دونوں فریقوں نے ہیلتھ کوریڈور، انڈسٹریل کوریڈور، ڈیجیٹل کوریڈور اور گرین کوریڈور کو مزید تعمیر کرنے پر اتفاق کیا۔

کے پہلے مرحلے نے توانائی، نقل و حمل CPEC چین پاکستان کے قابل تجدید توانائی کے شعبے میں چینی سرمایہ کاری کی بھی حوصلہ افزائی کرتا ہے۔ چینی سفیر نے کہا کہ اور دیگر بنیادی ڈھانچے کے شعبوں میں نمایاں کامیابیاں حاصل کی ہیں، جس میں 6,040 میگا واٹ بجلی، 886 کلومیٹر ٹرانسمیشن لائن اور 510 کلومیٹر ہائی ویز شامل ہیں، جس سے پاکستان کی سماجی و اقتصادی ترقی کی ایک اچھی بنیاد رکھی گئی ہے۔

دوسرے مرحلے میں داخل ہو رہا ہے تاکہ پاکستان کو جدید زراعت اور صنعت کاری کی منتقلی کا احساس ہو سکے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ ایک پرانی چینی کہاوت ہے ”CPEC آدمی کو ایک مچھلی دو اور تم اسے ایک دن کھلا سکو گے اگر ایک آدمی کو مچھلی پکڑنا سکھاؤ گے تو تم اسے زندگی بھر کھانا کھا سکتے ہو“۔ ہمیں یہ بھی امید ہے کہ پاکستانی حکومت چینی کاروباری اداروں کو سرمایہ کاری کے لیے محفوظ اور مستحکم کاروباری ماحول فراہم کرے گی۔

پروگرام نے ملک کے قرضوں میں اضافے کو جنم دیا ہے۔ بین الاقوامی مالیاتی CPEC جنگ ” اور ”دی نیوز“ کی طرف سے ایک سوال کہ ایک نقطہ نظر کے مطابق، ”نے پاکستان میں کرنٹ اکاؤنٹ خسارے کو بڑھانے میں اہم کردار ادا کیا ہے، کیونکہ ملک نے منصوبوں کے لیے اربوں ڈالر کامواد CPEC فنڈ نے بھی خبردار کیا ہے کہ درآمد کیا ہے۔

پاکستان کو بھی ادائیگیوں کے توازن کے بحران کا سامنا کرنا پڑا اور اسے بیل آؤٹ کے لیے آئی ایم ایف سے رجوع کرنا پڑا کہ جواب میں نون روٹنگ نے کہا کہ چین اور پاکستان ہمہ وقت کے اسٹریٹجک پارٹنر ہیں جو ایک دوسرے کے ساتھ تمام اچھے برے حالات میں ساتھ کھڑے ہیں۔

میں نہ صرف چینی اداروں جیسے آئی پی CPEC کا پاکستان کی حکومت اور عوام خیر مقدم کرتے ہیں۔ CPEC چینی سفیر نے کہا کہ جیت کے تعاون کے جذبے کے ساتھ پیز کی سیلف فنانسنگ سرمایہ کاری شامل ہے بلکہ اس میں چینی حکومت کی طرف سے فراہم کردہ کم سود والے قرضے اور امدادی منصوبے بھی شامل ہیں۔

توانائی کے منصوبے پاکستان کی بجلی کی CPEC تعاون کے ذریعے پاکستان نے اپنی ترقی کی صلاحیت کو مضبوط کیا ہے اور اپنی برآمدات کو بڑھایا ہے۔ مثال کے طور پر، فراہمی کا ایک چوتھائی حصہ فراہم کرتے ہیں اور لاہور اور فیصل آباد جیسے شہروں میں برآمدی صنعتوں کے لیے توانائی کا ایک بڑا حصہ فراہم کرتے ہیں، سی پیک منصوبے کی مدد سے تھر کے کونکے سے ملک کو فائدہ پہنچانا شروع ہو گیا ہے۔

کے تحت سماجی زندگی کے CPEC وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف نے عوامی سطح پر کہا کہ تھر کی جامع ترقی سے پاکستان کے لئے 6 ارب ڈالر کاروبار مبادلہ بچا جاسکتا ہے۔ چین نے کلاس روم بھی فراہم کیے ہیں۔ (intelligent) مشترکہ ورکنگ گروپ کے فریم ورک کے تحت پاکستان میں پرائمری اور سیکنڈری سکولوں کے لیے طبی سامان اور انڈسٹریل پارک میں کام کرنے والی سرامکس اور دیگر نو چینی سرمایہ کاری والے M3 پاکستان میں متعلقہ صنعتوں کی ترقی کو بھی آگے بڑھاتا ہے۔ فیصل آباد CPEC اداروں سے پہلے، پاکستان نے سرامک ٹائلز درآمد کرنے کے لیے سالانہ تقریباً دو ارب امریکی ڈالر خرچ کیے تھے۔

کادوسر امرحہ CPEC اس سرمایہ کاری سے، پاکستان نے اعلیٰ معیار کے سرائیکس کی درآمد میں نمایاں کمی کی، جس سے پاکستان کو زر مبادلہ کے ذخائر بچانے میں مدد ملی۔ صنعت، زراعت، سائنس و ٹیکنالوجی اور انفارمیشن ٹیکنالوجی کے شعبوں میں سرمایہ کاری میں اضافہ کرے گا

خاص طور پر جس میں 2021 میں چین کے ساتھ پاکستان کی زرعی برآمدات کے سرپلس کی بڑی صلاحیت اور نمو تقریباً 13 گنا اضافہ ہوا ہے۔ اس سال چین کو پاکستان کی زرعی برآمدات میں اضافہ ہوا ہے جو 1 بلین ڈالر سے زیادہ ہونے کی توقع ہے۔ اس سال پاکستان کی چین کو تلوں کی برآمدات 100 ملین ڈالر سے تجاوز کر گئی ہیں۔

اس کے ساتھ ساتھ، چین پاکستان کو مالی استحکام اور اقتصادی ترقی کے مقصد کے لیے قرض فراہم کر رہا ہے اور دونوں فریقوں نے اچھے رابطے اور ہم آہنگی کو برقرار رکھا ہے۔ چین اس سلسلے میں کبھی مجبور نہیں رہا۔

گزشتہ سال کلٹ ہائیڈرو پاور پلانٹ، تھرٹیل پاور پلانٹ، گوادر ایسٹ بے ایکسپریس وے نے کام شروع کر دیا ہے۔

وزیراعظم شہباز شریف کے دورہ چین کے دوران جاری ہونے والے پاک چین مشترکہ بیان میں نشانہ بندی کی گئی کہ دونوں رہنماؤں نے ایم ایل ون منصوبے پر عملدرآمد کو آگے بڑھانے، کے سی آر منصوبے کو فعال طور پر فروغ دینے، گوادر پورٹ اور فری زون کو تیز کرنے، ہیلتھ کوریڈور، صنعتی کوریڈور ڈیجیٹل کوریڈور اور گرین کوریڈور کو مشترکہ تعاون کے ساتھ تعمیر پر اتفاق کیا۔

بیلٹ اینڈ روڈ انیشیٹیو کے اعلیٰ معیار کی ترقی کے لیے ایک بیج مارک پروجیکٹ بننے کی جانب ٹھوس پیش رفت کر رہا ہے۔ چینی سفیر نے کہا کہ ہندوستان اور CPEC پاکستان دونوں ہی چین کے ہمسایہ دوست ہیں اور ترقی کے ایک نازک مرحلے پر بڑے ترقی پذیر ممالک ہیں۔

چین دونوں ممالک کے ساتھ بڑھتے ہوئے دوستانہ تعلقات کے لیے پر عزم ہے۔ چین پاکستان اور بھارت کے ساتھ مل کر علاقائی امن و استحکام اور ترقی میں مزید مثبت کوششیں کرنے کے لیے بھی کام کرنا چاہتا ہے۔

امریکہ کی قیادت میں مغرب اب پوری طرح سے ایشیا اور آس پاس کے خطے پر نظریں مرکوز کئے ہوئے ہے جہاں روس اور چین بظاہر ان کے حریف / مخالف ہیں، LEMOA جو مغرب کی بالادستی کے لیے ممکنہ خطرہ ہیں۔ بھارت اور آسٹریلیا کو روس اور چین کے خلاف استعمال کرنے کے لیے بلاشبہ ان کی سپورٹ کی جارہی ہے۔

معاهدے اس کا واضح مظہر ہیں۔ BECA اور COMCASA

<https://jang.com.pk/news/1179899>

January 10, 2023

Pakistan Observer

Qin Gang lauded as new Chinese FM

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday held a telephone conversation with Qin Gang, the newly appointed Foreign Minister of China. Conveying his felicitations on Foreign Minister Qin's new appointment, the foreign minister noted that Pakistan and China are time-tested friends and All-Weather Partners, with a long history of mutual support and cooperation. The two foreign ministers discussed regional issues of mutual interest.

They reaffirmed commitment of Pakistan and China to advance the bilateral All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. The foreign minister thanked Foreign Minister Qin for China's active participation in and support for the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan being held in

Geneva. China's generous and timely assistance for post-flood reconstruction was a source of comfort for millions in Pakistan, and served as a glowing example of international cooperation, he added.—APP

<https://pakobserver.net/qin-gang-lauded-as-new-chinese-fm/>

3rd ship carrying 31,000MT fertiliser to dock at Gwadar Port today

Out of the two lac tons of urea fertiliser imports, the third ship carrying 31,000 metric tons of urea fertiliser is all set to dock at Gwadar Port on 10th January.

According to Gwadar Pro Monday, the first ship carrying 32,000 metric tons berthed on Dec 29 and the second ship carrying 31,500 tons was anchored on Jan 1. All bulk cargo consignments are being processed and transported through Gwadar Port in phases. This is the first time that Gwadar port has provided services of handling, processing and administrative operation to the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) which belongs to the public sector.

Before, all the import consignments including wheat import under the Afghan transit trade agreement and fertiliser imports for different companies were processed and transported from Gwadar port solely for the private sector.

Gwadar Port is making all this happen in collaboration with Gwadar International Terminal Limited (GITL) and National Logistic Cell (NLC).

<https://pakobserver.net/3rd-ship-carrying-31000mt-fertiliser-to-dock-at-gwadar-port-today/>

APCOYF chief lauds Chinese envoy's services

President All-Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation (APCOYF) Aasma Ismail has said that Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong's services in enhancing Pakistan-China relations were of great value as through his efforts, Pakistan-China friendship and diplomatic relations have become stronger and more stable. She expressed these views on the occasion of a special event for the celebration of the Chinese New Year organized by the Embassy of the People's Republic of China here, a news release said. She also held a meeting with the Chinese ambassador, during which the ways to further cement the Pakistan-China relations were discussed.

Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong praised the services of Aasma Ismail for the Federation and invited her to visit China. He said that Aasma Ismail played a vital role in strengthening Pakistan-China friendship from the platform of her organization. Nong Rong said that after three years of continuous efforts, the Chinese government was able to control Covid-19. "Now, as before, China's doors are open for tourists and business communities from around the world," he said. Aasma Ismail thanked Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong and said she was planning to organize the Pakistani Youth Cultural Show in different cities in China in July 2023 from the platform of the All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation. "We wanted to make a film on Pak-China friendship, the story of which is in the final stages. It is our effort to further strengthen the Pakistan-China friendship that would remain forever," she added.

She also presented an honorary shield to Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong in recognition of his valuable services. Later, Aasma Ismail, in her address to the participants of the event, said, “We congratulate the Chinese Communist Party on its success. We support the Pakistan–China youth policies of President Xi Jinping.” She said that Pakistan-China relations have become more stable with the passage of time.

<https://pakobserver.net/apcoyf-chief-lauds-chinese-envoys-services/>

The Express Tribune

Govt plans one-stop service for SEZs

Bill will be presented in parliament to facilitate investors by doing away with lengthy processes

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to introduce a “one-stop service” for developing industrial infrastructure in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) being set up under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) by passing the One Stop Service Act.

The idea behind the legislation is to facilitate domestic and foreign investors desiring to set up industrial units in the SEZs by ending lengthy processes like obtaining no-objection certifications (NOCs), clearances, licences and permits as well as waiting for essential services.

Sources told The Express Tribune that the federal cabinet, in a recent meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, gave the go-ahead to the draft One Stop Service Bill, which was forwarded to the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases (CCLC) for approval. The bill will also be presented in parliament for a formal approval.

At present, the process of setting up industrial units is so cumbersome that the investors require around 28 NOCs for building industrial infrastructure in the SEZs. However, if approved, the new law will lead to time-bound accelerated processing of applications.

Sources said that a major bottleneck to the achievement of CPEC goals was that Pakistan and China had not been able to establish industrial concerns in the SEZs, as envisaged in the CPEC plan.

Accelerated industrialisation is required to enhance and diversify Pakistan’s exports, which have been stagnant for the past many years.

According to a Board of Investment (BOI) summary presented in the cabinet meeting, the Special Economic Zones Act 2012 has been passed for the establishment, development and efficient operations of SEZs by providing a legal and regulatory framework to encourage domestic and international investors for the promotion and establishment of industrial infrastructure and other related matters.

The Act provides certain fiscal and allied incentives to the zone enterprises and developers. However, the benefits can be reaped by setting up businesses within the stipulated timelines.

“The provision of required permits, certifications and NOCs as well as provision of public services in a timely manner plays a key role in enabling timely ‘colonisation’ of an SEZ,” the summary said.

In this regard, the single-window service in a time-bound manner was globally acknowledged as a critical component to foster investment in economic zones, it added.

This facility is required to attract and retain investors that ensures accelerated processing of applications and requests for all essential services, clearances, licences and permits, with the aim of simplifying procedures and removing redundancies.

During the meeting the cabinet was told that many attempts had been made in the past at the federal and provincial levels to facilitate investment through such a service.

However, those attempts could not bear fruit in the absence of a legal cover and administrative coordination that could enable a special regime to override the general provisions in the existing legal statutes.

BOI, being the premier investment promotion agency, had formulated an all-inclusive one-stop service that could enable end-to-end services to the investors in SEZs through the use of digital means, the meeting was told.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2395065/govt-plans-one-stop-service-for-sezs>

Capitalise on China’s footwear market: PFMA

Says footwear exports are stuck at \$156 million

LAHORE: Speaking to *The Express Tribune* in an exclusive interview, the Pakistan Footwear Manufacturer Association (PFMA) Chairman, Mansoor Ehsan, expressed fear over losing the Chinese footwear export market to the ongoing economic crisis in Pakistan.

“As a footwear industry, we depend a lot on China in terms of raw material and expertise. The ongoing economic crisis, however, is forcing them to look to other economies to relocate its exports industry of over \$50 billion,” said Ehsan.

The PFMA chairman said that they are relocating to countries like Cambodia and Laos and that, “it is be our bad luck if we fail to get some share from this relocation”.

“Our footwear exports are stuck at \$156 million, if we want to take this figure to at least \$1 billion we need joint ventures either in raw material or exports with our Chinese counterparts. Currently, however, they are reluctant to come to Pakistan,” he said.

“Our aim is to get the required human resource skills to boost the industry and exports so the country can make some dollars, and right now, China is our best bet. But the government doesn’t seem interested in capitalising on the opportunity,” lamented Ehsan.

“We are not demanding any monetary benefits. All we need is the government’s moral support and the provision of some basic incentives for the export-oriented industries, so that foreign investors consider their investments to be ‘safe and healthy’ in Pakistan,” Ehsaan added.

In the past few years, Pakistan's footwear industry has matured significantly and has even managed to secure exports to some European and Middle Eastern countries. The country produces around 500 million pairs of shoes annually and is looking to increase its local market share, which according to them currently stands at a 60:40 ratio (local production/imports).

Apart from increasing its local market share, the association is also looking to increase its capacity to cater to a share of the EU's \$55 billion footwear import market and North America's \$57 billion import market.

"To take full advantage of the scope of footwear exports for Pakistan we need to upgrade our technology and train our human resource," suggested the PFMA chairman, adding that, "For this, we have to collaborate with our foreign counterparts, mainly China."

"Bangladesh is a great example – just two years ago their exports were only \$50 million. Today, their exports are touching the \$2 billion mark," he said.

"This is a pivotal time for this industry and we cannot make progress without government's support both in local and export markets. As a nation, we should try and take advantage of the Chinese footwear sector's relocation or we will miss a big opportunity, and of course billions of dollars in export revenue," added the chairman.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2395049/capitalise-on-chinas-footwear-market-pfma>

The Nation

Joint operation agreement of Pak-China Technical Institute signed

ISLAMABAD - In a major development at Gwadar, the signing ceremony for the joint operation agreement of Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCT & VI), built with a Chinese grant under CPEC was held at Gwadar Business Centre on Monday. The joint operation agreement was signed among Shandong Institute of Commerce and Technology (SICT), Gwadar Port Authority (GPA), the University of Gwadar (UoG), China Overseas Ports Holding Company (COPHC) for providing free of cost six-month short courses and three-year diploma programmes with hands-on technical and professional training to thousands of youths of Gwadar. Participants will be students of the first batch of representative students from University of Gwadar, local employees of COPHC, GPA and COPHC officers. Teachers and officers from SICT will join the ceremony online. Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCT & VI) was gifted and handed over by the Chinese government to GPA in September 2021 with an intent to train, prepare and equip the youth of Gwadar/Makran/Balochistan with skill sets for the future needs of Gwadar port, Free zones, smart city, new international airport and other CPEC projects pertaining to commerce, marine industry, market-based businesses, modern fish practices, real estate, tourism, construction and hospitality and other allied industries. As per the joint operation agreement, GPA is responsible for supplying spaces and supporting facilities to meet the requirements of teaching, office, and accommodation in the existing new building of PCT & VI. It will cooperate with all government departments to handle relevant procedures as per Pakistan laws and regulations. It will also coordinate with COPHC for internship and preferential

employment of qualified students of PCT & VI. University of Gwadar will be responsible for the operationalisation of the institute at international standards.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-10/page-10/detail-2>

Express News

سی بیگ نے بلوچستان میں 2 لاکھ ملازمتیں پیدا کیں

سی بیگ نے بلوچستان میں 2 لاکھ ملازمتیں پیدا کیں جبکہ مستقبل قریب میں مزید مواقع پیدا ہوں گے۔: اسلام آباد

سی بیگ پاکستان میں براہ راست غیر ملکی سرمایہ کاری راغب کرنے کیلئے بڑا منصوبہ بن سکتا ہے۔ افغانستان، ایران اور وسط ایشیائی ریاستیں سی بیگ میں شامل ہونے کیلئے بے چین ہیں، جس سے بلوچستان میں خوشحالی آئے گی۔ گوادر بندرگاہ اور فری زون سے 40 ہزار ملازمتیں پیدا ہو سکتی ہیں اور ان سے بلوچستان کیلئے 70 ارب ڈالر کی آمدن پیدا کرنے کی صلاحیت ہے۔ چین نے آئل ریفائنری کیلئے 4.5 ارب ڈالر کی سرمایہ کاری کا عہد کیا جبکہ سعودی عرب، گوادر میں آئل ریفائنری کے قیام میں دلچسپی رکھتا ہے۔ پاکستان اور چین مقامی لوگوں کو زیادہ سے زیادہ ملازمتیں دینا چاہتے ہیں، اس مقصد کیلئے ووکیشنل اینڈ ٹیکنیکل ٹریننگ انسٹی ٹیوٹ قائم کیا جا رہا ہے

<https://www.express.pk/story/2425971/6/>

K2 Daily News

<p>بنف 31</p> <p>کین کنٹریل اینڈ ریگولیشن (PCT & VI) کے مشورہ کارپوریشن کے معاہدے پر دستخط۔ گوادر پورٹ کے مطابق مشورہ کارپوریشن کے معاہدے کے تحت شیڈولڈ انسٹی ٹیوٹ آف کامرس اینڈ جینالوجی (SICT)، گوادر پورٹ اتھارٹی (GPA)، پانچوٹی آف گوادر (UoG)، چانکا اور سیز پورٹس ہولڈنگ کمپنی (COPHC) کے درمیان جے ماہ کے طے کر س ملت کر رہے جائیں گے۔ گوادر کے پڑاوں نوجوانوں کو فنی اور پیشہ ورانہ تربیت کے ساتھ کورسز اور تین سالہ ڈپلومہ پروگرام کروانے جائیں گے۔</p>	<p>سی بیگ، پاک چین ٹیکنیکل اینڈ ووکیشنل انسٹی ٹیوٹ کا پہلا نیا انتظامی ماڈل متعارف</p> <p>گوادر (آئی این پی) گوادر میں ایک اور اہم پیش رفت، سی بیگ کے تحت چینی گرانٹ سے تعمیر کیے گئے پاک (باقی صفحہ 7 نمبر 31)</p>
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https://www.epaper.dailyk2.com/Home?Issue=NP_ICT&Page=Back_Page

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

January 11, 2023

Daily Times

Large number of Chinese tourists expected to visit Pakistan in 2023

After three gloomy years of cross-border tourism between Pakistan and China due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the year 2023, the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges, is expected to witness a boom in the tourism sector in both countries.

“Exchanges have already started online. We are also working with Chinese tourism associations to develop business linkages. Soon we’ll finalize a calendar of events and

activities”, Aftab ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) told China Economic Net (CEN). He believes that China, one of the biggest players in the tourism economy at the global level, will find a lot to explore in Pakistan, where a lot of business opportunities are coming up for individual investments in the tourism and hospitality sector.

“Many Chinese people working under CPEC returned to China during the pandemic, now it’s time for them to come back with their families for a good visit. I expect that a number of Chinese tourists will visit Pakistan if we have better facilitation of border crossing, economical air ticket packages, and inter-city transportation between major cities like Beijing, Urumqi, Islamabad, Lahore...”, he said.

The traffic will be two-way. He told CEN reporter that in China, the silk route is a very popular travel route that has also attracted many tourists from Europe. In Pakistan, the rich history, culture, festivity, and music will offer a unique travel experience. In this regard, PTDC has already developed a detailed guidebook on Pakistan in Chinese. Video films on Pakistan will also be developed with subtitles in Chinese to help Chinese tourists know more about Pakistan. A working committee having representatives of both the sides will be formed to make the collaboration in tourism promotion more fruitful.

“It’s the most favorable time for bilateral tourism. It’s also time to make the visa policy more tourist-friendly on both sides. Tour operators should be encouraged to develop group tour packages so groups of tourists could go an organized matter on a set itinerary and see the beautiful sites on both sides”, he further said.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1049951/large-number-of-chinese-tourists-expected-to-visit-pakistan-in-2023/>

Pakistan Observer

BRI and Turkmenistan: A Way of Progress and Prosperity

By Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

The West “New Great Game” syndrome has been purposefully disseminating in the Central Asian Region against China which has become the largest trading partner and the biggest investor in which One Belt One Road Initiative (BRI) has played an important role.

According to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce (April 2017) since 2013, US\$304.9 billion in contracts have been signed between China and the economies along the route.

A substantial FDI has been poured into Turkmenistan, the 2nd largest country of the region in diverse sectors of economy including energy, oil & gas, infrastructure, transport, ICT, IT and last but not the least, industrialization under the flagship project of the BRI.

Now the two countries announced the decision to elevate the China-Turkmenistan relationship to a “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership” in Beijing. Since 2011, China has remained Turkmenistan’s largest trading partner.

According to China Customs statistics (December 2022) from January to August in 2022, bilateral trade between the two sides reached \$6.9 billion, an increase of 52.4 percent year on

year, of which Chinese imports were \$6.36 billion, a year-on-year growth of 50.1 percent, and exports of \$540 million, representing an 87.3-percent expansion year on year.

It is good omen that gradually Turkmenistan is progressively opening itself to the outer world with the development of large scale infrastructure projects including transnational energy projects and multimodal regional transport corridors.

Interestingly, Turkmenistan is ideally located between Central Asia, Middle East, South Asia and the Caucasus due to which Turkmenistan would become a major “connecting hub”.

In June 2016, in Tashkent, former Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov met the Chinese President Xi Jinping and had discussed further cooperation with the Belt and Road Initiative.

Turkmenistan is one of the biggest suppliers of natural gas to China and a key country of the China-Central Asia Gas Pipeline project.

Till June 2022, the China-Central Asia Gas Pipeline has delivered more than 400 billion cubic meters of natural gas to China over the last 12-plus years.

On the one hand, the pipeline helped replace the use of 532 million tonnes of coal during this period, equivalent to the reduction of 8.8 million tonnes of harmful substances and 568 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.

On the other hand, the project’s company has provided more than 22,000 jobs and trained some 110,000 local employees in Turkmenistan.

Moreover, China has become the largest trading partner of Turkmenistan. 70% of Turkmen exports, mostly gas transmitted to China while Turkmenistan has become the third largest trading partner of China in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the two countries have been each other’s largest cooperative partner in natural gas since 2016.

In addition, Turkmenistan also acts as a corridor for China to reach important import and export markets in South Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and beyond as well as access to the Caspian Sea which lies on the country’s western border. Turkmenistan’s largest export market is China, which accounted for 76.6 percent of all products in the first quarter of 2022.

China and Turkmenistan established their diplomatic relations in 1992. The early decades of the relationship saw the signing of several bilateral agreements and treaties which included a bilateral investment treaty (BIT) in 1992 and a double taxation agreement (DTA) in 2009.

Most recently, the President of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedow was on a state visit to China at the invitation of his Chinese counterpart, President Xi Jinping. The visit, scheduled between January 5 and 6, represents Berdimuhamedow’s first official visit to Beijing since taking over the presidency.

During the two-day official visit, numerous MOUs were inked which would be a value addition for the further strengthening of bilateral relations and BRI between the two countries in the days to come.

MOUs were signed to promote investment cooperation in the digital economy, green development, “Revival of the Great Silk Road” and “One Belt and One Road”; energy, oil,

gas exploration between Türkmengaz (Turkmen Gas) State Concern and the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), health, education, tourism, culture, media and last but not least, sports,

Interestingly, before the launch of China's BRI, Turkmenistan had already planned several strategic energy infrastructure projects and corridors.

However, at the time, these initiatives were limited in their scope, resources and participation. Since their involvement in the BRI scheme, these projects have now been able to advance their goal of becoming intercontinental corridors with access to significant transportation networks and energy security

. It includes the Turkmenistan-China Gas Pipeline, the International North-South Transportation Corridor, the Lapis Lazuli International Transit Corridor and the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline.

According to statistics from China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), in 2020, China's direct investment in Turkmenistan reached US\$211 million.

By the end of 2020, China's accumulated direct investment in Turkmenistan was US\$336 million. In 2020, Chinese enterprises signed 27 new project contracts in Turkmenistan with a total value of US\$457 million and a total turnover of US\$165 million.

Most of the new Chinese projects are contracted and implemented mainly in the fields of natural gas exploration and development and technical services.

To conclude, the two countries' friendship has deepened mutual understanding and learned from each other in terms of culture, tradition and worldview.

The great Silk Road that connects the two countries is a bridge of not only trade but also cultural exchanges.

At present, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Turkmenistan's development strategy to revive the Silk Road are gaining more and more synergy.

The two countries share common interests which make them good partners under such synergy. Both the BRI and Turkmenistan's development strategy to revive the Silk Road inject strong impetus into the economic development of Eurasia.

Both connect the vast region between the Pacific and the Atlantic with interconnected technological chains, industrial chains and industrial belts, which further strengthen greater regional connectivity.

It seems that energy will remain an important direction of Turkmenistan-China future cooperation. Turkmenistan enjoys huge potential in the energy sector.

China's growing demand is spurred by its expanding economy due to which Turkmenistan's government is planning to increase its supply of natural gas to China. Both Turkmenistan and China attach high importance to transport cooperation. Turkmenistan sees China as its most important cooperation partner in the Asia-Pacific region.

On its part, Turkmenistan is now working with its regional and trans-regional partners to build an infrastructure network of transit shipment and logistics.

It seems that it will include transit corridors leading to the Caspian Sea, the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea regions. It is expected to become a perfect channel of transport from Asia Pacific to Europe and the Middle East via Central Asia.

Interestingly, China is also exploring building a spur from Pakistan's territory once the multi-country TAPI natural gas pipeline project begins operating.

Turkmenistan is building the TAPI pipeline to diversify its gas exports which have mostly gone to China.

But the project has suffered lengthy delays due to difficulties obtaining financing and the security risks of building a pipeline through war-torn Afghanistan.

Pakistan-Turkmenistan and China would be a winning iron triangle for the further development of CPEC and BRI in the days to come. In the past, Turkmenistan showed its keen interest in using Pakistani ports for its greater connectivity and diversification of energy and finished products.

<https://pakobserver.net/bri-and-turkmenistan-a-way-of-progress-and-prosperity-by-dr-mehmood-ul-hassan-khan/>

The Nation

Pakistan to develop chip manufacturing sector with help of China

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and China have joined hands to build a semiconductor zone in the country to promote the chip manufacturing sector, WealthPK reported. The semiconductor industry is considered to be at a nascent stage in Pakistan. However, according to a report of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MOITT), a semiconductor zone will be set up in Pakistan with the help of China. The report says that since Pakistan imports most of the semiconductor chips used in local manufacturing, the global shortage due to the pandemic has affected the country. The initiative was pushed forward seeing how other countries are leaps and bounds ahead of Pakistan in the semiconductor industry. RapidSilicon, a San-Jose and Shanghai headquartered company, announced in 2021 that it wanted to become the first chip design firm in Pakistan. After acquiring \$15 million in seed funding, the company opened up a local office and began operations by hiring more than 60 engineers in Lahore. Steps are underway to push this sector to the fore. Funding amounting to Rs41.75 million was approved by the provincial government for establishing chip design centres in eight universities in Punjab. According to Hamza Saeed, the director of strategic planning and client services, Chinese companies have shown immense interest in the projects of the Special Technology Zones Authority (STZA). Recently, China has announced a \$400 billion plan to reach the semiconductor demand. China needs 0.5 million chip developers while 0.2 million chip designers have been arranged by China internally. China is looking for 0.3 million chip designers from other countries. "STZA is also engaged with China to provide chip designing services. This strategic cooperation is being negotiated at the agreement level," said Hamza Saeed. He said that authority STZA devised a multi-pronged strategy in

consultation with Chinese stakeholders. The Foreign Office of Pakistan has a special section for Chinese affairs while the STZA has introduced a comprehensive strategy with the Pakistani embassy in China about outreach to Chinese businesses. Pakistan embassy issued 200 letters to different Chinese tech companies. According to the ministry's report, China has positioned itself as a hub for manufacturing and supplying hardware components which makes the supply of such products in abundance and at affordable prices. The volume of the global semiconductor chip industry is expected to reach about \$600 billion in 2022 with 80% of the products coming from a handful of manufacturers in selected countries. The past two years have seen a critical chip shortage, which has resulted in a loss of more than \$500 billion. The chip industry is looking to increase its overall output on a global scale so that the supply and demand disparity does not get as dire as it did in 2020. The governments have already committed billions of dollars to increase output with some 50% higher outputs expected from traditional manufacturing clusters in places like China's Taiwan region and Korea.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-11/page-9/detail-3>

The News

Large number of Chinese tourists likely to visit this year

Islamabad : After three gloomy years of cross-border tourism between Pakistan and China due to the COVID-19, the year 2023, the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges, is expected to witness a boom in the tourism sector in both countries.

“Exchanges have already started online. We are also working with Chinese tourism associations to develop business linkages. Soon we'll finalise a calendar of events and activities”, Aftab ur Rehman Rana, managing director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) said.

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The traffic will be two-way. He told China Economic Net that in China, the silk route is a very popular travel route that has also attracted many tourists from Europe. In Pakistan, the rich history, culture, festivity, and music will offer a unique travel experience.

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=165542>

January 12, 2023

Daily Times

China pledges \$100m additional aid to flood-hit Pakistan

China is pledging an additional \$100 million to continue supporting Pakistan's recovery efforts from the devastating 2022 floods, announced Luo Zhaohui, Chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA). Also, regarding the technical assistance, from 2023 to 2025, China plans to train 1,000 technical staff and officials focusing on disaster prevention and management, Luo said while attending the international conference on Climate-Resilient Pakistan in Geneva. This funding reinforces China's commitment to the Pakistani people and will help address the climate crisis. When coupled with the nearly \$200 million in flood relief provided before from the Chinese government, this brings the total China commitment to date to nearly \$300 million, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. "We have also carried out projects including smart hydrology, rehabilitation housing and mobile medical vehicles. We will continue to provide real-time weather and disaster early-warning service. We have provided a post-disaster assessment report after Chinese experts' visit to the disaster sites in Pakistan. We will be happy to share the experience in reconstruction and engage with Pakistani officials in this regard. We are also considering setting up the South-Asia Disaster Relief Supplies Reserve," he pinpointed. Officials from some 40 countries as well as private donors and international financial institutions attended the meeting in Geneva on January 9.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1050336/china-pledges-100m-additional-aid-to-flood-hit-pakistan/>

Tetra-partite MoU signed to promote Sino-Pak coop on vocational education

A signing ceremony for the joint operation agreement of Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCT & VI), built under CPEC, was held in the presentation hall of China Business Center in Gwadar Free Zone, according to China Economic Net (CEN). The tetra-partite agreement was signed by representatives from Gwadar Port Authority, University of Gwadar, Shandong Institute of Commerce and Technology, China, and China Overseas Ports Holding Company. The event was attended by students, and professionals from all walks of life.

According to the agreement, the four parties will be collectively responsible for the operation and management of the institute. For this purpose, an executive body will be formed for policy making and implementation. PCT & VI is one of the many grant projects initiated in Gwadar by China. The mega-project was completed at a cost of \$10 million and handed over to Gwadar Port Authority in September 2021. This project, among the many other livelihood support programs undertaken by the Government of China, is widely supported by the local people of Gwadar. In the preliminary operation program under National Vocational and Technical Commission of Pakistan (NAVTTTC), 130 local students – majored in various technical fields – graduated from the institute.

Upon its handover, henceforth, short courses and long diploma certification will be offered in conventional and non-conventional fields with more relevancy to port and free zone

operation. The systematic arrangement of the parties offers chances for subsequent on-site training and ultimately job opportunities for the young graduates. It will also yield more skilled manpower for the local community.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1050145/tetra-partite-mou-signed-to-promote-sino-pak-coop-on-vocational-education/>

Pakistan Observer

Gwardar youth to get free tech education

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<https://pakobserver.net/gwardar-youth-to-get-free-tech-education/>

The Nation

PM thanks China for US\$ 1.1 billion pledge at Geneva conference

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday thanked the Chinese leadership for a pledge of US\$ 1.1 billion including US\$ one billion by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) at Geneva Conference for reconstruction and rehabilitation of flood affected areas in Pakistan. Describing the support as “crucial for reconstruction”, the Prime Minister in a twitter post said that “Our great friend China has always stood by Pakistan through thick & thin.” “We are highly grateful to Chinese leadership for a pledge of \$1 billion by Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank & \$100 million separately @ Resilient Pakistan,” he added.

PM thanks China for US\$ 1.1 billion pledge at Geneva conference

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-12/page-12/detail-2>

Nawaiwaqt News

پاک چین ٹیکنیکل اینڈ ووکیشنل انسٹی ٹیوٹ کے مشترکہ آپریشن کے معاہدے پر دستخط کی تقریب

اسلام آباد (نمائندہ خصوصی) سی پیک کے تحت چینی گرانٹ سے تعمیر کیے گئے پاک چین ٹیکنیکل اینڈ ووکیشنل انسٹی ٹیوٹ کے مشترکہ آپریشن کے معاہدے پر دستخط کی

تقریب گوادر بزنس سینٹر میں منعقد ہوئی۔ گوادر کے ہزاروں نوجوانوں کو فنی اور پیشہ ورانہ تربیت کے ساتھ تین سالہ ڈپلومہ پروگرام کا آغاز بھی دیا گیا ہے۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-01-12/page-10/detail-37>

January 13, 2023

Business Recorder

Bulk cargoes imported by govt begin arriving at Gwadar port

ISLAMABAD: The Gwadar port has started receiving government imports of bulk cargoes as three consecutive vessels carrying 90,000 MT urea have already arrived at the port and clocked the fastest discharge rate. This represents the efforts of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority, Gwadar Port Authority (GPA), Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) and Pakistan Customs, according to a press release issued here on Thursday.

These bulk cargoes were discharged and after bagging at the port are transported from Gwadar to other destinations in Pakistan. Next month Gwadar Port will start handling 450,000 MT of TCP wheat.

TCP on behalf of the government decided to handle the import of urea and wheat through Gwadar Port. This movement will ease the huge congestion at other ports of Pakistan due to the high traffic of vessels carrying bulk cargoes, which results in delaying the operation and transportation of shipments; thus, disturbing the entire supply chain mechanism. Import of these government cargoes offers substantial benefits to locals and will generate various economic activities and employment opportunities for locals in terms of 100% shipping agencies services by locals, a top priority for local transporters etc.—APP

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2023/01/13/3-page/952324-news.html>

Daily Times

MoU signed to take China-Pakistan ocean science forward

China's National Ocean Technology Center (NOTC) and Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences (LUAWMS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to cooperate on ocean space planning. According to China Economic Net (CEN) on Thursday, this new relationship was formalized in a virtual signing ceremony. Chen Wujun, Secretary General of NOTC, said that the MoU would be the key to opening cooperation between the Center and Lasbela University in the marine field. "We hope that in the future, both sides will take ocean space planning cooperation as the starting point, carry out extensive mutual visits and exchanges, and jointly hold training courses," said Chen.

“We will also work together to develop relevant information systems and observatory, and promote the construction of a joint research center on marine space planning between China and Pakistan.” Dr. Dost Muhammad Baloch, Vice Chancellor of LUAWMS, expressed his hope that the signing of the MoU will play an important role in the sustainable use of marine resources and improve the lives of the people of Pakistan, especially in Baluchistan.

“The MOU will help develop regional cooperation among Maritime Silk Road countries and establish a future communication and cooperation mechanism between China and Pakistan in the field of marine space planning,” said Dr. Dost. According to the Pakistani side, Pakistan has a coast of about 1,050 kilometers long and an exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of 290,000 square kilometers.

“The study of Marine Sciences has increased more than ever due to increase of exclusive economic zone of Pakistan from 200 to 350 nautical miles. In the face of the challenges and opportunities that may arise in the future, we need scientific research to improve our capacity to manage new issues in the oceans,” Dr. Dost said. Dr. Dost described the MoU as a natural alliance between the two universities that have mutual interests.

Located in Baluchistan, which has the longest coastline in the country, LUAWMS is the only maritime university in Pakistan. The university is located about 500 km east of Gwadar port, the gateway to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

In 2018, China Oceanic Development Foundation and LUAWMS signed an MoU on cooperation in marine space planning. In the past five years, China and Pakistan have continuously enhanced exchanges and interactions, deepened friendship and mutual trust, and reached a series of cooperation consensus. Under the new MoU, the two sides will carry out practical cooperation in more areas to enhance the capacity of Pakistan’s integrated marine and coastal zone management, improve the well-being of coastal people, support the construction of China-Pakistan Blue Partnership, and promote the high-quality construction of the Belt and Road Initiative.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1050713/mou-signed-to-take-china-pakistan-ocean-science-forward/>

Pakistan Observer

FM, Chinese envoy discuss bilateral relations

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong paid a farewell call on Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in Islamabad on Thursday.

During the meeting, views were exchanged on bilateral relations and to enhance cooperation in various sectors including China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

The Foreign Minister commended the services of the outgoing Chinese Ambassador and extended best wishes for his future endeavors.

<https://pakobserver.net/fm-chinese-envoy-discuss-bilateral-relations/>

The Nation

Bilawal vows enhanced ties with US, China, UK

SHAFQAT ALI

ISLAMABAD - Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari yesterday held separate meetings with Ambassadors of United States, China and British High Commissioner here and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to further strengthen relationship with their states for stronger future cooperation. In his meeting with US Ambassador Donald Blome, Bilawal thanked the decision of interview waiver by the US at its embassy in Islamabad and US Consulate General in Karachi. "This should speed up visa process and will increase people-to-people ties," the foreign minister said. "Thank you @SecBlinken we have discussed visa issues at length. Allowing interview waivers for those who have already in the past held US visas across all age groups is extremely helpful. This should speed up visa process and will increase people-to-people ties," the foreign minister later wrote on Twitter. During the meeting, they agreed to further enhance the Pak-US ties. The foreign minister also thanked the United States for announcing an additional \$100 million at the Geneva conference for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the flood-hit areas of Pakistan. Foreign Minister Bilawal told the US Ambassador that he had discussed in detail with the US Secretary of State the visa facilities for Pakistani citizens. The US Ambassador reiterated his country's resolve to keep extending support to Pakistan for rehabilitation of the flood victims. Earlier, the US embassy said the "United States Mission in Pakistan is pleased to announce the expansion of interview waiver eligibility at the US Embassy in Islamabad and the US Consulate General in Karachi for Pakistani citizens who are renewing B1/B2 tourist and business visas. All Pakistani citizens, regardless of age, whose B1/ B2 visas are valid or have expired within the last 48 months are eligible to participate. Previously, only Pakistani citizens of ages 45 and older were eligible to participate. Additionally, the interview waiver eligibility for student and petition-based work visa applicants who have previously held a US visa is also extended through 2023." The expansion of interview waiver eligibility is a procedural change to provide better customer service and more efficiently process renewals of tourist and business visas for qualified and eligible Pakistani citizens. As required by US law, some eligible visa holders may be required to appear at the US Embassy or US Consulate General for interviews after submission of their applications. "Applicants who are now eligible for interview waiver, but are currently scheduled for an interview, may cancel their appointment online, start from 'New Application' on the scheduling dashboard, and follow the steps online for submitting through interview waiver," it said. Meanwhile, outgoing Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong held a farewell meeting with Bilawal Bhutto here. During the meeting, Bilawal said that China is a great friend of Pakistan. He discussed bilateral issues with the outgoing ambassador. "They discussed matters of mutual interests including the CPEC and cooperation in other fields," said a foreign minister statement. FM Bilawal appreciated the services of the Chinese Ambassador for strengthening bilateral relations. Later, British High Commissioner Dr Christian Turner also paid a farewell call on Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto. During the meeting, they discussed increasing bilateral cooperation in various fields including Pakistan-

UK relations. The Foreign Minister expressed his gratitude for the announcement of additional assistance of 9 million pounds by the United Kingdom for the rehabilitation of flood victims. During the meeting, Bilawal appreciated the efforts of the British High Commissioner regarding climate change awareness in Pakistan. He also expressed his best wishes for the outgoing British High Commissioner. In another development, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto held a telephone conversation with Acting Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi to offer condolences on the dastardly terrorist attack outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul. Condemning the terrorist act in the strongest possible terms, the Foreign Minister underscored that terrorism posed a common threat to both Pakistan and Afghanistan and required a collective response. Reaffirming complete solidarity with the Afghan people in countering this menace, the Foreign Minister underlined Pakistan's commitment to work with Afghanistan towards promoting regional peace and stability.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-13/page-1/detail-6>

Tetra-partite MoU signed to promote Sino-Pak coop on vocational education

ISLAMABAD - A signing ceremony for the joint operation agreement of Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCT & VI), built under CPEC, was held in the presentation hall of China Business Centre in Gwadar Free Zone, according to China Economic Net (CEN). The tetra-partite agreement was signed by representatives from Gwadar Port Authority, University of Gwadar, Shandong Institute of Commerce and Technology, China, and China Overseas Ports Holding Company.

The event was attended by students and professionals from all walks of life. According to the agreement, the four parties will be collectively responsible for the operation and management of the institute. For this purpose, an executive body will be formed for policy making and implementation. PCT & VI is one of the many grant projects initiated in Gwadar by China.

The mega-project was completed at a cost of \$10 million and handed over to Gwadar Port Authority in September 2021. This project, among the many other livelihood support programs undertaken by the Government of China, is widely supported by the local people of Gwadar. In the preliminary operation program under National Vocational and Technical Commission of Pakistan (NAVTTTC), 130 local students - majored in various technical fields - graduated from the institute. Upon its handover, henceforth, short courses and long diploma certification will be offered in conventional and non-conventional fields with more relevancy to port and free zone operation.

The systematic arrangement of the parties offers chances for subsequent on-site training and ultimately job opportunities for the young graduates. It will also yield more skilled manpower for the local community.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-13/page-10/detail-4>

January 14, 2023

Pakistan Observer

Gawadar to play significant role in Balochistan: Farah

Balochistan government's Spokesperson Farah Azeem Shah on Friday said that the future of Balochistan was linked with development of Gwadar. he said protection of the rights of fishermen was the responsibility of the government and the first right on Gwadar belongs to the locals here, she added. The spokesman of the provincial government said that for any economic development and acceleration of economic activities, the establishment of law and order and the enforcement of rule of law were very important. Keeping in view the requirements of the modern age, the students will be provided opportunities for technical education and the students will be helped with scholarships for higher and quality education, she noted adding that they could play their role effectively in the development of the province. The spokesman further said that Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo was striving for the overall development of the province. INP

<https://pakobserver.net/gawadar-to-play-significant-role-in-balochistan-farah/>

Pakistan hands over chairmanship of G-77 and China to Cuba

Pakistan formally handed over the chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China to Cuba on Thursday after completing its one-year term during which the world grappled with triple crises of food, fuel and finance that especially hit hard the developing countries.

“It is my honour today to transfer the Chair of the Group of 77 and China to my dear friend, Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez Parilla of Cuba,” Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said in a video address from Islamabad to the 134-member group, the largest at the United Nations.

Pakistan formally hands over chairmanship of G-77 (developing countries) and China to Cuba After FM Bilawal's address, Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, handed over the gravel to the Cuban Foreign Minister Rodriguez Parilla to a resounding applause from the delegates to the meeting, held in the Trusteeship Council.

Upon taking over as chairman, the Cuban foreign minister praised Pakistan's “laudable” leadership of the Group of 77 during the year 2022. A founding member of G-77, which promotes the developing countries' collective economic interests at the UN, Pakistan took over the chairmanship of G-77 from Guinea on January 14, 2022.

Under Pakistan's chairmanship, the Group has been instrumental in maintaining development at the heart of the United Nations and focus of development partners towards the crises faced by the developing countries due to the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, growing impacts of climate change, economic imbalances and rising debt distress, commodity price shocks and food insecurity, and persistent fragility and conflict — with the war in Ukraine currently exacerbating many deteriorating trends.

In his address, Foreign Minister Bilawal said Pakistan has had the privilege to chair the Group of 77 and China three times in the past. However, he added, leading the Group in

2022, as “our nations collectively confronted the ‘perfect storm’ of the multiple external shocks of Covid, climate and conflict, was especially challenging and, yet, rewarding”.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-hands-over-chairmanship-of-g-77-and-china-to-cuba/>

The Nation

Chinese ambassador makes farewell call on NA speaker

ISLAMABAD - Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf highly commended the outgoing envoy Nong for his significant contributions to strengthening Pakistan-China bilateral and parliamentary relations, during a farewell courtesy call by Nong Rong Noon, Ambassador of China in Pakistan. The Speaker said that Pakistan highly valued ironclad friendship with the People’s Republic of China. The all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between the two states had gone from strength to strength due to the consistent, dedicated, and sincere efforts from both sides and the role of the ambassador in these efforts was very significant. The speaker also appreciated the envoy for his arduous work in promoting parliamentary cooperation between the two states. He said such interactions would help in learning from parliamentary experiences of each other and create mutual opportunities under the strategic partnership, particularly through CPEC to work for the benefit of people on both sides of the border. The ambassador expressed gratitude to the speaker for his kind remarks and said that Pakistan was his second home. He had a very fruitful experience and fond memories during his two-year stay in Pakistan. Ambassador Nong maintained that Pakistan-China relationship has a very bright future and he would wish to see further growth in them. He emphasised that China would continue to support Pakistan in pursuit of its national development and objectives. The two sides also discussed the prevailing international and regional situation, expansion of bilateral cooperation, particularly with respect to trade and commerce; and regular people-to-people exchange between Pakistan and China. The meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere and at the end the speaker wished the ambassador success and good luck for his future endeavours.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-01-14/page-13/detail-0>

January 15, 2023

Pakistan Observer

Senate chairman fetes outgoing Chinese ambassador

Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Saturday hosted a farewell dinner in honor of outgoing Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong. During the meeting important regional and international issues including bilateral relations were discussed.

Chairman Senate appreciated the services of Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong in taking Pak-China relations to new heights.

Chairman Senate said that Pakistan-China friendship was an example for the whole world and this time-tested friendship has always met challenges together.

He said that the relations between the two friendly countries were based on mutual respect and trust and China has supported Pakistan in every difficult time.

Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project was a gift from China to the people of Pakistan and acknowledged the active contribution of China to the relief and rehabilitation during the recent floods in Pakistan.

He said that the Pakistani nation was grateful to the people and government of China for this generous assistance.

On this occasion, Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong appreciated the comments of the Senate Chairman and said that the government and people of China are also proud of their everlasting friendship with Pakistan.

He said that China will continue to cooperate in the development of Pakistan and both the countries will continue to support each other's position at regional and global forums.

<https://pakobserver.net/senate-chairman-fetes-outgoing-chinese-ambassador/>

Chinese Newspapers

January 02, 2023

China Daily

BRI gives new push to China's economic diplomacy

Traveling from Shanghai to Beijing in an economy class on medium-speed rail was my intentional decision to meet the common Chinese people and to know their perception regarding Chinese developmental expansion around the globe. I and my traveling colleague were the only two foreigners in the economy-class cabin. Throughout the trip, I observed one thing and that was that common Chinese people want to know about the world. The Belt and Road Initiative is an opportunity to integrate Chinese to other parts of the world. I came across the famous statement in China, "China is a sleeping giant. Let her lie and sleep; for when she awakens, she will astonish the world." Traveling inside China and other parts of the world, I came to know that China has a huge potential of integrating the global order due to its acceptability of diversity and plurality.

In the 21st century, the world saw the awakening of the sleeping giant and building its significance in the international system through its economic success, military modernization, and soft power influence. From a nascent consumer market to the most influential economy, China is ranked among the most major and powerful economies in the world. With its long-term strategic measures to modernize its society, China has successfully transformed into a high-tech industry economy and become a nation of global influence. The economic policies and goals to boost domestic consumption, accelerate technological development, and lure global investment have made China a dominant power in the global economy.

The Asian giant's military might has also been expanding at an astounding pace and scope. Since the 1990s, the military strategy of China has focused more on fighting and winning a high-tech war against a modern foe rather than waging a people's war. China has been

modernizing its military forces by putting great stress on the significance of maritime security, cyber operations, offensive operations, and mobility operations, to strategically dominate contemporary warfare. The increasing size of China's military and economy is indicative of the trend that she is now emerging as a new superpower, or rather, has already emerged as a global superpower.

In the age of global information, success not only depends on whose military wins but also on whose narrative wins. Therefore, the practice of "soft power" works as an attractive policy option to win the hearts of global nations. China's traditional culture has always been appealing, but now it is entering the realm of popular culture around the world. The foreign policy of China has also shifted from one of internal development to one of external influence, not only economically but also militarily, diplomatically, and normatively, most notably through a systematic discourse and smart power strategy.

China is efficiently portraying its soft image by investing heavily in its domestic infrastructure and, subsequently, in global infrastructure as well. China's worldwide infrastructure development project known as the BRI has tremendously boosted trade, encouraged economic growth, and enhanced regional integration. From being a simple regional project to connect Asia, Africa, and Europe, via land and sea networks, the BRI has become global and extended into every field imaginable, including infrastructure, culture, finance, people-to-people interactions, education, and interstate politics. The BRI has largely been successful not in terms of concrete projects only but in ways that have helped China strengthen its diplomatic and economic ties with 140 partner nations and position itself as the champion of globalization.

Since the rise of China, its broader and integrative geo-economic agenda is seeking to enhance its reach into distant markets and trade enterprises. The mega project of the Belt and Road Initiative is an expression of China's geo-economic strategy that is embedded in the historical trends of globalization and the neoliberal order. In the international political landscape, geo-economic, strategic, and geopolitical areas are deeply intertwined due to the complex multi-layered foundation of international political realities. Unprecedented developments such as the BRI are not without certain areas of opportunities as well as challenges.

Through its Belt and Road Initiative, China intends to achieve mutual progress, shared prosperity, and win-win cooperation throughout the region with the goal of fostering infrastructure development and socioeconomic uplift. The country has also been assisting the BRI partner nations to accelerate technological advancement, fight extreme poverty, and achieve high-quality growth. The Chinese investment policies are also set to encourage the development of high technology in nations such as Pakistan.

China and Pakistan's bilateral relations are in the historical milieu of cooperation, shared geopolitical outlook, strategic partnership, and economic interdependence. The bilateral engagement has successfully evolved into concrete commitments and pragmatic considerations of interests and values. The entrenched commitments between the two neighboring states have developed further by prospects of consolidation as a consequence of Pakistan being an essential actor in the BRI's development.

The BRI initiative has brought forth many positive and long-lasting results for both China and Pakistan. Through the promotion of bilateral connectivity, logistics, construction projects, and economic and trade opportunities, the strategic project has been contributing to the improvement of people's lives in both nations.

China has opened its doors to sharing high-tech technology with Pakistan. Furthermore, it has encouraged widespread cooperation in a variety of fields, including academia, research, government, industry, and the arts. Pakistan, on the other hand, is devoted to embracing the same technology and providing a stable environment for the development of projects that will promote the rejuvenation of the economy.

Although the Belt and Road Initiative has successfully depicted its softer image as a global and responsible force that seeks to assist the entire globe through economic development and foreign investment while enhancing its political capital and influence, the Western ideology propagates the projects under the BRI have expanded with China's sole strategy to have an influence over the government of other countries and put a global footprint.

In an effort to counter Western propaganda, China must convey BRI's open, green, and clean core strength to the regional and international mass media and get more sustainable achievements with high construction standards among all member nations. Strategically speaking, the BRI is representative of a new era of Chinese economic diplomacy and promotes a network of free trade areas and other forms of economic cooperation among its member nations, which will serve to increase regional cooperation and mark the rise of China in the world.

<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202301/02/WS63b22cb0a31057c47eba733f.html>

January 04, 2023

People's Daily

Interview: Pakistan-China year of tourism to greatly boost tourism cooperation, says Pakistani official

By Raheela Nazir, Jiang Chao (Xinhua)

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 3 (Xinhua) -- The decision to hold the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges in 2023 will greatly help improving people-to-people contacts and especially promoting tourism cooperation, a Pakistani official said.

"China obviously is the country that produced the largest number of tourists for the rest of the world before the COVID-19 pandemic ... The recent policy of resuming outbound tourism for Chinese citizens in an orderly manner would help in restoring the confidence of the world in terms of the promotion of tourism while making a good contribution to the global economy," Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab ur Rehman Rana told Xinhua in a recent interview.

Pakistan and China have a long friendly relationship, and people would love to meet each other and experience the countries of each other, he said, adding that Pakistan is not just

looking at inviting Chinese tourists to Pakistan, but also looking at sending Pakistani tourists to China.

"Our tour operators have already started holding online meetings with their Chinese counterparts. Under the exchange programs, both countries are planning to help tour operators of both sides to meet personally so they can revive their contacts and design packages and products which could attract the right kind of tourists on both sides," the PTDC official said.

Highlighting Pakistan has a lot to offer for Chinese tourists, he said that the wild mountains, lush green meadows, exquisite valleys, beautiful tracks for trekking, sites for adventurous sports and a number of ancient archeological places and other attractions in the South Asian country are waiting to mesmerize the Chinese tourists.

"For Pakistan, the opening of Chinese tourism is a very positive sign," Rana said, adding that Pakistan has made a lot of preparation to welcome Chinese tourists.

The Pakistani government has been working on improving the availability of information on both sides as well as producing new literature on major tourist destinations in the Chinese language, so that the Chinese tourists know well about Pakistan, he said.

"Pakistan International Airlines has recently announced the restarting of flights between Islamabad and Beijing. If there's any travel expo taking place in China, we'll send our delegation there," Rana said.

Besides providing new prospects in Pakistan's tourism industry, the official said China has helped transformed the country's tourism by building road infrastructure under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Launched in 2013, CPEC is a corridor linking Pakistan's Gwadar Port with Kashgar in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which highlights energy, transport and industrial cooperation.

"We have seen the new motorways, highways and side roads all the way from south to east to north, and the improvement of the road network is very important for tourism promotion. CPEC has not only improved the access to different business hubs and various cities in Pakistan, but also facilitated the access to various tourist sites," he said.

With improved accessibility, there will be quite a lot of new developments including the establishment of tourism zones, new hotels and tourist resorts along the CPEC routes in the coming years, he said.

This photo taken on Oct. 17, 2020 shows a view of the old city of Hunza valley in Pakistan's northern Gilgit-Baltistan region. (Xinhua/Ahmad Kamal)

Rana believed that CPEC would help further improve the local tourism sector and help attract more investment into the tourism infrastructure of Pakistan, accelerating the country's development.

As the year 2023 is being designated as the Pakistan-China Year of Tourism Exchanges, Rana said numerous tourism-related activities will be happening between the two neighbors during the new year.

"We will hold a Gandhara Buddhist heritage exhibition in Beijing very soon. There is a plan to send our cultural delegations of youth and tourism professionals to China and obviously, we welcome delegations from China also coming to Pakistan in promoting Chinese culture in Pakistan and vice versa," he said, adding that the PTDC will coordinate with other departments to strengthen cultural and tourism exchanges and promote people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

"The year 2023 is going to be a good beginning," Rana added.

(Web editor: Cai Hairuo, Liang Jun)

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2023/0104/c90000-10191650.html>

Shanghai Daily

China's optimized COVID-19 response conducive to global tourism: Pakistani official

China's newly adjusted COVID-19 response that lifts restrictions on Chinese citizens' overseas trips and promotes cross-border personnel exchanges will be conducive to the recovery of global tourism, said a Pakistani official.

He added that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has made the tourist resorts in Pakistan accessible to tourists, and will play a vital role in the development of Pakistan's tourism sector.

<https://www.shine.cn/news/nation/2301044727/>

January 05, 2023

Xinhuanet News

Hong Kong signs MOU with Pakistan on education cooperation

HONG KONG, Jan. 5 (Xinhua) -- The Education Bureau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training of Pakistan to enhance education collaboration.

The MOU provides a framework to facilitate strategic education collaboration between Hong Kong and Pakistan and covers mutually beneficial initiatives, including the exchange of expertise and experience, exchange of educational literature, teaching aids and demonstration materials, as well as exchanges of scholars, teachers, experts, students and other education personnel, according to an official press release.

Choi Yuk-lin, education secretary of the HKSAR government, said that the MOU marks the beginning of a new phase of close cooperation between Hong Kong and Pakistan in the area of education.

The HKSAR government has signed nine MOUs with countries along the Belt and Road to date, which demonstrates the HKSAR government's commitment to and effort in enhancing the internationalization of education as well as strengthening educational ties and exchanges with the Belt and Road countries, Choi said.

"I am confident that the MOU will facilitate more comprehensive exchanges and collaboration in education between the two places," she added.

<https://english.news.cn/20230105/6404f5a2756749d9a93d9efa32f23f74/c.html>

January 06, 2023

China Daily

Li: China puts Pakistan ties a diplomacy priority

MO JINGXI

Premier Li Keqiang said on Thursday that China will work with Pakistan to promote practical cooperation in various areas, urging the South Asian nation to do its utmost to ensure the safety of Chinese people and organizations there.

Li made the remarks in a phone conversation with Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

During the phone talks, the two leaders exchanged New Year greetings and views on the bilateral relationship.

Li said that the China-Pakistan friendship has withstood the test of international vicissitudes and has grown even stronger.

Noting China always considers its relationship with Pakistan a priority in its diplomacy regarding neighbors, Li said that it will, as always, support Pakistan in upholding its national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and legitimate interests, and support its efforts to maintain domestic solidarity and stability to achieve national development and rejuvenation.

China will work with Pakistan on pragmatic cooperation in key fields, support its efforts to develop the economy and improve people's well-being, he added.

The Pakistani leader thanked China for its huge support and assistance to his country in the fight against floods and vowed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in all areas and push forward the Pakistan-China relationship to a higher level.

Sharif said that Pakistan adheres to the one-China principle and firmly supports China on all issues that concern China's core interests.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202301/06/WS63b7883aa31057c47eba80e9.html>

Global Times

Pakistan welcomes China's latest COVID policy, opposes politicization of pandemic: ambassador

Pakistan welcomes China's recent COVID policy adjustment and believes it will significantly contribute to the recovery and growth of the world economy, Pakistani Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque told the Global Times in an exclusive interview.

He said that Pakistan is opposed to the "politicization of the pandemic."

According to the Pakistani diplomat, the recent adjustments that China made are reflective of the latest pandemic situation and are based on scientific and rational analysis. The Pakistani people have noted the revised measures announced by China in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and they "welcome them."

"Since the outbreak of COVID-19, China has made effective efforts to protect people's lives and health. The recent adjustments are reflective of the latest pandemic situation and are based on scientific and rational analysis. It marks a decisive victory against the virus," he said.

"These changes will facilitate people-to-people exchanges between China and other countries and will significantly contribute to the recovery and growth of the world economy," he noted.

China has recently made a series of refined measures including managing COVID-19 with measures against Class-B infectious diseases starting from January 8. The provisional measures on cross-border state that starting from January 8, inbound travelers with no issues to report in their health declaration can enter China without being subject to quarantine.

The move has won wide support internationally. However, since China released its refined measures on COVID-19 prevention and control, some countries announced to impose additional measures on Chinese travelers, citing so-called virus concern.

Regarding the question on whether Pakistan will impose different measures on Chinese travelers, the ambassador stressed that "Pakistan is opposed to country-specific policies and politicization of the pandemic."

"We have always maintained that a response to a health crisis of global nature must be based on scientific reasoning and logic and to be tackled through close collaboration and international solidarity.

"So as we move forward, health authorities from China and Pakistan will continue their close collaboration and sharing of information to jointly address the evolving pandemic situation and adjusting our respective policies," he said.

Haque noted that he expects the cooperation between the two countries will further increase as China relaxes the border controls.

"Our two countries will accelerate cooperation on a range of areas, including exchange of high-level delegations, enhanced B2B (business to business) travel, and increase in people-to-people exchanges. We are also expecting major milestones in CPEC this year, including the

inauguration of the new Gwadar International Airport and ground breaking of ML-1," he said.

According to the ambassador, China and Pakistan are celebrating 2023 as the Year of Tourism Exchanges, and the relaxed border control will enhance the flow of tourists from both countries.

He noted that during the past years, the two countries have been "cooperating closely even with the border controls in place, which is a manifestation of the commitment of leadership and people of our two countries towards the bilateral ties."

In 2022, both countries saw enhanced high-level exchanges, a stronger economic partnership, return of Pakistani students to China, increase in frequency of flights and most notably a steady development of CPEC, he said.

Haque told the Global Times that the two countries also closely coordinated in the three years' fight against the pandemic.

"When the first wave broke out in China, Pakistan sent all its supplies to help our Chinese friends. The President of Pakistan also paid a solidarity visit to China amid the first wave. China's help to Pakistan during the pandemic was also exemplary. We remain grateful to China for its critical support through provision of essential medicines and equipment especially vaccines which remain the mainstay of our inoculation drive saving countless lives."

"China has also supported a large number of countries during the pandemic. President Xi had declared that vaccines would be considered a public good. As such China provided billions of doses across the globe, especially to developing countries, which helped in the control of the virus and saved countless lives," he said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202301/1283345.shtml>

People's Daily

Chinese premier, Pakistani PM hold phone talks

(Xinhua)

BEIJING, Jan. 5 (Xinhua) -- Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Thursday talked over phone with Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif at the latter's invitation.

The two leaders first exchanged New Year greetings. Stressing that the China-Pakistan friendship has withstood the tests of international changes and has grown stronger over time, Li said China always places relations with Pakistan as a priority in its neighborhood diplomacy, and will continue to support Pakistan in safeguarding national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, legitimate rights and interests, as well as in maintaining national unity, stability and realizing development and revitalization.

Sharif's successful visit to China not long ago has strongly promoted the development of bilateral relations, Li said, adding that China is ready to intensify high-level exchanges with

Pakistan, promote practical cooperation in key areas, and promote greater development of China-Pakistan relations.

Li pointed out that the current world economic situation is complicated, characterized by high inflation, low growth, tight monetary policy and high debt.

All countries should jointly promote mutual opening up, strengthen macroeconomic and financial policy coordination, and strive to promote the recovery and growth of the world economy, said the premier.

China always supports Pakistan in developing its economy and improving people's livelihood, and is willing to work with Pakistan to safeguard regional peace, stability and development, said Li, adding that it is hoped that Pakistan will continue to do its utmost to ensure the safety of Chinese personnel and institutions in Pakistan.

For his part, Sharif thanked China for its huge support and assistance to his country in fighting floods, and highly appreciated that China has always stood by Pakistan in times of difficulties, which fully demonstrated the ironclad friendship between Pakistan and China that is higher than mountains and deeper than the sea.

Pakistan firmly upholds the one-China principle, supports China on all issues concerning China's core interests, and is willing to strengthen cooperation with China in various fields to push bilateral relations to a higher level, Sharif said.

(Web editor: Cai Hairuo, Liang Jun)

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2023/0106/c90000-10192526.html>

January 08, 2023

China Daily

Pakistani PM hails China's great help for flood relief aid

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has appreciated China and Chinese enterprises' great help to the flood-affected people of the country.

Speaking at a meeting for donation of funds to the flood-affected people by the China Energy Engineering Corporation (CEEC) at the Prime Minister's House here on Friday, Sharif expressed his gratitude to China for its support to Pakistan.

The prime minister thanked Chinese companies for the help they have provided to the Pakistani people in flood-affected areas since severe floods hit Pakistan last year.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has brought benefits to the people of Pakistan with Chinese enterprises' contribution in the fields of energy and infrastructure in Pakistan, Sharif said, adding that Pakistan welcomes Chinese enterprises to invest in the new energy industry, especially photovoltaic energy project.

chinadaily.com.cn/a/202301/08/WS63ba0286a31057c47eba8481.html

Xinhuanet News**GLOBALink | Train coaches imported from China to enhance Pakistan's technical capacity: official**

Train coaches imported from China are completely compatible with the local track, and have been approved for a commercial run, a Pakistani official said. With China's technical assistance, Pakistan's ability to produce trains independently will be enhanced.

<https://english.news.cn/20230108/1cbd1ac1dbed4a5d82e828ed4d24c084/c.html>

January 09, 2023

Global Times**Exclusive: Pakistan Navy to receive two more Type 054A/P frigates from China in 2023: Pakistani naval chief**

By Liu Xuanzun

With two hulls already inducted and two more scheduled to be delivered in 2023, the Type 054A/P frigates built by China are expected to become a mainstay in the Pakistan Navy, Admiral M Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of the Naval Staff of the Pakistan Navy, told the Global Times in a recent exclusive interview.

Speaking highly of China-Pakistan cooperation, Admiral Niazi said that the acquisition of the Type 054A/Ps is a symbol of enduring friendship and historical affinity between the two countries.

The Type 054A/P is one of the latest multi-role frigates of Chinese origin, equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors that includes CM-302 SSM and LY-80 SAMs as well as Advanced Anti-Submarine Warfare suite and Combat Management System, enabling ships of this class to operate under multi-threat scenarios, Admiral Niazi said.

The first two ships of this class, the PNS Tughril and the PNS Taimur, were inducted into the Pakistan Navy in December 2021 and June 2022 respectively, while the remaining two ships are also on track to join the Pakistan Navy Fleet in 2023, said the naval chief.

Admiral Niazi said that these ships are being integrated into Pakistan Navy operations, and will be a mainstay in the Pakistan Navy Fleet in the coming years, ensuring the seaward defense and protection of Pakistan's vital sea lines of communication.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202301/1283505.shtml>

Exclusive: China-Pakistan AIP submarine project progressing steadily: Pakistani naval chief

By Liu Xuanzun

The Hangor-class submarine project between China and Pakistan is progressing steadily, and the air independent propulsion (AIP) system-equipped boats are now under various stages of

construction in the two countries, Admiral M Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of the Naval Staff of the Pakistan Navy, told the Global Times in a recent exclusive interview.

Introducing the Pakistan Navy's development strategy as "progressive capability enhancement" to create a balanced, potent, and combat-ready force to meet evolving threats, Admiral Niazi said that as part of this modernization, the Pakistan Navy is replacing its existing ageing platforms with acquisitions from friendly countries along with the transfer of technology for in-country construction.

In this regard, the Pakistan Navy has strengthened collaboration with China with the procurement of F-22P frigates, Fast Attack Craft (Missile), helicopters, a survey ship, and medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned combat aerial vehicles, and the ongoing planned induction of Type 054A/P frigates and the Hangor-class submarines, which will further cement naval ties between the two countries, Admiral Niazi said.

The Hangor-class submarine project is progressing steadily and the submarines are under various stages of assemblage in Pakistan and China, the naval chief revealed. "The project is continuing as per the intended timeline despite certain delays due COVID-19 and technical intricacies," he said.

These conventional modern submarines are equipped with the latest weapons and sensors, and the boats' induction with the AIP system onboard will significantly enhance their submerged endurance capability, Admiral Niazi said.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202301/1283514.shtml>

China-Pakistan joint drills strengthen ties, enhance interoperability between the two navies: GT exclusive interview with Pakistani naval chief

Sea guardians with friendship

By Liu Xuanzun

The Pakistan Navy plans to host the AMAN-23 multinational maritime exercise in February 2023, with the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy, having taken part in previous editions, are again expected to participate. China and Pakistan have been maintaining close naval and maritime exchanges and cooperation in recent years, including joint drills, enhanced by Pakistan's procurement of four advanced Type 054A/P frigates from China. Shortly before the Exercise AMAN-23, Global Times reporter Liu Xuanzun (GT) was granted an exclusive interview with Admiral M Amjad Khan Niazi (Adm. Niazi), chief of the naval staff of the Pakistan Navy, and discussed topics ranging from the exercise plan and the Pakistan Navy's equipment procurement plan from China to the PLA Navy in the eyes of the Pakistan Navy.

GT: Please briefly elaborate on the upcoming Exercise AMAN-23. When and where will it be held, and who is going to participate?

Adm. Niazi: Exercise AMAN is the premier multinational maritime exercise of the Pakistan Navy which has been conducted biennially since 2007. The exercise is conducted with the aim to develop synergy between participating naval units to tackle maritime security

challenges by enhancing interoperability between regional and extra regional navies at different levels of technological prowess. The eighth series of Exercise AMAN will be held in Karachi from February 10 to 14, 2023. The format of the exercise has two distinct phases: First, the harbor phase which will be held from February 10 to 12, followed by the sea phase from February 13 to 14.

During the harbor phase, various professional and social activities will be conducted to share experiences on contemporary maritime security challenges and coordinate modalities of sea exercises. The sea phase includes exercises and an international fleet review to demonstrate unified resolve against maritime terrorism, piracy, and other prevalent illicit activities at sea.

We are expecting a wide range of participation from across the globe, as 43 countries participated in Exercise AMAN-21 despite COVID-19 restrictions. I am confident that Exercise AMAN-23 will contribute significantly toward fulfilling the common desire of participating maritime nations for regional peace and shared prosperity through such collaborative efforts.

GT: What are your purposes and goals for conducting the exercise?

Adm. Niazi: There are a number of non-traditional threats that prevail in the wider Indian Ocean region such as terrorism, piracy, drugs smuggling, and arms trafficking. The vastness of the oceans makes the maritime arena an attractive avenue for illegal activities and no country has the capability to singlehandedly counter these challenges. Collaborative maritime security has thus evolved as an established norm and the Pakistan Navy is actively involved in international and regional efforts. Exercise AMAN is Pakistan's humble but focused initiative in this regard.

The word AMAN in Urdu means "Peace" and the motto of the exercise is "Together for Peace" which demonstrates the importance and united resolve of all participating countries and partners in this cause. The AMAN series of multinational exercises is significant in fostering regional cooperation for the maintenance of good order at sea, improving interoperability, sharing experiences, and exhibiting common resolve against terrorism and organized crimes in the maritime domain. Participation in this exercise has been growing at a steady pace since its inception, with the exception of AMAN-21 in view of the COVID environment. The increased participation reflects growing trust in the value of the exercise and acknowledgement of the Pakistan Navy's efforts in promoting collaboration between regional and extra regional navies in the face of diverse non-traditional security threats.

GT: Other than AMAN, the PLA Navy and the Pakistan Navy recently have had close exchanges and cooperation, including the Sea Guardian-2 joint exercise held in Shanghai in July. Why is it so important to hold joint exercise like this for both the PLA Navy and the Pakistan Navy?

Adm. Niazi: Pakistan Navy-PLA Navy relations are a reflection of Pakistan-China strategic ties and range from training exchanges to high-level visits, port calls by ships, navy-to-navy expert-level staff talks, and the regular conducting of bilateral exercises. I may highlight that the PLA Navy is among the world's leading navies that now operates regularly in the Indian Ocean region, making collaborative maritime security our common interest for ensuring

maritime security in the region. Pakistan Navy-PLA Navy interaction also provides an opportunity to enhance interoperability, share experiences to optimally utilize common sensors, iron out procedures, and further elevate our relations.

In this regard, the Sea Guardian series of exercises serve the objectives of fostering interoperability and sharing professional experiences to deal with contemporary traditional and non-traditional security threats. During Exercise Sea Guardian-2 conducted off Shanghai from July 10 to 13, 2022, the PNS Taimur along with PLA Navy frigates Xiangtan and Shouzhou, supply ship Qiandaohu, submarine, and aviation units including early warning aircraft and fighter aircraft participated. The evolutions at sea included joint maneuvers, anti-surface, anti-air, and anti-submarine drills which provided a useful opportunity to strengthen naval ties and enhance interoperability between the two navies.

GT: In tandem with Exercise AMAN-23, the Pakistan Navy will also hold the first Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference (PIMEC). What is PIMEC?

Adm. Niazi: The Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference, or PIMEC, is an initiative of the Pakistan Navy to showcase the potential of Pakistan's maritime sector and draw attention to the contribution that the maritime industry can make toward the development of our blue economy. The expo aims to bring together stakeholders and companies, both international and domestic, from various maritime fields to exploit the potential offered by the blue economy. The three-day expo will provide an opportunity for business to government (B2G) and business to business (B2B) interactions for joint ventures and investments in Pakistan's maritime sector. A maritime conference will also be conducted during the PIMEC where eminent speakers, experts, and representatives, both domestic and foreign, and from both the public and private sectors, will share their views on contemporary maritime issues and suggest viable options for developing countries like Pakistan to exploit the true potential of the blue economy.

GT: In what ways would you like to see China participate in PIMEC, and why?

Adm. Niazi: Since PIMEC aims to bring together stakeholders and companies from diverse maritime fields, I reckon it will provide a unique opportunity for joint ventures and investments in the maritime sector. In this regard, the Chinese maritime sector has witnessed exponential growth over the years as evidenced by being the leading manufacturer of shipping equipment. Furthermore, China has more than 30 major ports and seven out of 10 of the world's busiest ports are located in China. With these maritime credentials, the participation of the Chinese maritime sector in the maiden PIMEC will provide an ideal opportunity to local as well as international companies in exploring avenues of collaboration to promote investments in the maritime sector of Pakistan.

GT: Speaking of China-Pakistan cooperation, now that China has delivered two of four Type 054A/P frigates, how does the Pakistan Navy think of the vessels? What roles are they playing in enhancing Pakistan Navy's capabilities?

Adm. Niazi: Acquisition of the Type 054A/Ps is a symbol of enduring friendship and historical affinity between China and Pakistan. The Type 054A/P is one of the latest multi-role frigates of Chinese origin equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors that

include CM-302 SSM and LY-80 SAMs as well as the advanced anti-submarine warfare suite and combat management system. These ships are equipped to operate under multi-threat scenarios. The first two ships of this class, PNS Tughril and the PNS Taimur, were inducted into the Pakistan Navy in December 2021 and June 2022 respectively, while the remaining two ships are also on track to join the Pakistan Navy Fleet in 2023. These ships are being integrated into Pakistan Navy operations and will be the mainstay in the Pakistan Navy Fleet in the coming years ensuring seaward defense and protection of Pakistan's vital sea lines of communications.

GT: What's next for the Pakistan Navy's cooperation plan with China in terms of equipment procurement? For example, how is the submarine project going on?

Adm. Niazi: The Pakistan Navy's development strategy is based on "progressive capability enhancement" to create a balanced, potent, and combat-ready force to meet evolving threats. As part of this modernization, the Pakistan Navy is replacing its existing aging platforms with acquisitions from friendly countries along with transfer of technology for in-country construction. In this regard, collaboration with China has been strengthened with the procurement of F-22P frigates, Fast Attack Craft (Missile), helicopters, a survey ship, and medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned combat aerial vehicles. The ongoing planned induction of Type 054A/Ps and Hangor-class submarines will further cement naval ties between the two countries. The Pakistan Navy will continue to engage Chinese firms to meet its operational requirements in the future.

The Hangor-class submarine project is making progress steadily and the submarines are under various stages of assemblage in Pakistan and China. These conventional type modern submarines are equipped with the latest weapons and sensors. The induction of Hangor-class submarines with air independent propulsion (AIP) system onboard will significantly enhance their submerged endurance capabilities. The project is continuing as per the timeline despite certain delays due to COVID-19 and technical intricacies.

GT: China has undergone a series of military reforms since 2012. The PLA Navy is also making great efforts to become a blue-water navy. In your eyes, what kind of achievements has the Chinese military made over the last decade?

Adm. Niazi: The PLA Navy has shown remarkable progress during the last two decades to achieve the goal of becoming a blue-water navy. It became the world's largest navy in terms of size in 2015 and has been growing ever since through the addition of state-of-the-art platforms, weapons, and sensors. The commissioning of 28 ships in 2021 alone is undoubtedly a manifestation of an impressive pace of shipbuilding capacity by China. Developments in the field of submarines, aviation, and hypersonic missile technology also bear testimony to the PLA Navy's drive to transform into a credible and modern force. Moreover, the PLA Navy's role in maintaining peace and stability in the Indian Ocean region and counter-piracy operations while keeping from BLOC politics is creditable. We look forward to strengthening our historic relationship with the PLA Navy and cooperating closely to promote peace and stability in the Indian Ocean region while preserving good order at sea.

GT: China commissioned its first aircraft carrier in 2012. A decade later it has three. Do you think China will have more aircraft carriers? What's the meaning of aircraft carriers to a country's sovereignty and security?

Adm. Niazi: The Pakistan-China friendship spans over more than seven decades and is imbued with a high level of trust and commonality of interests. It has matured into a comprehensive strategic partnership at the national level. In this regard, it is heartening to see the PLA Navy grow into a blue-water navy with a variety of modern platforms in their inventory, including the three aircraft carriers. The latest PLA Navy aircraft carrier, the Fujian, designed by Chinese engineers and equipped with electromagnetic aircraft launch systems, is a significant leap in the field of naval technology. Aircraft carriers reflect a country's strategic orientation and power projection capability. In this regard, keeping in view the strategic relations of Pakistan and China as iron-clad brothers, we wish for the PLA Navy to grow from strength to strength and continue with its modernization efforts to safeguard its national interests, as per evolving geo-strategic dictates.

GT: When you interact with your counterparts from the PLA Navy, do you see any difference in them having taken place over the last decade

Adm. Niazi: Over the last decade, the PLA Navy has grown exponentially and transformed into a highly competent and combat-ready force. Based on my recent interactions, I have found PLA Navy personnel highly professional, determined, and well trained in line with the modern trends. The conduct of PLA Navy ships at sea highlights their professionalism and adherence to well-defined procedures which indicates high standards of PLA Navy training institutes. It is encouraging to observe similar traits in Pakistan Navy personnel that have availed themselves of various training courses in China. With this ongoing evolution in both material and quality human resources, I have no doubt that the PLA Navy is on its way to becoming one of the finest leading navies in days to come.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202301/1283501.shtml>

Xinhuanet News

Feature: Chinese artificial flowers, plants grace homes, events in Pakistan

by Raheela Nazir

ISLAMABAD, Jan. 9 (Xinhua) -- In Pakistan's Rawalpindi city, the China Flower House offers a wide range of lifelike artificial flowers and plants imported from China, enticing everyone entering the shop with their appealing colors, designs and diversity.

"Pakistani people love to decorate their houses, offices, gardens, wedding parties and other events with these beautiful Chinese flowers and plants made from polyester. Literally, no one can tell whether these are real or fake from their shape and texture," Muhammad Abbas, the 40-year-old manager of the decor shop, told Xinhua while sorting a cluster of long-stemmed red and black roses for a customer.

"Besides their alluring appearance, these products are made from high-quality material, are easy to maintain without any hassle, and are cost-effective ... there is no fading of colors, and

they look fresh and pretty all the time ... these are the basic features that home and event decorators are in love with," he said.

Abbas said he has been involved in the business for the last 20 years, and never witnessed a decrease in demand and sales of Chinese flowers and plants, adding that Chinese manufacturers' abilities in upgrading the quality and designs to meet the demand of local customers are exceptional.

Talking to Xinhua, 38-year-old Naseem Zadi said she has come to buy flowers for her newly-built house which she wishes to decorate. "If you ask me, I would say these Chinese flowers have replaced the real ones as many people do not have enough time on their busy schedules to take care of real flowers or plants and they look lovely and attractive as well," Zadi said.

With such a large variety, they are available in every shape and size, she said, adding that she is customizing her pots of flowers to fit her tastes and needs.

Assembling different colored blooms at a shop selling Chinese-made flowers in the federal capital Islamabad, Huma Mateen, an event manager and a professional decorator, said one of the most important ingredients of decorative embellishments is flowers.

"Events and parties are incomplete and boring without eye-catching floral arrangements. Though China has been making amazing products of all kinds, these artificial flowers and plants are my most favorite. I hope the Pakistan-China friendship keeps blooming beautifully and splendidly like these flowers," Mateen added.

Mohsin Malik, a Chinese flower trader in Islamabad, said thousands of people in Pakistan are affiliated with the fast-growing business and are making profits.

"Local traders buy at a comparatively low rate from Chinese suppliers and sell them here with a good margin. They are still affordable for customers as artificial flowers and plants of the same quality, imported from other countries, sell at exorbitant rates in the market. They're popular for their reasonable prices, quality and assortments," he told Xinhua.

<https://english.news.cn/asiapacific/20230109/edc35e7953aa4ea38f0987d2091d5a71/c.html>

January 10, 2023

People's Daily

Chinese FM holds phone talks with Russian, Pakistani, S. Korean FMs respectively

(Xinhua)

BEIJING, Jan. 9 (Xinhua) -- Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang on Monday held phone conversations with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin respectively.

The China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era has maintained high-level development, exchanges and cooperation in various fields have been

deepened, and the popular support for bilateral friendship has been continuously consolidated, Qin said.

He said China-Russia relations are based on the principle of non-alignment, non-confrontation and non-direction at the third party, noting that China is ready to work with Russia to implement the important consensus reached by the two countries' heads of state and continuously push forward the two countries' relations.

During phone talks with his Pakistani counterpart, Qin said China and Pakistan enjoy a special friendship and high-level mutual trust, and the close high-level interactions between the two countries have injected strong impetus into the development of bilateral relations.

China is ready to work with Pakistan to take the important consensus between leaders of the two countries as a guidance, continuously deepen their traditional friendship, and join hands to forge an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era, he noted.

Qin stressed that as the Chinese Lunar New Year is approaching, China pays close attention to the safety of Chinese citizens in Pakistan, and hopes that Pakistan will continue to take effective security measures.

When talking with Park, Qin said China and South Korea are close neighbors that will always live next to each other and partners that cannot be separated, adding that the sound and steady development of China-South Korea relations serves the common interests of the two countries and is the general direction that both sides are continuously working for.

Qin said he would like to forge and maintain good working relationship with Park and jointly implement the important consensus reached by the two countries' heads of state.

He noted that he stands ready to focus on the current situation while taking a long-term perspective, grasp the overall friendly situation and rally cooperation forces, so as to push for steady and long-term development of China-South Korea relations.

Qin also expressed concerns about the recent temporary restrictions taken by South Korea on arrivals from China, and voiced his hope that South Korea would uphold an objective and scientific attitude.

The three foreign ministers congratulated Qin on taking office as the Chinese foreign minister, extended new year greetings for the Year of the Rabbit to the Chinese people, and expressed their willingness to jointly implement the important high-level consensus and work together to continuously promote new achievements in bilateral relations.

Zardari said Pakistan will spare no effort to protect the safety of Chinese personnel, institutions and projects in Pakistan.

Park said South Korea is willing to strengthen cultural and people-to-people interactions and personnel exchanges between the two countries.

(Web editor: Cai Hairuo, Liang Jun)

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2023/0110/c90000-10193772.html>

January 11, 2023

China Daily

Pakistani expert: Restrictions on Chinese travelers unfair

After fighting the pandemic for three years, China "reopened" to the world but some countries have imposed restrictions on Chinese travelers, which is discriminatory.

Despite China taking strict measures or easing policies according to changing circumstances, Western countries continue to slam China. Yasir Masood, an Islamabad-based broadcast journalist and communication expert, said this reflects the West's bias.

Masood said the United States has been leading attempts to smear China. Reports from the international media seem to neglect many of China's efforts to help deal with the global health crisis.

Masood said that China took many steps in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, from protecting Chinese citizens to providing aid to countries in need.

"These kinds of narratives won't do any good to global peace," Masood said. He stressed that people should understand and unpack the realities.

<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202301/11/WS63be2243a31057c47eba8f11.html>

Global Times

Connected in recognition: Foreign ambassadors signal a welcome for China's optimized, responsible COVID policy

By Xie Wenting and Bai Yunyi

Editor's Note: As of January 8, China downgraded the management of COVID-19 from category A to the less serious category B infectious disease in light of the evolving epidemic. The Chinese government has optimized measures to combat the epidemic in accordance with the social and economic development - a move well received by many countries and believed to contribute to the economic recovery of the post-pandemic world. The measures include inbound travelers with no issues to report in their health declaration can enter China without being subject to quarantine. Despite some countries announcing additional measures on Chinese nationals citing so-called unjustified "virus concerns," many countries have signaled a welcome to Chinese tourists. In this issue, the Global Times reporters Xie Wenting and Bai Yunyi talk with diplomats about their take on China's recently revised COVID policy as well as its impact on bilateral cooperation.

China is a very responsible country in handling pandemic: Argentine ambassador

China has been very responsible in contributing to the handling of the pandemic and is undoubtedly the most supportive country for most emerging economies, Argentine Ambassador to China Sabino Vaca Narvaja told the Global Times.

He noted that China is, today, one of the main economies in the world and represents one of the Latin American region's main trading partners. Therefore, the new policy that China

adopted on January 8 is "extremely relevant for our entire region because that will not only reactivate tourism, but will also accelerate commercial trips and official visits, which are very important for the relationship to continue to deepen," he stressed.

He told the Global Times that Argentina will not impose any restrictions or quarantine measures on tourists from China.

"We are very happy that China is advancing into this new stage and visits and tourism are resuming because until the pandemic began, it had become the world leader in outbound tourism," Narvaja said.

Argentine consulates in China are preparing to meet expected Chinese demand for travel. Applications for visas are increasing and there is a lot of interest from the Chinese public.

Narvaja did not forget to mention the impact of the recently concluded World Cup with Argentina clinching the famous trophy, acting as a major draw for Chinese people's interest in visiting the country.

The government of Argentina is now developing a comprehensive plan to further promote tourism between the two nations.

This plan involves establishing direct flights, improving the speed of granting visas, and enabling electronic payment methods that are widely used in China.

During the interview, Narvaja expressed appreciation for the health-focused cooperation between the two countries, especially China's provision of COVID-19 vaccines to the country during the pandemic.

"Argentina highly values all health cooperation, both in supplies and vaccines at a time when it was very difficult to access them," he said.

According to the Argentine diplomat, even today in Argentina, the most widely used vaccine continues to be that produced by Sinopharm.

Since he arrived in China in 2020, Narvaja has dedicated himself to visiting more than 26 provinces throughout the country because he believes that subnational cooperation is essential due to the potential China holds with Argentina. "Undoubtedly, with the new regulations, I will be able to get to know the country in greater depth."

China's optimized COVID policy a welcome gesture, facilitating economic cooperation:
Nepali ambassador

Nepali Ambassador to China Bishnu Pukar Shrestha Photo: Courtesy of Embassy of Nepal in China

Nepali Ambassador to China Bishnu Pukar Shrestha Photo: Courtesy of Embassy of Nepal in China

China's adjustment of its COVID policy is a welcome gesture, which symbolizes a move toward fulfilling the aspiration of China to open up further to the world for its modern and high-quality socio-economic development, Nepali Ambassador to China Bishnu Pukar Shrestha told the Global Times in an exclusive interview.

"The relaxation in international travel plays a significant role in trade promotion and increment, as well as a sustainable post-COVID recovery. When there is more travel, there will be more transactions creating more opportunities for socio-economic development," Shrestha said.

Shrestha noted to the Global Times the new arrangement will greatly facilitate economic cooperation as well as people-to-people exchanges.

It is obvious that a number of Nepalese business groups or students will come to China after the cancellation of quarantine for international arrivals, he said. "I am not sure about the exact group, but I am confident that there will be more exchanges of visits, delegations, entrepreneurs, think-tanks, academicians, media persons, students, artists, and the like in 2023," he said.

"In 2022, only a number of Nepali students entered China to resume their studies. We are thankful to the government of China for the cooperation and coordination accorded to Nepali students. Nepal is confident that China's downgrading of the virus as a Category B infectious disease and implementing a relaxation of measures of COVID-19 will certainly help foster excellent bilateral relations between Nepal and China in the political, economic, and socio-cultural arenas, and at the people-to-people level," he stressed.

He said that China can invest more in prosperous areas such as trade, hydropower/energy, infrastructure development, connectivity encompassing vital components such as railways, roads, airports, mining, food/agro and herbal processing industries, and tourism and hospitality industry, and information and communication technology, among others.

"Both Nepal and China need to enhance bilateral relations through close and productive engagements in these areas of mutual interest based on the win-win principle."

The ambassador said that Nepal always welcomes Chinese tourists to experience the incredible beauty of Nepal.

"I believe that Chinese tourists travelling to Nepal will return home with fond memories and experiences from Nepal," Shrestha said.

Recent COVID response adjustment in China based on scientific, rational analyses: Pakistani ambassador

Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque speaks at an event celebrating the 82nd anniversary of Pakistan Resolution, the National Day of Pakistan, in Beijing on March 23, 2022. Photo: Courtesy of the embassy of Pakistan

Pakistan welcomes China's recent COVID policy adjustment and believes it will significantly contribute to the recovery and growth of the world economy, Pakistani Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque told the Global Times in an exclusive interview.

He said that Pakistan is opposed to the "politicization of the pandemic."

According to the Pakistani diplomat, the recent adjustments that China made are reflective of the latest pandemic situation and are based on scientific and rational analyses. The Pakistani

people have noted the revised measures announced by China in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and they "welcome them."

"Since the outbreak of COVID-19, China has made effective efforts to protect people's lives and health. The recent adjustments are reflective of the latest pandemic situation and are based on scientific and rational analyses. It marks a decisive victory against the virus," he said.

"These changes will facilitate people-to-people exchanges between China and other countries, and will significantly contribute to the recovery and growth of the world economy," he noted.

Regarding the question of whether Pakistan will impose different measures on travelers from China, the ambassador stressed that "Pakistan is opposed to country-specific policies and politicization of the pandemic."

"We have always maintained that a response to a health crisis of a global nature must be based on scientific reasoning and logic, and to be tackled through close collaboration and international solidarity.

"So as we move forward, health authorities from China and Pakistan will continue their close collaboration and sharing of information to jointly address the evolving pandemic situation and adjusting our respective policies," he said.

Haque noted that he expects that cooperation between the two countries will further increase as China relaxes border controls.

"Our two countries will accelerate cooperation in a range of areas, including exchange of high-level delegations, enhanced B2B (business to business) travel, and an increase in people-to-people exchanges. We are also expecting major milestones in CPEC this year, including the inauguration of the new Gwadar International Airport and the ground breaking on the ML-1," he said.

According to the ambassador, China and Pakistan will celebrate 2023 as the Year of Tourism Exchanges, and relaxed border controls will enhance the flow of tourists from both countries.

Thai Ambassador to China Arthayudh Srisamoot. Photo: Courtesy of Embassy of Thailand in China

Thai Ambassador to China Arthayudh Srisamoot. Photo: Courtesy of Embassy of Thailand in China

Thailand looks forward to the return of Chinese tourists to Thailand, and Thai Consulates in China are also preparing for the resumption of tourist visa application submitted via tour companies, Ambassador of Thailand to China Arthayudh Srisamoot told the Global Times in an exclusive interview.

He said that Chinese passport holders can get 30-day visas on arrival in Thailand from now until the end of March 2023.

Chinese tourists accounted for almost one-third of Thailand's nearly 40 million foreign visitors in 2019, according to the Xinhua News Agency.

Thailand, on Monday, welcomed the arrival of thousands of Chinese tourists in its capital Bangkok, the first travel groups following China's optimization of COVID-19 control measures which took effect on January 8.

Ambassador Srisamoot said that he believes China's new policy will provide opportunities for increased trade and investment, tourism, and the resumption of frequent high-level visits between both sides, including the return of students to China.

"The policy certainly signals the progress of 'back to normal' and as the policy is gradually implemented, both sides should focus on ensuring safe travel. Thailand is now open for international tourists with certain entry rules in order to ensure both smooth and safe travel for all visitors. The easing of international travel and quarantine measures will facilitate greater interaction and enhance the cooperation between all sectors that have been delayed by COVID-19 for the last three years," he said.

Srisamoot told the Global Times that he does not expect an immediate surge of tourists after January 8, but relevant sectors and authorities have been prepared for the incoming tourists.

They expect that tourists will gradually return to Thailand after direct flights between Chinese and Thai cities resume and volume will reach or surpass pre-COVID levels.

Srisamoot said Thailand bases its COVID-19 policy on a scientific and non-discriminatory basis. Its new measures include testing on arrival for any passengers that have symptoms of COVID-19.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202301/1283590.shtml>

January 12, 2023

China Daily

Pakistan hails China's efforts against virus

China's battle against COVID-19 has truly been the people's fight, with the country overcoming the challenges due to the whole-government and whole-of-nation approach, said Pakistan's Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque, adding that the Chinese resolve and solidarity in the pandemic fight have been admirable and offered lessons for the world.

"I must say that I'm so impressed (with) the way the entire Chinese nation (had) come forward under the guidance of the central government to fight the pandemic, which has been a challenge not only for China, but also for all the global humanity," Haque told China Daily in Hong Kong.

The diplomat said he has been in Beijing for the last 2.5 years and he has seen firsthand the Chinese government's policies to combat and control the pandemic. Haque visited Wuhan and met some of the heroes who were on the front line in the battle during the pandemic.

China had a decisive victory against COVID-19, Haque said. "China is ... a large country of 1.4 billion people. They need (ed) to have certain policies that could ensure the safety of the people, so the country made a national effort to save lives," he said.

Haque said the recent adjustment in virus control measures announced by the Chinese government is based on logic, reasoning and scientific analysis.

Exchanges continue

The envoy said even during the pandemic, exchanges between Pakistan and China kept on going. The two sides saw trips by delegations, and work on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor continued.

Now, as China has opened its borders again, there will be more exchanges and more flights from Hong Kong to the Chinese mainland, and to Pakistan and other parts of the world, he said, alluding to Hong Kong's role as a key transit hub.

"And we are looking forward to this renewed exchange. I think it is also going to be a great help to stabilize the global economy," he said.

The diplomat also expressed gratitude to the Chinese government and the Chinese people for helping Pakistan during the difficult time of the pandemic. More than 60 relief flights were sent from China to Pakistan, carrying essential medicines and equipment.

Haque mentioned that Chinese vaccines have been the mainstay in Pakistan's COVID-19 inoculation campaign. "They helped us save lives in Pakistan, they helped save lives across the globe," Haque said.

"So we are really grateful to China (for) playing a very leading role in the effort against COVID-19."

China was the main supplier of vaccines not only to Pakistan, but also to the entire globe, Haque said, noting President Xi Jinping's pledge that whenever any vaccine is developed in China, it would be a public good.

<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202301/12/WS63bf626fa31057c47eba91fa.html>