



For Better Understanding on China–Pakistan and CPEC

Gleanings from the National & Chinese Press

March 01-15, 2023

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March 01, 2023

Daily Times

Work on N-5 Highway construction to start in months with Chinese grant

IA senior official of the National Highway Authority (NHA) praised Chinese contractors for their quality work and informed that work on Hala-Sakrand section of the National Highway 5 (N-5) will start in few months with Chinese grant.

Asim Amin, Member PPP, NHA was responding to queries during a live interaction, according to Gwadar Pro on Tuesday. He said that NHA has evaluated bids offered by three Chinese state-owned firms for rehabilitation of the 51-kilometre Hala-Sakrand section of the N-5 in Sindh.

He said that after the approval of the Chinese government, the project is expected to start within three to four months. The Chinese government has approved a \$100 million grant for the section of the country's largest north-south highway. The Chinese government had also rehabilitated several parts of N-5 in 2011 and 2016 after the road was severely damaged by the 2010 flood.

The NHA member said that Hala-Sakrand road will be one of the finest roads, as whatever road project in Pakistan has been executed by the Chinese contractors, the work quality is of optimum level. He said that the Chinese grant for the project is a gift for the Pakistani people by the Chinese government.

The official also said in response to another question that the Chinese and Pakistani experts will soon start the feasibility study of Babusar Tunnel and Babusar-Naran road. "We have sought technical and financial assistance from China for the project, which may cost around Rs100-125 billion", he said, adding that the project will reduce the distance between Babusar Top and Gilgit by 90 kilometres.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1067816/work-on-n-5-highway-construction-to-start-in-months-with-chinese-grant/>

Pakistan Observer

BRI & Role of Middle Corridors and Forces of Hegemony

Dr Mehmood-ul-Hassan Khan

The Chinese One Belt & One Road Initiative (BRI) has entered into its 10th year during which it has succeeded to win "hearts and minds" of the people living around the globe. However, forces of hegemony are also active to derail the project in Central Asia through false and fake propaganda.

Actually, they tried to start another "end-game" to sabotage the socio-economic and geopolitical development in these countries. Even before the scheduled visit of the US Secretary Antony Blinken to India, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, the US Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Donald Lu showed his country's serious concerns about the Chinese loans and projects.

On the contrary, the BRI has been a “connecting hub” and “bridging force” between the continents, communities and corporations, working jointly to achieve the dreams of greater regional connectivity through world class infrastructure development, immense socio-economic integration and last but not the least formation of middle corridors. In this regard, formation of the Middle Corridor (MC) has further enhanced the BRI connectivity and potential utility.

The MC is a trade route that spans the Central Asian green fields, the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus Mountains and the dawn of the BRI has further enhanced its trans-regional connectivity. The route is part of China’s ‘Belt and Road’ initiative. It is known as the China-Central Asia-West Asia Corridor which links China and the regional markets of East Asia with Georgia, Turkey and the European markets.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has opened a new window of opportunity for the regional countries. Leaders of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Central Asian States have grasped the emerging opportunity and initiated inter-state cooperation through regular bilateral visits and the signing of memorandums on the minimization of tariffs and border crossing hurdles and jointly working for the development of the MC. In this regard, Turkey first conceived the corridor in the late 2000s, creating the necessary ferry, port, railway and road infrastructure across Central Asia and the Caspian Sea.

There have been lots of meaningful projects launched for the further strengthening of the MC. The “Trans-Kazakhstan Railway” was opened in 2014. The completion of the “Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway” was another milestone completed in 2017. It enabled rail passage through the Caucasus Mountains for the first time since the 1990s.

Seemingly, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in particular, actively collaborated to turn the MC into a reality. Together with China and Turkey, these countries have held a series of conferences and ministerial meetings to improve their cross-border rail links and reduce trade friction between them.

Azerbaijan holds the geographical advantage in the MC and is situated on the East-West trade route, connecting Europe and China, opens up a lot of opportunities. It has enhanced its potential of transit shipments, transport and logistics sectors.

During November 2022, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey signed a roadmap for the simultaneous elimination of bottlenecks and the development of the “Middle Corridor” for 2022-2027. The implementation of the agreements will allow increasing the capacity along the corridor to 10 million tons per year by 2025

At the same time, the MC promises to become a regional power centre. Even Uzbekistan, has supported the development of the MC and tries to build its own railway networks that would connect to the corridor. According to Uzbekistan Railways (December 2022), Uzbekistan organized a train bypassing Russia in December 2022.

For the further strengthening of the MC Azerbaijan, Türkiye and Uzbekistan signed “Tashkent Declaration” to reshape the cooperation of the participating countries in multiple spheres from economy to trade, transportation and energy, as well as address the regional and global security challenges.

To conclude, CPEC Phase-II has the potential to further enhance the prospects of greater regional connectivity between the South Asia, Central Asia and South Caucasus regions. In this regard, there is an urgent need to further improve regional trade with all the Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan. Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan trade and economic relations are constantly on the rise which should be further expanded because the potential of trade between both the regions are much greater than the current level of trade volumes.

Azerbaijan's "superior" and "supporting" economic policies, befitting a "trade model" with lots of "custom exemptions", direct flight connectivity and having strategic partnership has become a role model for other regional countries for achieving desired goals of greater regional connectivity.

Kazakhstan's rigorous and diversified "in-person approach" has given it a comparative advantage in this regard. It follows holistic and comprehensive innovative diplomacy to increase bilateral relations in the diverse sectors of economy i.e. pharmaceutical, civil aviation (April 2023 direct flights), SMEs, energy, real estate, oil & gas, agriculture and last but not the least joint ventures in sports, surgical instruments and textiles with Pakistan and its private companies.

Uzbekistan's "systematic" and "supportive" policies of greater regional connectivity have surpassed all the regional countries. The trans-regional railway project "(Pakistan-Uzbekistan-Afghanistan)" would be a "game changer" in the context of greater regional connectivity and trade in the days to come. Pakistan-Uzbekistan bilateral trade, economic, business and trade activities have been further increased because of its pure but simple economic diplomacy.

There is an immense potential of enhancing trade in the field of agriculture and agro-products, which needed to be tapped. Maximum facilitation should be provided to the investors of all Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to help set up their businesses in the already established Special Economic Zones across Pakistan.

There is huge scope for higher education cooperation through joint degrees, and student and faculty exchange programs. The Virtual University of Pakistan is offering online education, which is cost-effective for students of these countries.

Most recently, the 8th Session of Pakistan-Uzbekistan Inter-governmental Commission (IGC) on Trade-Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation was held in Uzbekistan. It was mutually agreed to extend cooperation in priority areas like transport and logistics. Moreover, the growth of mutual trade, investment and industrial cooperation and banking were also discussed. It was decided to further increase bilateral trade which reached \$240 million in 2022 (highest among CIS). Both countries mutually supported the adoption of concrete measures to accelerate the practical implementation of the Agreement on Preferential Trade and Diversification of Transport Corridors in order to create prerequisites for increasing the volume of mutual trade.

An agreement was also inked to accelerate the progress of the trans-Afghan railway construction project. Moreover, MOUs to increase the volume of multimodal cargo

transportation, creation of terminals on the territories of both states for further joint export of products to the markets of third countries were also signed. Furthermore, interbank partnership was also discussed to implement the mechanism of SWAP operations between central banks, the development of correspondent banking relations between the financial institutions of the two countries. The closure of banking connection should be halted and immediately restored.

<https://pakobserver.net/bri-role-of-middle-corridors-and-forces-of-hegemony-by-dr-mehmood-ul-hassan-khan/>

The contribution of the CPEC, PowerChina, and Port Qasim power projects to youth empowerment

Qaisar Nawab

Several studies have shown that employment is critical to the health of the economy. The term “emergency” refers to a situation in which a person’s life is put in jeopardy due to an unforeseen event. It allows workers to increase their capacity for information as well as their expertise, which has a “snowball effect” on future recruitment opportunities by fostering the development of new businesses.

A significant increase in Pakistan’s employment rate was only a fantasy and a dream prior to the development of the CPEC project. Unfortunately, the majority of domestic workers lacked the specialised skills and experience required for the jobs created by CPEC’s early harvest programmes. As a result, Chinese businesses began to prioritise foreign workers. So, these projects employed far more unskilled domestic workers than qualified or technical Pakistani workers.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is an infrastructure development project worth billions of dollars that is part of China’s Belt and Road Initiative. The CPEC project includes the expansion of Pakistan’s Gwadar port, as well as the construction of roads, railways and energy infrastructure. PowerChina, a Chinese state-owned enterprise, is actively involved in the construction of power infrastructure projects such as the Port Qasim Power Project under the CPEC programme.

In terms of youth empowerment particularly youth development and employment, the CPEC project and associated energy infrastructure projects have the potential to open up new opportunities in Pakistan. For example, the design and operation of power plants such as the Port Qasim Power Plant necessitate a wide range of skills, including engineering, project management and maintenance. Young people in Pakistan can improve their job prospects by acquiring these skills through education and training. The CPEC project has the potential to generate a wide range of jobs in industries such as tourism, hospitality and logistics. Young people may find work in areas such as shipping and customs, as well as the development and management of hotels and resorts, as a result of the development of the Port of Gwadar, for example.

A number of infrastructure and development projects, including the CPEC, were launched in 2013 as part of China’s grandiose “Belt and Road” initiative (BRI). It is a significant

development project that will transform Pakistan's economy by constructing new transportation and energy infrastructure and connecting China to the Arabian Sea. The project entails the construction of a network of roads, railways and pipelines to transport oil and gas from the port of Gwadar in south-west Pakistan to Xinjiang in north-west China. The term "solar power" refers to the use of solar energy to generate electricity. The plan also includes the development of industrial parks to attract foreign investment and boost manufacturing growth.

CPEC is expected to attract billions of dollars in foreign investment and create thousands of new jobs in Pakistan, making it a game changer for the country's economy. Furthermore, the project aims to provide much-needed infrastructure to Pakistan's rural and impoverished areas, improving connectivity and expanding economic potential. However, the CPEC has come under fire from critics who see the initiative as a ploy by China to increase its influence in the region. Security issues have also arisen as a result of the presence of separatist organizations in Pakistan's Baluchistan region, where Gwadar Port is located.

Power Construction Corporation of China, also known as PowerChina, is a Chinese state-owned company that focuses on energy and infrastructure construction. PowerChina, one of the world's largest engineering and construction companies, operates in over 100 countries and regions. Among the Company's commercial ventures are the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) of power plants, hydroelectric projects, transmission lines, substations and other infrastructure projects. PowerChina has been involved in a number of high-profile projects, including the construction of the Beijing-Shanghai high-speed railway and the Three Gorges Dam, the world's largest hydroelectric power station, both of which have significantly aided China's energy and infrastructure growth.

PowerChina has recently participated in a number of international projects, the majority of which have been in developing countries. These projects include the construction of hydroelectric power plants, transmission lines and other types of infrastructure in countries such as Pakistan, Indonesia and Brazil. PowerChina has worked on a variety of renewable energy projects, including wind, solar and biomass power plants. The company is investing heavily in the research and development of new clean energy technologies, with the goal of producing 50 GW of renewable energy by 2025.

POWERCHINA RESOURCES LTD (51% ownership) and Qatar's "AL-MIRQAB CAPITAL" (49% ownership) financed and established Port Qasim Electric Power Company (Private) Limited, also known as "PQEPC." The Port Qasim Coal Power Plant Project is primarily in charge of the investment, construction, operation and management. It was established on August 12, 2014, in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad. More than 40 billion kilowatt hours of electricity have been produced since the project's inception and it has been safely operational for 1800 days. The Port Qasim power plant project includes a comprehensive talent development strategy and a standardized management structure to ensure that all new hires feel comfortable in their roles as soon as possible.

100 of the first 150 Pakistani university graduates working in power plants received six-month training in similar Chinese power plants and were fully subsidized. Some of these graduates have gone on to become key professionals in the country's coal-fired power plant

industry, holding key managerial positions. It has established itself as a green environmental protection powerhouse capable of powering all 4 million homes in Pakistan for four consecutive years, with the highest electricity generation load rate, highest electricity consumption, and lowest electricity price.

The “One Belt, One Road” China Pakistan Youth Development Initiative was proposed and implemented collaboratively by the All-China Youth Federation, PowerChina Group and the Prime Minister Office for Youth Affairs. This was done in order to assist the youth of China and Pakistan in vigorously participating in the establishment of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and to encourage the common development of the two countries’ youth in international cooperation.

According to the Sino-Pakistani youth development strategy, related CPEC projects will provide 1000 jobs and internships for young Pakistanis. The Prime Minister’s Office of Pakistan Youth Affairs would openly recruit via social media, job boards, college recruitment and other channels. Around 100 jobs and internships will be available at China’s hydroelectric and thermal power project sites and offices in Karachi, Islamabad, Kashmir, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and other locations, including relevant commercial and technical positions.

It is critical to remember that the impact of CPEC projects on employment and youth development is still being studied. Some have questioned the project due to its lack of transparency and the possibility of debt and reliance on China. Concerns have been raised about the project’s ability to benefit local workers and communities, as well as whether it will result in locals being evicted from their homes and losing their traditional livelihoods. As a result, while the CPEC project and related energy infrastructure initiatives have the potential to create job opportunities for Pakistani youth, it is critical to ensure that the project’s benefits are distributed fairly and that there are no unintended consequences.

<https://pakobserver.net/the-contribution-of-the-cpec-powerchina-and-port-qasim-power-projects-to-youth-empowerment-by-qaisar-nawab/>

The Express Tribune

Students invited to write on CPEC’s 10 years

Chinese consulate co-organizes contest initiative’s impact on public

LAHORE: The Chinese Consulate in Lahore and the Institute of International Relations and Media Research (IIRMR) are jointly organising a nationwide essay competition titled ‘CPEC 10 years on, grassroot level impacts and improvement in socioeconomic status of the general public in Pakistan’.

The essay competition will last for 30 days from March 1, invoking students’ insights and intellectual perceptions on the subject of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor’s contribution in the public sphere, role in modern skills enhancement, job creation, merits and demerits in the wellbeing of common people, youth and women empowerment and unexplored areas that may help incentivise all and sundry to grow and flourish in the new era.

The Chinese Consulate, in a statement, asked students hailing from all provinces, especially AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan to participate in the competition.

“This year marks the 10th anniversary of the launching of CPEC. As the landmark project of the Belt and Road Initiative, CPEC not only has promoted socio-economic development in Pakistan, but more importantly has brought tangible benefits to each and every Pakistani across the country. You may not suffer the frequent power cuts. You may spend less time traveling from Karachi to Peshawar. You may make more profits by planting crops in collaboration with Chinese agronomists. You may be provided jobs and internships,” the statement added.

IIRMR Chairman Muhammad Mehdi and President Yasir Habib Khan said educated youth could play a vital role in the CPEC through their productive thoughts, written expressions and practical involvement.

The results will be announced on April 5 with cash prizes of Rs40,000 for 1st position.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2403752/students-invited-to-write-on-cpecs-10-years>

March 02, 2023

Pakistan Observer

Construction of fish processing factory begins in Gwadar

As various projects gain traction in Gwadar, a Chinese company, Haixintian Pelagic Fishery Overseas Base Company, begins full-scale construction of its fish processing factory in Gwadar Free Zone South (phase 1).

Last month, Haixintian Pelagic Fishery Overseas Base Company commenced the importation of its industrial units from China, and construction is now underway for the cold storage and other facilities necessary for the fish industry. To facilitate this, the company has secured a warehouse spanning 5,911 square meters in the Gwadar Free Zone (Phase 1).

The warehouse comprises 2,000 square meters of standard workshop space, which will be constructed according to the design of the sublessor. It will be the Gwadar Free Zone’s first fishing and fishing-related factory. All legal and documentation procedures for operating in Pakistan have already been completed by the company. Because the industry is linked to the expertise of the local workforce, it has the potential to benefit the community in terms of both job and business opportunities.

<https://pakobserver.net/construction-of-fish-processing-factory-begins-in-gwadar/>

Refocus on Pur Aman Balochistan

Sajjad Shaukat

WHEN, during the President Gen Pervez Musharraf’s regime in March 2002, Pakistan initiated the construction of Gwadar Deep-Seaport in Balochistan province with Chinese assistance, sirens went off in the capitals of some European countries, especially the US, India and Israel which took it as a threat to their global and regional plans. Afterwards, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is part of China’s BRI has been rapidly

developing. CPEC will prove to be a gateway to prosperity for both countries as well as the region. Under the project, China is investing as much as \$62 billion in various sectors in Pakistan in a phased manner.

Besides energy projects, CPEC will open new doors of development relating to various fields, as the national economy of the country will grow fast, leading to creation of new job opportunities, poverty reduction, and development of transportation sector—boost agricultural and industrial growth, including exports. Notably, India was openly opposing the CPEC and China's BRI; the US also joined New Delhi.

In May, 2020, the outgoing US Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Alice Wells had once again criticized BRI and CPEC by saying that the US was concerned about CPEC projects due to the unfair rates of profits which are guaranteed to Chinese firms. The Chinese Embassy called her statement totally baseless by stating: "We take Pakistan as an equal partner and never asked Pakistan to do more." Islamabad and Beijing have, repeatedly, dismissed the criticism as a Western propaganda and the latter also insisted that the CPEC will equally benefit Pakistan.

In fact, Gwadar seaport project which is backbone of the CPEC will uplift the impoverished people of Balochistan, including developments in other backward areas by redressing their grievances, which the hostile elements, supported by the US, India and Israeli do not want. The ink on Pak-China agreements related to the CPEC was barely dry when especially American CIA, Indian RAW and Israeli Mossad had accelerated playing up the Baloch insurgency. Malicious propaganda against the CPEC coincided with the terror attacks in various regions of Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan.

Pakistan's defence forces and primary intelligence agency ISI have successfully broken the backbone of the foreign-backed terrorists. Peace has been restored in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in Karachi as well as in other vulnerable regions. But, in the recent past, terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and particularly Balochistan show that these external intelligence agencies are destabilizing Pakistan and want to damage the CPEC. Especially, RAW is also using some terrorist outfits such as ISIS and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)-linked Majeed Brigade which claimed responsibility for a number of terrorist assaults on workers and labourers, working for the CPEC projects in Balochistan. These terror entities also abducted and killed many Chinese nationals.

It is mentionable that the Taliban fighters on 15 August 2021 entered the Afghan capital Kabul and seized power, taking control of Afghanistan. The Taliban-led government clarified that Afghan soil would not be used for any terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda, ISIS and the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) for terror attacks against neighbouring countries, including Pakistan. But, regarding some recent terror attacks which also include Balochistan, sources suggested that some militants of the TTP, which is based in Afghanistan, have entered Pakistan from Afghanistan. Hence, the military leadership has warned Kabul to check this infiltration.

It is noteworthy that in November 2020 at a joint press conference, DG ISPR Maj Gen (now Lt-Gen.) Babar Iftikhar and the then Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi unveiled a

dossier containing “irrefutable evidence” of India’s sponsorship of terrorism in Pakistan—also targeting the CPEC. Pakistan’s Ambassador to the UN Munir Akram had handed over the dossier to the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. In its 27th report, dated 3 February 2021 and the 28th report, recently published, the UN Security Council’s monitoring team for tracking terrorist groups confirmed Pakistan’s dossier, and drew attention to the increasing cross-border terrorist threat to Pakistan.

Regarding various terror assaults, the then Foreign Minister Qureshi had remarked that if the international community had taken timely notice of Islamabad’s concerns over New Delhi’s involvement in terrorist activities across Pakistan, Lahore’s Johar Town blast and several terrorist incidents in Balochistan would not have taken place. While under General Bajwa’s command the fencing along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, which also entails Pak-Afghan border of Balochistan started in June 2017 by the Army to improve the security situation and the near-completion of the project in 2021 is praiseworthy.

And Pakistan Army also contributed a lot in socio-economic development of Balochistan besides giving military training to the youth, while protecting mega-projects and the CPEC staff. It is notable that presiding over an apex committee meeting in Quetta, the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had approved the plan—PurAman (Peaceful) Balochistan on August 6, 2015—for the return of the angry Baloch into the national mainstream. In this respect, the apex committee meeting reviewed the overall security situation in the insurgency-hit province and progress on the National Action Plan.

The then Army Chief General Raheel Sharif, Federal Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Retired Lt Gen Abdul Qadir Baloch Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Governor Balochistan Muhammad Khan Achakzai and Chief Minister Balochistan Dr Abdul Malik Baloch were among those attending the meeting. Earlier during the day, Prime Minister Sharif also performed the ground-breaking of three important development projects namely Mangi Dam, Balochistan Agriculture University and Flyover on Smungli Road. The PM also inaugurated Sariab Road Flyover, which has been completed at a cost of 1581 million rupees.

PM Nawaz Sharif had stated that Balochistan would be a major beneficiary of CPEC and the project would open new avenues of development and prosperity for Pakistan. Premier Sharif elaborated “Gwadar’s deep sea port would link the land-locked Central Asian States with the rest of the world—will attract massive amounts of local and foreign investment.” PM further stated: “We will provide fool proof security to CPEC projects and we will ensure that maximum benefits reach the common people.”

<https://pakobserver.net/refocus-on-pur-aman-balochistan-by-sajjad-shaukat/>

The Express Tribune

Green development pivotal to CPEC projects

Chinese companies in Pakistan have been following international standards on safety and environmental protection

ISLAMABAD: The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has been playing a pivotal role in promoting green development in Pakistan, highlighting China's commitment to the harmonious coexistence of human beings and nature, Pakistani officials and experts said.

Talking to Xinhua, Convener of the National Parliamentary Task Force on SDG, Romina Khurshid Alam said, "The cooperation between Pakistan and China under CPEC in the fields of energy, transport, agriculture and industrial production has helped Pakistan boost green, low-carbon sustainable development."

Apart from assisting Pakistan in overcoming its energy crisis and upgrading infrastructure through CPEC, Chinese companies in Pakistan have been strictly following international and local standards on safety and environmental protection, Alam said.

"In implementing infrastructure projects, ecological factors have been fully considered and a number of green and clean energy projects including solar, wind and hydropower have been completed," said the official.

THE ARTICLE ORIGINALLY APPEARED ON THE CHINA ECONOMIC NET

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2403998/green-development-pivotal-to-cpec-projects>

China is here to stay in Pakistan

China expects that Pakistan's relations with other countries don't expand at the cost of Sino-Pak relations

To the context of the new-found warmth in the US-Pakistan relations with the visit of the high, multi-agency delegation from Washington, the message from Beijing is loud and clear: we are here to stay in Pakistan without influencing its decision-making or meddling in its internal affairs.

Pakistan's distinct shift away from China is visible like never before. FM Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's four visits to Washington followed by a high-level US delegation led by Derek Chollet, the Counselor of the US Department of State, underscores the renewed urge for engagement.

Is this a source of concern for the Chinese leadership?

Certainly not! Instead it inflames the desire to double up diplomatic and economic initiatives.

A synthesis of recent discussions — both private and extracted from public forums — is worth considering in this context.

Firstly, China expects that Pakistan's relations with other countries don't expand at the cost of Sino-Pak relations. This is a bond that exists between the peoples of China and Pakistan and has little to do with any political person or party.

Our sole objective is Pakistan's political stability and economic progress. We will, as friend, oppose any malign influence meant to disrupt or undermine the Sino-Pakistan friendship, is the message out of Beijing. This relationship transcends buildings, dams, roads and bridges.

Nong Rong, the former Chinese ambassador in Pakistan, has been elevated to the level of a deputy foreign minister. His predecessor Sung Wei Dong as well as former deputy Lijian Zhao also enjoy similar influential Asia-focused positions in the Chinese ministry of foreign affairs. That should be seen as a signal for an elevated level of engagement with Pakistan.

Secondly, taking care of the basic governance issues is the exclusive responsibility of the central and provincial government. Even prioritisation of projects is the job of Pakistani officials.

In this context, Chinese officials and business executives mention several power plants, Thar coal exploitation, new highways, upcoming Gwadar International Airport, Orange Line, the 950km Matiari-Lahore High-Voltage Transmission Line, vocational training institute at Gwadar, etc as benchmarks for the time-tested friendship.

Despite this, detractors are turning unaddressed simmering socio-economic issues in places such as Gwadar and extended Balochistan into exploitable fault-lines. *Haq Do Tehreek* by Maulana Hidayatur Rehman in Gwadar is one such ploy that Chinese suspect is being used to malign China and CPEC.

How can China be held responsible if civil, military authorities and politicians fail in addressing the problems resonated by *Haq Do Tehreek*; many Chinese are involved in multiple projects across Pakistan?

Why should we be held responsible if short-sighted Pakistani leaders and bureaucracy acted recklessly with little knack for long-term planning and efficient execution?

The only way to prevent this is to genuinely and urgently resolve basic governance issues, Chinese official argue.

Thirdly, if the US can be a positive factor vis a vis Pakistan, we will welcome it because that creates a win-win for all. But Beijing will strongly oppose any attempt to drive wedge between Islamabad and Beijing. We must all resist any move aimed at steering Pakistan away from China through unfair geo-political maneuvers or economic pressures.

This reiteration obviously stems from the way former Army Chief General Qamar Bajwa attempted to pull Pakistan away from China in an apparent attempt to assuage American concerns. This also generated an unprecedented element of distrust — however miniscule — among the Chinese leadership which had been alarmed over the “negative vibes” that they discerned in GHQ under Bajwa.

Fourthly, Afghanistan remains a primary concern in Beijing as far as security and counterterrorism is concerned. Yet, it hopes all regional stakeholders, Russia and the US can synergise their positions on the war-battered country. But Afghanistan must not be allowed to turn in to a breeding ground for proxy terrorism detrimental to the interests of neighbouring countries, sounds the warning.

We should remember: Chinese by nature don't bluster, are not emotional, and are extremely measured. They don't say things straight in your face out of deference. This is a civilisational trait. But in September 2021 they had gone wary of Bajwa's duplicity. Even

they used words “negative signals from GHQ” instead of calling him duplicitous. Why should they then uncover their intent in an amorphous situation defined by alignment with the US?

Chinese also wonder if Pakistan has already become an instrument of the American Asia-Pacific Policy — originally floated by President Obama as the Asia Pivot policy.

What are the conditions accompanying the resolve to improve and strengthen the US-Pakistan relations?

Regardless, though, China is determined to push its economic connectivity via the Belt and Road Initiative, backed up by President Xi Jinping’s latest conceptual endeavour i.e. the Global Security Initiative. It symbolises the Chinese quest for peaceful co-existence and economic cooperation.

Taking cognizance of increasing polarisation across the globe, Xi urges nations to adapt to the drastically shifting global environment and to approach the complex and interconnected security concerns with a cooperative mutually win-win mindset.

It appears even the Chinese government is waiting for the political mist to clear in Pakistan before reenergising its economic initiatives into the next level. But there is no stepping back from “our iron brother [Pakistan]” under any circumstances.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2403917/china-is-here-to-stay-in-pakistan?amp=1>

The Nation

KP IGP assures security to Chinese in province

Peshawar - According to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Inspector General Akhtar Hayat Khan, Pakistan-China relations are higher than mountains and deeper than the ocean, and both countries have supported each other in every difficult time. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police will provide all possible security to the Chinese throughout the province.

He expressed these opinions during a visit to China Window, a Chinese cultural centre in Peshawar. The Provincial Police Chief was briefed on China Window’s security. He went to various Chinese culture galleries and expressed a strong interest in them.

Speaking to the media, IG Police Akhtar Hayat Khan stated that the CPEC is a project for Pakistan’s development and prosperity and that the ongoing projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will provide employment and strengthen the economy.

In this regard, the IG stated that he specifically visited Rashkai Special Economic Zone, while the relevant regional police officers across the province have reviewed the issues related to the security of the Chinese workers in the various projects and are taking all possible precautions.

According to Akhtar Hayat Khan, given the popularity of digital media and the importance of the Chinese language, youth should be encouraged to take advantage of this most important medium and learn the Chinese language. It is commendable that training was organised in the China Window by the National Commission for Technical and Vocational Training NAVTTC and UNHCR, which will yield very important results in the future.

The establishment of the Chinese Cultural and Information Centre in Peshawar, with the support of the Chinese Embassy, was described as a centre of excellence by the IG Police. He praised the large number of people who have visited this cutting-edge facility to learn about the culture of their brotherly neighbouring country, China. Previously, the IG Police distributed certificates to participants in China Window's Digital Media and Chinese language course.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-02/page-3/detail-0>

Express News

پاکستان کی معاشی صورت حال کا ذمہ دار ایک ترقی یافتہ ملک ہے، چین

چین نے قرض فراہم کرنے والے ممالک اور اداروں کی اجارہ داری پر تنقید کرتے ہوئے کہا ہے کہ پاکستان سمیت دیگر ترقی پذیر ممالک کی ابتر معاشی صورت حال: بیجنگ کی ذمہ دار ایک ترقی یافتہ ملک کی مالیاتی پالیسیاں ہیں۔

ان کا خیالات کا اظہار چین کی وزارت خارجہ کی ترجمان ماؤنگ نے عالمی خبر رساں ادارے بلوم برگ کے پوچھے گئے سوال کے جواب میں کیا۔ ان سے پاکستان کے قرضے معاف کرنے کے حوالے سے پوچھا گیا تھا۔

خیال رہے کہ موڈیز اوریجٹ کے مطابق پاکستان پر جون تک 7 بلین ڈالر کا قرض واجب الادا ہے جس میں چین کا قرضہ بھی شامل ہے۔

چین کی وزارت خارجہ کی ترجمان ماؤنگ نے جواب دیا کہ چین، پاکستان کی اقتصادی اور مالی تعاون کرتا رہا ہے اور آئندہ بھی اقتصادی استحکام برقرار رکھے، زندگیوں کو بہتر بنانے اور ترقی کے حصول کے لیے پاکستان کی کوششوں کی حمایت کرتا رہے گا۔

ترجمان ماؤنگ نے امریکا کا نام لیے بغیر کہا کہ لیکن یہ بتانا ضروری ہے کہ ایک مخصوص ترقی یافتہ ملک کی بنیاد پرست مالیاتی پالیسیوں کی وجہ سے پاکستان اور بہت سے دوسرے ترقی پذیر ممالک قرضوں میں پھنس کر بے پناہ مالی مشکلات کا سامنا کر رہے ہیں۔

ترجمان ماؤنگ نے مزید کہا کہ چین اور پاکستان نے ہر مشکل وقت میں ہمیشہ ایک دوسرے کا ساتھ دیا ہے۔ چین پاکستان کے معاشی اور سماجی استحکام کی کوششوں میں تعمیری کردار ادا کرنے کے لیے تمام فریقین سے مشترکہ کوششوں پر زور دیتا ہے۔

چین کی وزارت خارجہ کی ترجمان نے کہا کہ ترقی پذیر ممالک کے قرضوں کا بڑا حصہ مغربی ممالک کے زیر دست تجارتی قرض دہندگان اور کثیر جہتی مالیاتی اداروں کا ہے جو ان بڑے ممالک کے اشاروں پر چلتے ہیں۔

ترجمان وزارت خارجہ ماؤنگ نے مطالبہ کیا کہ پاکستان کی معاشی صورت حال کو مد نظر رکھتے ہوئے قرض دینے والے مالیاتی ادارے اور ممالک مدد کے لیے آگے بڑھیں۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2449537/10/>

Jang News

تمام فریق پاکستان کا قرضوں کا بحران حل کرنے میں مدد کریں، ترجمان چینی وزارت خارجہ

چین نے مالیاتی اداروں اور ترقی یافتہ ممالک سے پاکستان کی مدد کرنے کا مطالبہ کر دیا۔

چین نے کہا ہے کہ تمام فریق قرضوں کا بحران حل کرنے میں پاکستان کی مدد کریں۔

ترجمان چینی وزیر خارجہ ماؤنگ نے بیجنگ میں نیوز بریفنگ کے دوران کہا کہ ترقی یافتہ ملکوں کی سخت معاشی پالیسیاں پاکستان جیسے ملکوں کے معاشی بحران کا سبب ہیں۔

چینی وزارت خارجہ نے کہا کہ مالیاتی ادارے اور قرض دینے والے ممالک پاکستان کی معاشی صورتحال میں مدد دیں۔

ترجمان چینی وزارت خارجہ کا کہنا ہے کہ تمام پارٹیز پاکستان کیلئے 'مثبت' کردار ادا کریں۔

<https://jang.com.pk/news/1199985>

K2 Daily

بابر بٹرنان، ایبوسر اور گلگت کے درمیان قاصد کم ہو جائے گا

100 ملین ڈالر کی چینی امداد سے چند ماہ تک این 5 کے ہلاک کر ڈیکشن پر کام شروع کیا جائے گا

کراچی (آئی این پی) 100 ملین شروع کیا جائے گا، طاہرہ ازہری چینی اور کے اس منصوبے کے لیے چینی سے چینی ڈالر کی چینی گرانٹ سے آئندہ چند ماہ چینی پاکستانی ماہرین جلد ہی ایبوسر اور گلگت اور مالی مدد مانگی گئی ہے جس پر تقریباً 100 ملین ڈالر (5 ارب روپے) کے ہلاک کر ڈیکشن پر کام شروع کریں سے 125 (باقی صفحہ 7 نمبر 10)

10 ارب روپے تک آسکتی ہے۔ ماہرین اس کے کام کے حوالے سے تیار کیا ہے کہ این 5 کے 51 کلومیٹر ہلاک کر ڈیکشن کی بحالی کے لیے تین چینی سرکاری فرموں کی جانب سے فنانس کردہ بریڈوں کا جائزہ لیا ہے۔ چینی حکومت کی منظوری کے بعد چین سے ہار ہا میں منصوبہ شروع ہونے کی امید ہے۔ چینی حکومت نے ملک کی سب سے بڑی ٹیلی فون پالی وے کے لیے 100 ملین ڈالر کی گرانٹ کی منظوری دے دی ہے۔ 2010 کے سیلاب سے سڑک کو شدید نقصان پہنچا تھا اور چینی حکومت نے 2011 اور 2016 میں این 5 کے کئی حصوں کی بحالی بھی کی تھی۔ ہلاک کر ڈیکشن بہترین سڑکوں میں سے ایک ہوگی کیونکہ پاکستان میں جس بھی سڑک کے منصوبے پر چینی کنٹریکٹرز نے کام کیا ہے وہاں چینی معیاری اور بہترین ہے۔ منصوبے کے لیے چینی گرانٹ چینی حکومت کی طرف سے پاکستانی عوام کے لیے ایک تحفہ ہے۔ مزید بتایا گیا ہے کہ چینی اور پاکستانی ماہرین جلد ہی ایبوسر اور گلگت سڑک کی فرہنگی اعلیٰ شروع کریں گے۔ اس منصوبے کے لیے چین سے چینی اور مالی مدد مانگی گئی

ہے جس پر تقریباً 100 سے 125 ارب روپے اگت آسکتی ہے، یہ منصوبہ ایبوسر اور گلگت کے درمیان 90 کلومیٹر کا مسلام کم کرے گا۔

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The Nation

Dr Burki for following Chinese methodology of economic development

LAHORE - Dr Shahid Javed Burki, political economist and the former finance minister, has emphasized upon enhancing ratio of domestic savings, tax collection and investments in SME sector for sustainable future development of Pakistan. It was stated by him at a seminar jointly organised by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) and the Burk Institute of Public Policy (BIPP) at SMEDA head office. Farhan Aziz Khawja, CEO SMEDA, delivered address of welcome on this occasion. The seminar was also addressed by other economists including Shahid Najam and Babar Yaqoob Fateh Muhammad. Secretary Industries, MD PSIC, Secretary P&D, Secretary Finance, Federal Ombudsman and a number of the government and business community representatives also attended the seminar online. Dr Shahid Javid Burki, who was key speaker of the seminar, advised to follow the Chinese methodology of economic development for Pakistan. He told

that when he made the first visit of China in 1965 it was a far less developed country than Pakistan. But, now it has become the world's 2nd largest economy, he said. He said, "The rich opportunities available for SME development in Pakistan also need to be exploited in line with the global standards." He termed it a great challenge for SMEDA and the government of Pakistan in the current macro-economic situation of Pakistan, but without coming up with the world markets, SMEs cannot play due role in economic development of Pakistan.

He pointed out that huge population of youth and the agriculture sector were the major strengths of Pakistan, which can play pivotal role in SMEs growth. The youth should be provided with the market oriented education and training, whereas the agriculture produces should be converted into value added products in accordance with international standards of processing and packaging that will enable us to tap a number of the unexplored global markets for Pakistan's exports.

Shahid Najam, Babar Yaqoob Fateh Muhammad and the other speakers also highlighted the need of SME development by overcoming the existing challenges through conducive policy framework. They said that SMEDA should be entrusted a lead role in economic development of Pakistan through political ownership, policy stability and conducive business environment.

CEO SMEDA Farhan Aziz Khawaja, in his address, thanked the guest-economists and acknowledged that BIPP is a world class institution to provide answers to the complex and wicked public policy questions in accordance with the "New Public Management" (NPM). He said that SMEDA was busy to implement a plan for capacity building of the educated youth through higher education institutes of Pakistan that will help young graduates to start SME businesses through Prime Minister's Youth Loan Program.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-03/page-8/detail-4>

K2 Daily

	
<p>بیتھ 19</p> <p>لے شرح سود 300 ٹیس ہائس بیٹھا کر 20</p> <p>یعد کر دیٹھٹیک کے مطابق 24 فروری لاکھ</p> <p>ہوئے والے بٹھ میں پاکستان کوٹھن سے 70</p> <p>کرڈ ڈار موصول ہوئے جن میں سے فیرگی</p> <p>قرضوں کی اداگی کے بعد مرکزی بینک کے</p> <p>ذرمہ دار کے ذمہ دار میں 55 کرڈ 60 لاکھ ڈالر</p> <p>ادانہ ہوا۔ ایٹھٹیک بینک کا کہنا ہے کہ ایٹھٹیک</p> <p>آف پاکستان کے ذمہ دار 3 ارب 81 کرڈ ڈار</p> <p>رہے جبکہ کرنل ٹکوں کے ذمہ دار ایک کرڈ 42</p> <p>لاکھ ڈالر کم ہو کر 5 ارب 45 کرڈ ڈار ہے۔</p>	<p>ملک کے ذرمہ دار کے ذمہ دار میں 55 کرڈ ڈار اضافہ</p> <p>بین سے کرنل قرض سے 70 کرڈ ڈار موصول، ذمہ دار 3 ارب 80 کرڈ ڈار</p> <p>کرنل ٹکوں کے ذمہ دار ایک کرڈ 42 لاکھ ڈالر کم ہو کر 5 ارب 45 کرڈ ڈار ہیں</p> <p>اسلام آباد (اینٹرنل ڈیسک) بینٹی کرنل بینک آف پاکستان کے مطابق 24 فروری تک سٹی</p> <p>قرض ملنے سے ایٹھٹیک کے ذرمہ دار کے ذمہ دار کے مجموعی ذمہ دار 9 ارب 26 کرڈ ڈار</p> <p>ذمہ دار سے 55 کرڈ ڈار بڑھ گئے۔ ایٹھٹیک بینک (باقی صفحہ 7 بیٹھ نمبر 19)</p>

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کیلئے تمام آر پی او اور ڈی پی او کو سخت کریک ڈاؤن شروع کرنے کی ہدایت دیجے ہوئے کہا کہ صوبے کے تمام اضلاع میں دہشت گردوں اور دہشت گردوں کی چوری، خرید و فروخت اور اشتعال میں ملوث قانون شکنوں کو قانون کی گرفت میں لایا جائے اور قرار واقعی سزا دی جائے گی۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ آئندہ جس علاقے میں ڈور چمڑے کا دھاندلہ سائے آ رہا ہے، حائل سرکل انسپکشن اور ڈی پی او کو جواب دہ ہونگے۔ آئی سی پنجاب نے 15 کی کالز پر زیادہ مقدمات درج کرنے والے ضلعی پولیس انسپکشن کو شاپس بجیڈ کم مقدمات پر سرچش کی۔ آئی سی پنجاب نے کہا کہ پولیس ڈائریکشن میں زیادہ اشتہاری ہانڈے والے اشتعال کے سی پی او اور ڈی پی او کو لائن ٹھیس ہیں اور ان کی کارکردگی دیگر انسپکشن کیلئے قابل تقلید ہے۔ ڈاکٹر عثمان انور نے بجلی چوری کے مقدمات کے اندراج میں زبردستی کارکنوں کے تحت سخت قانونی کارروائی کو یقینی بنانے کی ہدایت کی۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ بجلی چوری قومی نقصان ہے اور ہمیں قومی نقصان کو نقصان پہنچانے والوں سے سختی سے نمٹنا ہے اور یہ سب ممکن ہے جب بجلی چوری کے مقدمات جلد تاخیر درج ہوں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ ایسے مقدمات کے اندراج میں جیس انکسٹن میں تاخیر نظر آئی وہاں سرکل انسپکشن اور ایس ایچ او براہ راست ذمہ دار ہونگے۔ آئی سی پنجاب نے کہا کہ تمام ڈی پی او مقامی واپ ڈی ایس کے ساتھ قریبی رابطہ رکھیں اور بجلی چوری کی شکایات پر جلد تاخیر کارروائی کو یقینی بنائیں۔

چینی باشندوں کی سیوری کیلئے ہر ممکن اقدامات کرنے کا حکم
شرعیوں کی رہائش گاہوں اور تمام ورکنگ سائٹس کی سیوری آپسٹیشن باقاعدگی سے کی جائیں
چنگ کی تیاری، خرید و فروخت میں ملوث قانون شکنوں کو گرفت میں لایا جائے، عثمان انور
لاہور (پ ر) ایکسپریس پولیس پنجاب ضلعی پولیس دفتر میں "حفظ" سٹریٹجی کرنے کی
ڈاکٹر عثمان انور نے اجلاس کے بعد ایک مسوے کے ڈیٹا کن وے دی ہے۔ آئی سی پنجاب نے آر پی او
تمام ریجنل پولیس دفتر جبکہ 12 ایف ٹی ایم اور ڈی پی او سے (ہفتی وار 6 بجے نمبر 50)

بیتھ 50

کہا کہ جاری کردہ ہدایات کے مطابق "حفظ" سٹریٹجی کو فعال کر کے فراہم کیا اور سہارا بچوں کے علاوہ مدد اور توجہ کے تحت کمزور طبقوں کی خدمت اور تحفظ میں کوئی کسر نہ رہا رکھیں۔ آئی سی پنجاب نے کہا کہ یہ "حفظ" سٹریٹجی سہارا بچوں کی سہارا بچوں اور بچیوں کے مسائل کے حل کے لئے ہے۔ سہارا بچوں اور بچیوں کے مسائل کے حل کے لئے ہے۔ آئی سی پنجاب نے غیر ملکی شہریوں یا گھروں میں چینی باشندوں کی سیوری کیلئے آر پی او اور ڈی پی او کو ذمہ داری میں بھرتی اقدامات یقینی بنانے کا حکم دیا۔ ڈاکٹر عثمان انور نے کہا کہ چینی شہریوں کی سیوری اولین ترجیح ہے لہذا چینی شہریوں کی رہائش گاہوں اور ترمیم تمام ورکنگ سائٹس کی سیوری آپسٹیشن باقاعدگی سے کی جائیں۔ آئی سی پنجاب نے چنگ ہڈی سے چینی انسانی جانوں کے تحفظ

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March 04, 2023

Business Recorder

\$1.3bn financing from China's ICBC expected

ZAHEER ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has stated that the budget deficit is manageable but the external account deficit needs to be managed; otherwise, the country will be "blackmailed".

Addressing a press conference on Friday in response to the ongoing debate in the mainstream and social media, the finance minister said that "we have been spending more than what the country could afford and consequently, the country is facing the foreign exchange problem." He said that he would not resign and no one should dictate him through talk shows as he is trying to fulfil the responsibility assigned to him by the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM).

The finance minister came down hard on the former prime minister Imran Khan and accused him of the current economic situation and stated that he should refrain from talking that the country is about to default, "neither the country is bankrupt nor will it be".

He said that neither there is a need for a financial emergency nor any plan is under consideration.

He; however, agreed to the formation of a commission of independent experts to determine who is responsible for the current economic situation.

He said that prior actions of the IMF have been fulfilled. He; however, did not respond to the question as to how much debt was increased, following the depreciation of the rupee during the present government's tenure, and what had stopped them from undoing electricity and petrol prices by Rs5 per unit and petrol Rs10 per litre, respectively, after coming to power in April 2022, which were announced by the previous government by end of February 2022. The finance minister also did not respond to why the PDM did not reverse the PTI government's decision to reduce the petrol and electricity prices, especially since they had termed the PTI government's move a "political gimmick" and a financially unviable "deviation" from the terms and conditions agreed with the IMF. Dar said that the former prime minister's attitude is "very selfish" about national issues and has always been stating the country is about to default. The finance minister said that there are no two opinions that the country is passing through a difficult economic situation but it will not default. He said that the external situation was further compounded by the floods as the government has to import pulses, wheat, and fertiliser for which a few billion dollars have been spent.

He said that the fiscal deficit was left at 7.9 per cent, the current account deficit at 4.6 percent of the GDP, and the trade deficit was \$39 billion.

Likewise, he said that average GDP growth was 3.7 percent and during their period, the GDP growth was \$26 billion comparable to \$112 billion during the PML-N tenure of five years. He said that the per capita income was increased just by \$30 during the four years of the PTI government, adding that inflation in the country was due to the global increase in commodity prices and inflation during July-February 26.2 percent and core inflation is 19 percent. The government to protect the low-income group has increased the BISP allocation to Rs40 billion.

He added that at present, the SBP has foreign exchange reserves of \$3.2 billion while commercial banks have foreign exchange reserves of \$ 5.44 billion. He said that foreign exchange reserves would increase further.

He said that China has shown friendship. He acknowledged that exports during the previous tenure of the PML-N were stagnant and stated of course there has been a decrease in imports and exports during the current PDM tenure.

The finance minister said that the present government have made foreign payments of about \$6.5 billion, of which, \$2 billion to Chinese banks and \$3.5 billion to the UAE and Swiss banks. He said that all the formalities with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) have been completed as of Thursday night and \$1.3 billion repaid to them are now being rolled over to Pakistan.

Dar said that the circular debt was increased by the previous government to Rs1,465 billion from Rs1,148 billion during the last four years and gas circular debt has been increased to Rs1,700 billion.

Dr said that Imran-led government has increased the total public debt and liabilities Rs30 trillion to Rs54 trillion and government debt from Rs25 trillion to Rs49 trillion till June 2022. In reply to a question about the devaluation of the rupee and the increase in the interest rate, Dar questioned who had separated the monetary policy by making changes in the law, as well as, created a new system by making changes in the institutions.

The minister said that the Ministry of Finance is responsible for the fiscal side and supplementary budget not because of taxes, but due to energy sector debt.

The finance minister also showed displeasure over his predecessor finance minister Miftah Ismail for making a statement on television about economic policy, and stated that there is an economic policy and a road map with the present government but it cannot be advertised in the newspaper.

The finance minister said that he would steer the country out of the economic quagmire soon and expressed the hope that the SBP reserves would increase to \$10 billion and national reserves to \$16 billion by June 30, 2023.

He said that where wheat and fertilizer used to be smuggled out of the country, now dollars are being smuggled and he is mulling over a policy to deal with it.

He said that the budget deficit is manageable but the external account has to be managed; otherwise, the country would be “blackmailed”. He said that the country has been spending, which it could not afford.

He said that those who had brought Imran Khan to power and later stated that if he remained in power the country’s survival would have been at stake.

Dar said that the financing gap, he believes is \$5-6 billion instead of \$7-8 billion.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2023/03/04/1-page/956447-news.html>

Daily Times

Pak-China tissue culture lab to boost local potato production

Most of the potato seeds in Pakistan highly depend on imports, hence the price of local high-quality seeds is expensive, unaffordable for many low-income farmers. Our tissue culture laboratory is committed to producing high-quality potatoes locally, reducing our dependence on foreign seeds, Dr Babar Ijaz, person in charge of overseas projects, Shandong Rainbow Agricultural Technology Co., Ltd, said on Friday.

Potato is one of the rare cases in which Pakistan is not just self-sufficient for domestic use but also an exporter. Last year, floods have devastated many kinds of crops in Pakistan, while potato production soared to 7.937 million tonnes in FY22 from 5.873 million tonnes in FY21, up by 35 percent as floods did not hit Punjab which is a hub of potato production. By contrast, Pakistan imports 20,000 tons of potato seeds every year.

Potato is not a crop for poor people because its initial cost of production is high. 35-40 percent of the cost goes to seeds, said Syed Ijaz ul Hassan, Director of the Sahiwal Potato

Research Institute. Facing such a status quo, Pakistani and Chinese enterprises have been working hard to find opportunities for cooperation.

In addition to seed production, related potato by-products are also welcome Chinese invests. Besides, mechanized harvesting, pest control are also full of opportunities,” Dr Babar Ijaz told China Economic Net (CEN).

The most common potato diseases in Pakistan include early blight, stem rot and so on. In contrast, Chinese varieties are more resistant to pests and diseases with higher yields, which is exactly what Pakistan needs to learn to improve our own potato germplasm.

As early as 2018, Rainbow had signed a memorandum of understanding with Pakistan Beaconhouse Group. This year, most of our work that was delayed due to the epidemic began to accelerate, said Fan Changcheng, Deputy General Manager of Rainbow.

In order to build Pakistan largest potato tissue culture lab, Shandong Academy of Agricultural Sciences has also invested in our plan. At present, a small-scale tissue culture facility of the first phase of the lab is under planning, with a goal of producing 500 mu (33.3 hectares), equivalent to about 1,500 tons of potato seeds, and the second phase will be expanded to 10,000 tons, Fan added.

As Mr. Fan said, since the current situation that Pakistan’s potato seeds are dependent on imports, increasing the supply of local seeds can save precious foreign exchange reserves and increase the income of farmers. If Pakistan can realize the large-scale production of local high-quality potatoes, in addition to meeting domestic needs, it can also export products to other countries, such as Arab countries.

At present, Rainbow and Qatar’s vegetable institutions also have in-depth cooperation. Such a long-term plan not only help Pakistan potato producers get rid of import dependence, but also earn foreign exchange, Mr. Fan stated.

Such viewpoint was echoed by Dr Babar Ijaz, First of all, we must ensure the localized production of high-quality seeds, and at the same time improve planting technology and mechanization level. Then we might be able to export potatoes to other countries. We have a huge potential for countries that have smaller land areas or dont produce much of their own potatoes.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1069029/pak-china-tissue-culture-lab-to-boost-local-potato-production/>

China-made Chery to repeat its sales miracle in Pakistani market

China-made Chery vehicle to repeat its sales miracle in Pakistani market, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday.

“It’s an amazing experience! Good interior space and a powerful engine make TIGGO 4 the best option for a car in its price range!” Abdul, from Balochistan, could not hide his excitement to share his TIGGO 4 driving experience with other consumers at a recent test drive event held by Clifton, one of Chery’s offline dealers in Pakistan.

Many consumers, like Abdul, were patiently waiting for the test runs of Chery's TIGGO 4 and TIGGO 8. "Pakistan's current economic difficulties have adversely affected the delivery schedule of booked orders in the auto sector.

I believe these force majeure conditions will pass quickly and we will soon have Chery TIGGO series at our doorsteps." said another customer.

Automobile sales in Pakistan hit a 31-month low of 10,867 units in January 2023 amid a partial halt in small car production due to restrictions on the import of components and a surge in prices following a massive devaluation of the rupee. However, production and sales of jeeps and pickups showed a notable growth in January, compared to the previous month, despite all the odds.

Sales of jeeps and pickups in January increased to 4,846 units from 3,232 units in December 2022, a month-on-month growth of 49.93%, according to the data of Pakistan Automotive Manufacturers Association (PAMA).

"Chery Group's outstanding performance in the world makes us confident about 2023 sales," stated Felix Hu, country director of Chery Automobile in Pakistan.

In January, the sales volume of Chery Group hit 101,379 units, up 16.5% year on year, making it the eighth consecutive month since June 2022 that its sales volume exceeded 100,000 units in a single month. Among them, some high-end models such as the TIGGO 8 and TIGGO 7 series have maintained their monthly sales of more than 10,000 units with 10,856 and 12,768 units respectively.

Chery's triumph in January extends its achievements in 2022. In 2022, Chery sold 1.23 million vehicles, setting a new record for its annual sales volume, with overseas sales exceeding 450,000 units, up 67.7 percent year-on-year, placing Chery at the top of the list of Chinese brands exporting passenger vehicles for the 20th consecutive year.

This sales miracle can be attributed to Chery's persistence in mastering its core technology. As a Chinese brand adhering to independent research and development, Chery has built 5 R&D centers worldwide, with an R&D team of more than 7,000 elites, many of which are senior designers and engineers who have served world-class automobile enterprises including Jaguar Land Rover and General Motors.

According to the 2022 Automotive Performance, Execution and Layout (APEAL) Study released by J.D. Power, a world-renowned market consulting and research company, TIGGO 8 Pro Max ranks No. 2 in the mid-sized SUV segment. In the meantime, it has won numerous awards, including the "2022 Most Innovative Model" in Saudi Arabia and the "Best Medium-sized SUV of the Year" in Mexico. Besides, the 1.5T hybrid power engine developed by Chery and installed on TIGGO 8 Pro Phev won the title of "the Best Engine under 2.0L" at the 2023 Auto Award Ceremony in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Two of Chery's models, TIGGO 8 pro and TIGGO 4 pro SOP, were built and launched in Pakistan in 2022 and gained the trust of over 3,000 customers in around six months.

“In the coming year, Chery will continue to be driven by technology to guarantee the further development of sales volume, vehicle quality and reputation from Pakistani clients,” concluded Felix.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1069009/china-made-chery-to-repeat-its-sales-miracle-in-pakistani-market/>

Dunya News

\$500m loan from China a lifeline for Pakistan amid sinking economy

ISLAMABAD, March 3 (Reuters) - The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China ((ICBC) has approved a rollover of \$1.3 billion loan for cash-strapped Pakistan, which will help shore up its depleting foreign exchange reserves, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said.

The facility will be disbursed in three installments. The first one of \$500 million has been received by Pakistan's central bank, Dar said in a tweet. "It will increase forex reserves," he said.

The money, which Dar said had been repaid by Pakistan to the ICBC in recent months, is crucial for the South Asian economy, which is facing a balance of payment crisis, with its central bank foreign exchange reserves dropping to levels barely able to cover three weeks of imports. Pakistan has already received a \$700 million loan from China to help boost its forex reserves. Dar said a total \$2 billion is in effect Pakistan borrowing back the debt repayments it has paid to Beijing for previously agreed loans.

He said Pakistan would need \$5 billion external financing to close its financing gap this fiscal year which ends in June. More external financing will be coming to Pakistan only after Islamabad signs a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which the minister said should be done by next week. The lender has been negotiating the deal with Pakistan since early last month to clear its ninth review, which if approved by its board will issue over \$1 billion tranche of \$6.5 billion bailout agreed in 2019.

"We will, God willing, take this country out of this quagmire," Dar said, dismissing concerns of a default risk.

<https://dunyanews.tv/en/Business/704177->

The Express Tribune

Chinese prescription

International creditors must evolve a proactive lending policy and developing states be provided with space to operate

Beijing's outlook of world view is in contrast with the Western perceptions. Though China is very much part of the global capitalist entrepreneur economy, it takes a departure when it comes to fundamentals of poverty alleviation and development. This is why a spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry took no qualms in stating that 'certain developed countries' have not lived up to the expectations of buckling up underdeveloped states, and their policies had rather led to stagnation in growth. This is no new synopsis, and is evident from the

approach that China has for interacting with developing countries as its aid and assistance does not come with strings attached. Whereas, the West is in with an agenda and behind the excuse of reforms, there is much that the poor recipient members have to suffer in the long run.

It is not clear as to what entailed China to come up with such a categorical utterance at this point of time. While it referred to Pakistan, the assumption is that it is hinting at the plethora of conditionalities that Islamabad is being made to accept by the IMF, as the former goes on to strike a new deal in restructuring its loans. As Pakistan sits on the edges of an imminent default, and with Western credit rating agencies simply writing off the country's tangibles, there is a fear that it could lead to severe ramifications on the international financial index. On the other hand, China, which has rolled over its cash tranches with Pakistan to help it avert bankruptcy, has pointed out the enigma of walking away as the Fund and other lenders are accustomed to. It is an undeniable fact that the US, despite being an ally, has not pumped in any succour and that is what the communist giant has pointed out.

There is a cue to be picked from China i.e. all international creditors must evolve a proactive lending policy, and developing states must be provided with space to operate. There is no tailor-made prescription, and developing countries should be free to reorient their policies as per their needs and requirements.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2404262/chinese-prescription>

K2 Daily

سی پیک کے تحت قائم موبائل فیکٹری کو جبری بندش کا سامنا
ایل سی نہ کھلنے کی وجہ سے تقریباً 3000 ملازمین بے روزگار ہو گئے ہیں

وزیراعظم نے موبائل فیکٹری کے بند ہونے پر شدید غم ظاہر کیا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ اس سے تقریباً 3000 ملازمین بے روزگار ہو گئے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت اس صورتحال کو سنبھالنے کے لیے اقدامات اٹھانے لگی ہے۔

اسلام آباد (این این آئی) سابق وزیر صنعت اور تجارتی امور نے کہا کہ سی پیک کے تحت قائم موبائل فیکٹری کے بند ہونے سے تقریباً 3000 ملازمین بے روزگار ہو گئے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت اس صورتحال کو سنبھالنے کے لیے اقدامات اٹھانے لگی ہے۔

400 ملازمین بے روزگار ہو گئے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت اس صورتحال کو سنبھالنے کے لیے اقدامات اٹھانے لگی ہے۔

سی پیک کے تحت قائم موبائل فیکٹری کو جبری بندش کا سامنا

https://www.epaper.dailyk2.com/Home?Issue=NP_ICT&Page=International%20/%20Local%20News&Date=2023-03-04

https://www.epaper.dailyk2.com/Home?Issue=NP_ICT&Page=Classified&Date=2023-03-04

Nawaiwaqt News

چینی بینک نے 1.3 ارب ڈالر قرض رول اوور کی منظوری دیدی: وزیر خزانہ

اسلام آباد (نمائندہ خصوصی) وزیر خزانہ اسحاق ڈار نے ٹویٹ میں کہا ہے کہ چینی بینک نے پاکستان کیلئے 1.3 ارب ڈالر قرض رول اوور کرنے کی منظوری دیدی۔ یہ قرض پاکستان نے حال ہی میں چینی بینک آئی سی سی کو واپس کیا تھا۔ قرض کی رقم چین سے پاکستان کو تین اقساط میں ملے گی۔ قرض کی پہلی قسط 50 کروڑ ڈالر سیٹ بینک کو موصول ہو گئی ہے جس سے زرمبادلہ کے ذخائر میں اضافہ ہو گیا ہے۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-03-04/page-1/detail-40>

چین کا بیان گہرے تعلق کا عکاس: اسحاق ڈار

اسلام آباد (نمائندہ خصوصی) وفاقی وزیر خزانہ سینیٹر محمد اسحاق ڈار نے کہا ہے کہ چین کی وزارت خارجہ کی طرف سے گزشتہ روز بلومبرگ کو دیا گیا جواب پاکستان اور چین کے مابین دوستی اور تعلق کی گہرائی کی عکاسی کرتا ہے۔ یہ بات جمعہ کو وزیر خزانہ سینیٹر اسحاق ڈار نے اپنے ٹویٹ میں کہی۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-03-04/page-1/detail-12>

پاک چین دوستی ہی امریکی بالادستی کے عزائم کا توڑ ہے

چین نے قرض فراہم کرنیوالے اداروں اور ممالک کی اجارہ داری پر تنقید کرتے ہوئے کہا ہے کہ پاکستان سمیت دیگر ترقی یافتہ ممالک کی ابتر معاشی صورت حال کی ذمہ دار ایک ترقی یافتہ ملک کی مالیاتی پالیسیاں ہیں۔ چین کی وزارت خارجہ کی ترجمان ماؤ ننگ نے گزشتہ روز عالمی خبر رساں ادارے بلوم برگ کی جانب سے پوچھے گئے ایک سوال کے جواب میں کہا کہ چین پاکستان سے اقتصادی اور مالی تعاون کرتا رہا ہے اور کرتا رہے گا۔ انہوں نے باور کرایا کہ پاکستان کا اقتصادی استحکام برقرار رکھنے، وہاں کے عوام کی زندگیوں کو بہتر بنانے اور ترقی کے حصول کیلئے چین پاکستان کی کوششوں کی حمایت جاری رکھے گا۔ انہوں نے امریکہ کا نام لئے بغیر کہا کہ ایک مخصوص ترقی یافتہ ملک کی بنیاد پرست مالیاتی پالیسیوں کی وجہ سے پاکستان اور بہت سے دوسرے ترقی پذیر ممالک قرضوں میں پھنس کر بے پناہ مالی مشکلات کا سامنا کر رہے ہیں۔ چین اور پاکستان نے ہر مشکل وقت میں ہمیشہ ایک دوسرے کا ساتھ دیا ہے۔ چین پاکستان کے معاشی اور سماجی استحکام کی کوششوں میں تعمیری کردار ادا کرنے کیلئے تمام فریقین سے مشترکہ کوششوں پر زور دیتا ہے۔ ماؤ ننگ کے بقول ترقی پذیر ممالک کے قرضوں کا بڑا حصہ مغربی ممالک کے زیر دست تجارتی قرض دہندگان اور کثیر الجہتی مالیاتی اداروں کا ہے جو ان بڑے ممالک کے اشاروں پر چلتے ہیں۔ انہوں نے اس امر کا تقاضا کیا کہ پاکستان کی معاشی صورت حال کو مد نظر رکھتے ہوئے قرض دینے والے مالیاتی ادارے اور ممالک پاکستان کی امداد کیلئے آگے بڑھیں اور اپنا تعاون پیش کریں۔

یہ حقیقت تو اظہر من الشمس ہے کہ آئی ایم ایف اور دوسرے عالمی مالیاتی اداروں پر امریکی پالیسیوں کا غلبہ ہے۔ وہ کسی ملک کیلئے بیل آؤٹ پیکیج کی منظوری دیتے ہوئے امریکی مفادات کو پیش نظر رکھتے ہیں اور مقروض ممالک کو جن شرائط کا پابند کرتے ہیں وہ امریکی ڈیکٹیشن پر ہی مبنی ہوتی ہیں۔ مالیاتی اداروں کے بیل آؤٹ پیکیج کا مقصد بھی متعلقہ ممالک کی معیشت کو امریکی خواہشات کے مطابق جکڑے رکھنے کا ہوتا ہے تاکہ ان میں خودداری کی کوئی رمت پیدا نہ ہو سکے اور انکی آزادی و خود مختاری امریکی اشاروں پر ناجہتی نظر آئے۔ امریکہ نے اپنے تئیں دنیا کی واحد سپر پاور بن کر دوسرے ممالک کو ڈیکٹیشن کرنا اپنا حق سمجھ لیا ہے جو اپنے مفادات پر تو کوئی زد نہیں پڑنے دیتا مگر دوسرے ممالک کی آزادی و خود مختاری کو پرکھنے کی حیثیت نہیں دیتا۔ امریکہ نے عالمی قوانین، کنونشنز اور اقوام متحدہ کے انسانی حقوق کے چارٹر کے برعکس خود کو یہ اختیار بھی تفویض کر دیا ہے کہ وہ اپنے مفادات کے تحفظ کی خاطر کسی بھی دوسرے ملک کی سلامتی و خود مختاری پر حملہ آور ہو سکتا ہے۔ اگرچہ اقوام متحدہ کے چارٹر میں ہر رکن ملک کی مساوی حیثیت تسلیم کی گئی ہے اور ہر ملک کی آزادی و خود مختاری کے احترام کا تقاضا کیا گیا ہے۔ مگر امریکہ اقوام متحدہ کی قراردادوں، فیصلوں اور کنونشنز کو بھی خاطر میں نہیں لاتا اور اس نمائندہ عالمی ادارے کو بھی اپنی امن مرضی کے مطابق چلانے کی کوشش کرتا ہے۔ اس نے ایٹمی ٹیکنالوجی کے حوالے سے بھی ایٹمی کلب کے ذریعے دوسرے ممالک کو ڈیکٹیشن کرنے کا وسیلہ اختیار کر رکھا ہے اور اسکی مرضی کے بغیر ایٹمی ٹیکنالوجی حاصل کرنے یا حاصل کرنے کی کوشش کرنے والے ممالک امریکہ کی ڈیکٹیشن کے تحت ہی اقوام متحدہ کی جانب سے عائد کی جانے والی عالمی اقتصادی پابندیوں کے سزاوار ہوتے رہتے ہیں۔ پاکستان، ایران اور شمالی کوریا اسکی زندہ مثالیں ہیں جنہیں اپنی ضرورت کی بنیاد پر ایٹمی ٹیکنالوجی کے حصول پر عالمی اقتصادی پابندیوں کی زد میں آنا پڑا۔ اسکے برعکس عالمی و علاقائی امن و استحکام کی خرابی کا باعث بننے والے ممالک بھارت اور اسرائیل امریکہ کے ”نبلی آنکھوں والے بچے“ قرار پائے ہیں جنہیں پاکستان اور عرب دنیا بالخصوص فلسطین کیخلاف اپنے جارحانہ توسیع پسندانہ اقدامات کیلئے امریکی سرپرستی اور آشریہ با د حاصل ہے۔ آئی ایم ایف اور عالمی بینک بھی اپنی قرض پالیسی کا امریکی ڈیکٹیشن کے مطابق ہی اجراء کرتا ہے چنانچہ امریکی

پالیسیوں کے نتیجے میں دنیا میں خلفشار بڑھ رہا ہے اور ان امریکی پالیسیوں کے باعث اقوام متحدہ کے غیر موزن ثرہونے سے اقوام عالم میں جس کی لاشی اسکی بھینس کا تصور پنپ رہا ہے۔

بلاشبہ چین کو اس ساری صورت حال کا مکمل احساس و ادراک ہے جو دنیا اور خطے میں طاقت کا توازن امریکہ کے ہاتھوں بگڑنے سے بچانے کیلئے علاقائی اور عالمی تعاون کے راستے ہموار کرتا ہے اور اقوام متحدہ اور آئی ایم ایف کارکن ہونے کے ناطے وہ ان فورموں پر امریکی توسیع پسندانہ عزائم کے آگے بندھ باندھنے کا کردار ادا کرتا ہے۔ پاک چین دوستی کا آغاز چونکہ چین کی آزادی کے ساتھ ہی ہو گیا تھا چنانچہ ان دونوں ممالک کے مابین علاقائی ترقی، سلامتی اور استحکام سے متعلق مفادات میں بھی اشتراک عمل ہو اور یہی وہ صورت حال ہے جس نے پاک چین دوستی کو شہد سے میٹھی، سمندروں سے گہری اور ہمالیہ سے بلند کر کے دنیا کیلئے ضرب المثل بنا یا۔ سی بی کے ناطے آج پاکستان چین دوستی خطے کے امن و استحکام کی بھی ضمانت بن چکی ہے۔ امریکہ کو چین کے اس مضبوط و متحرک کردار اور خطے میں پاک چین دوستی کے ثمرات کے تناظر میں ہی اپنے سپر پاور ہونے کا زعم ٹوٹا نظر آ رہا ہے اس لئے وہ بھارت کی سرپرستی کر کے علاقائی طاقت کا توازن بگاڑنے کی کوشش میں لگن ہے۔

اس تناظر میں ہمارا مفاد تو اسی میں ہے کہ اپنی معیشت کو مستحکم بنانے اور اپنے پاؤں پر کھڑا کرنے کیلئے چین اور برادر مسلم ممالک سے مالی معاونت حاصل کر کے آئی ایم ایف کے شکنجے سے نجات حاصل کرنے کی کوشش کی جائے کیونکہ آئی ایم ایف کے قرضوں کے بوجھ تلے دبی ہماری معیشت اپنے پاؤں پر کھڑی ہو گی تب ہی ملک کے عوام کی مالی مشکلات اور غربت و مہنگائی کا خاتمہ ممکن ہو گا۔ چین اس مقصد کے حصول کیلئے بھی ہمارے کندھے سے کندھا ملانے کھڑا ہے اور پاکستان کیلئے آئی ایم ایف کے قرضوں کی نوبت لانے والے ترقی یافتہ ممالک بالخصوص امریکہ پر پاکستان کی مالی معاونت کیلئے آگے بڑھنے پر زور دے رہا ہے۔ اس کیلئے سب سے پہلے خود چین نے عملی پیش رفت کی ہے اور پاکستان کو غیر مشروط قرض کی خطیر رقم ادا کر دی ہے جس کے باعث پاکستان کے زرمبادلہ کے ذخائر بھی ساڑھے 55 کروڑ ڈالر بڑھ گئے ہیں۔ اس تناظر میں چین کی بے لوث دوستی ہمارے لئے نعمت غیر مترقبہ سے کم نہیں۔ پاکستان اور چین کو ایک دوسرے پر مکمل اعتماد بھی ہے اور امریکہ بھارت گٹھ جوڑ کے سامنے پاکستان اور چین کا مشترکہ دفاعی حصار بھی مضبوط ہے۔ پاک چین دوستی کو کسی بدخواہ کی جانب سے کوئی ہلکی سی آج بھی نہیں آنے دینی چاہیے۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-03-04/page-5/detail-11>

March 05, 2023

Daily Times

Chinese peanuts to be solution to high oil prices in Pakistan

Chinese peanuts to be a solution to high oil prices in Pakistan, says a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Saturday.

“Look! Our seeds are rich in nutrient elements,” Dr Babar Ijaz, person in charge of overseas projects, Shandong Rainbow Agricultural Technology Co., Ltd, showed a plump peanut seed to the reporter during an interview with CEN.

Lately, Rainbow’s high-oleic-acid peanut cultivation base project was formally included in the framework of China-Pakistan agricultural cooperation by the Ministry of Agriculture of China. “As you can see, our seed registration in Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) has started. A total of five high-oleic peanut varieties for oil extraction, Runhua series have been trial-planted in Pakistan, expected to achieve fruitful results.

Next, our aim is to increase the area gradually to 1,500 hectares in coming years,” Fan Changcheng, Deputy General Manager of Rainbow, noted bluntly. “My country has a long

tradition of peanut planting. Peanuts like a warm environment with sufficient sunlight, with loose and breathable sandy loam as the most suitable soil condition.

Potohar region, Punjab is the best area for peanut production here,” Babar Ijaz added, “Peanut seeds contain 40-50 percent oil, and high oleic peanut oil is rich in unsaturated fatty acids, which is not only more storable, but also lowers blood lipids. During our trial, we always focused on how the local environment can act on the quality of seeds on the whole. The varieties we selected have the highest oleic acid content, up to 75-80 percent, which means very high nutritional value.”

“Self-sufficient in peanut production means that we can reduce our import bill of edible oil,” said Muhammad Jahanzaib, scientific officer of the Oil Seed Research Program in NARC, Pakistan. Statistics from United States Department of Agriculture showed that Pakistan’s peanut planting area in 2022/23 is about 150,000 hectares, with a total output of 140,000 metric tons, and an average yield of about 0.93 metric tons per hectare.

According to Babar Ijaz, such a relative lower yield needs a lot of room to be improved, “especially we need to produce more edible oil and get rid of the situation that edible oil is highly dependent on imports. If our project area can be gradually expanded, it can even improve the peanut farming ecosystem in Pakistan as a whole.” In January, Rainbow and Beli Technologies, a well-known Pakistani agricultural enterprise, signed a large-scale planting MoU. First lot of peanut seeds with independent intellectual property rights has been exported to Pakistan. Overall, the seed germination rate of Rainbow’s peanuts is over 98 percent.

As for future, Fan mentioned two major obstacles that affect the peanut industry in Pakistan: insufficient planting area and low yield. After gradually increasing yield, subsequent by-product processing also has a good prospect. We are working with the Chinese Government to establish the “China-Pakistan oilseed crops lab” focusing on the quality testing of peanut oil, and will also assist in the formulation of unified standards for the peanut oil in Pakistan. In addition to edible oil, other food processing is under consideration. Except the improvement of local edible oil structure, at the same time gradually upgrade entire peanut industry, which is a win-win situation for us and Pakistan enterprises.”

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1069314/chinese-peanuts-to-be-solution-to-high-oil-prices-in-pakistan/>

Pakistan Observer

China rejects ‘debt trap’ western narrative

Rejecting accusations about the “debt-trap diplomacy”, China has insisted that on the contrary, African nations have reaped a great deal of benefits from the infrastructure projects as part of its Belt and Road Initiative.

In fact, African economies were weighed down by a whooping external debt owed to multilateral financial institutions and commercial creditors, and not China.

Wang Chao, the spokesman for the first session of the 14th National People's Congress, made the remarks in response to a question on Saturday during the much-anticipated press conference that marked the beginning of China's most important political season. Citing statistics from a World Bank report, the spokesman cleared the air around the hyped claims and maintained.

that nearly three-quarters of Africa's external debt was actually owed to the multilateral institutions and commercial creditors, whereas Beijing was working to ease Africa's debt burden.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-rejects-debt-trap-western-narrative/>

China's Two Sessions: Significance & Utility

Dr Mehmood-Ul-Hassan Khan

China has been pioneer of good governance and superior human values for the last 12000 years. Interestingly, China has been pursuing socio-economic development, human respect, environment and nature friendly policies to maintain qualitative life since long.

China's Two Sessions have become icon of modern model of smart/good governance during which all major policies of macro-economy, strategic priorities of national politics, fund allocations of social development, debate on structural reforms, distribution of ministerial slots, approval of projects and last but not the least, critical review of the last years economic achievement and performance will be thoroughly discussed.

It is indeed a huge political event which is open, transparent, inclusive, holistic and comprehensive. Hopefully, it will provide essential inputs of the leaders and policy makers to steer the country towards more openness and modernization. It will also set goals and targets for the next years in terms of GDP, GNP, LSM, poverty reduction, employment generation. Ultimately, it will stage the world largest political show to discuss the national, regional and global economy and will facilitate quick economic recovery in the days to come.

It vividly reflect China's constant and continued persuasions of peaceful co-existence, effective role in the global governance, multiculturalism and promotion of a balanced economic growth in the country, region and beyond. In this regard, the successful conclusion of the 20th National Congress of CPC, it is again ready for further transformation, modernization and politically soft projection through the conduction of its two sessions already started on March 4 2023.

Since China has become one of the biggest economic equalizers, politically peaceful stimulator, diplomatically positive neutral and industrially centre of production, due to which its two sessions have now become one of the hottest topics of mass media. In this regard, the market pundits, economists, gurus of diplomacy and even security expert are of the view that announcement of continuation of structural reforms would further streamline and stimulate economic recovery and market consolidation in the days to come. In a nutshell, friends and foes are equally and anxiously waiting the start and outcome of the Chinese two sessions.

The Chinese two sessions would showcase a window of the country's proactive development and are considered a true reflection of simple socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Hopefully, it would be positive, productive and, of course, massively participatory in its presentation, persuasion, policies, plans and future projects. Due to rapidly changing socio-economic conflicting realities, geopolitical contradictory preferential treatments and last but not the least, geostrategic compulsions, the Chinese two sessions have become an iconic political event in the world. Moreover, prevailing global economic recession, imposition of unilateral sanctions, ongoing CHIP and trade war, economic and financial constraints and diplomatic stresses and strains have further enhanced the strategic importance of China's two sessions.

China's systematic advancement in green development, national capacity building mechanism against COVID-19, further modernization, openness and last but not the least, initiation of Xi Jinping's Global Development, Global Security Initiative and Shared Prosperity have become role model of human survival, immense socio-economic development, gradual industrial development and achieving of global peace, stability and harmony and this year China's two sessions stand for it.

In 2022, the official growth target was set at around 5.5 percent. But due to unavoidable external shocks, including the COVID-19 epidemic, China's GDP growth rate reduced to the target but still achieved the hard won 3%, outperforming most other major economies in 2022 and with the economic output topping the 120 trillion Yuan mark for the first time. Interestingly, as China lifted anti-epidemic measures and declared victory against COVID-19, the Chinese macro-economy has embarked on a fast recovery track, reflected in a growing number of indicators, including increased consumption and expanded manufacturing activity. In this regard, many domestic and foreign institutions are expecting a GDP growth rate of above 5 percent in China this year. The International Monetary Fund, for example, forecast a 5.2 percent-growth compared to a 2.9-percent global growth. Stability is the key theme, and policy intensity is likely to be moderate.

A series of recent top meetings and official statements also highlighted the importance of stability. The Central Economic Work Conference in December demanded making economic stability a top priority and pursuing steady progress while ensuring economic stability for 2023, while eyeing "an overall recovery and improvement. The further boosting of domestic demand, enhancing of technological self-reliance and strength and prevention of major risks would be national priorities during 2023 and beyond. Even policy consolidation in the financial and real estate sectors may also be expected this year. At the two sessions each year, there are often major policies for the development of the capital markets, and this year is not likely to be an exception.

There are growing expectations for the establishment of a working mechanism to maintain financial stability. A draft law on financial stability submitted to the Standing Committee of the NPC in December which recommended the establishment of a working mechanism to maintain financial stability, the strengthening of the mechanism to prevent and defuse financial risks, the clarification of the division of responsibilities to handle financial risks, and improved response measures to financial risks.

To conclude the Chinese Two Sessions would also set policy guidelines for sound development of China's capital market, including the rollout of an across-the-board

registration-based initial public offering (IPO) system and revised regulations for Chinese firms' overseas listings, with the latter scheduled to take effect on March 31. It is expected that another top priority for China's economic development this year is expanding foreign trade and foreign investment. The Central Economic Work Conference in December also demanded greater efforts to attract and utilize foreign capital.

In this regard, wider market access, opening-up of modern services industries and for foreign-funded firms to be granted national treatment should be the foremost priority. The writer is Executive Director: The Center for South Asia & International Studies (CSAIS) Islamabad, Regional Expert: China, CPEC & BRI, Senior Analyst: Defence, World Affairs, Pakistan Observer

<https://pakobserver.net/chinas-two-sessions-significance-utility-by-dr-mehmood-ul-hassan-khan/>

March 06, 2023

Daily Times

Pakistani hand-drawn animated film showreel fascinates Chinese audience

The showreel of Pakistan's upcoming hand-drawn animated film *The Glassworker* has cast a spell on Chinese audience as it has garnered more than 558,000 views, with over 5,000 comments and reviews on Bilibili, a popular YouTube-like video sharing platform in China with over 70 million active daily users. "I can't believe this comes from Pakistan. This is the real art. Really looking forward to the entire film," reads one comment on Bilibili. "Amazingly high-quality film! If this proves a success, it will revolutionise Pakistan's cultural industry," another user posted. In an exclusive interview with China Economic Net (CEN), Usman Riaz, director of the animated film and founder of the Karachi-based Mano Animation Studios, said that he was "tremendously grateful for the response it [the showreel] has gotten.

It would be amazing to share the film with the incredible audience and animation supporters in China." Inspired by his trip to Italy when he was 16 years old, where he had the opportunity to see the glass blowing being done in Venice, the Pakistani director decided to make an animated film out of it once the opportunity arose. However, it wasn't until 2015 that Usman started working on the film, and the film-making process has been arduous. After one year of preparation and hard work, the talented director raised \$116,000 through a Kickstarter campaign to create a pilot animation in 2016 before releasing a prototype of the film in 2018 with his own studios, Usman told CEN.

In the same year, the artist revealed, the prototype film was scrapped and a new storyline for the film was developed with the help of Japanese artists. The director told CEN, a Chinese animated film *Big Fish and Begonia* has also been an inspiration. "In 2014, I read about it [the film] and saw the clips online...I remember sending [the clips] to our team," he recalled, "we look at what B&T studios have done, [and] what they're trying to do. This film is going to be amazing."

“I was honestly just so thrilled and so happy when it did get come out. And it got the acclaim and response that it did, because it’s a phenomenal film,” Usman noted, “I hope that we can make something that is hopefully as good because they are an inspiration.” Set for global theatrical release this year, *The Glassworker* follows a young boy named Vincent who is passionate about glass art and dreams of becoming a master glassblower. Working at a glass factory owned by a wealthy and powerful businessman, he falls in love with the factory owner’s daughter Alliz, and their romance becomes complicated by the impending war and the class divisions in their society.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1069438/pakistani-hand-drawn-animated-film-showreel-fascinates-chinese-audience/>

Pakistan Observer

Dar acknowledges China’s response on country’s economic situation

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar applauded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China’s response to the western media who raised a question regarding China’s loans awarded to Pakistan.

Pakistan is experiencing economic testing times and China has extended its financial support.

Bloomberg asked Mao Ning, spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China, at the Regular Press Conference on March 2, “Both Moody’s and Fitch say Pakistan has \$7 billion of debt due by June, including those from China. So will the loans be rolled over?”

The diplomat responded, “To give you our principled position, China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic and cooperative partners and iron brothers. The two sides have always shared weal and woe together and supported each other.

China has been in close economic and financial cooperation with Pakistan and supported its efforts to maintain economic stability, improve lives and achieve self-generated development.”?

She noted, “I need to point out that the radical financial and monetary policies of a certain developed country and their serious spillover effects are the primary cause of the financial difficulties experienced by Pakistan and many other developing countries.

The Western-dominated commercial creditors and multilateral financial institutions account for the lion’s share of developing countries’ debt.

China calls on concerted efforts from all parties to play a constructive role in Pakistan’s economic and social stability efforts.”

Responding to this, Ishaq Dar according to Gwadar Pro, went on to social media to publicly acknowledge the response of China on the current economic situation of Pakistan.

“China’s reply to Bloomberg on 2nd March 2023 reflects the depth of friendship between the two countries and beyond,” said Ishaq Dar.

<https://pakobserver.net/dar-acknowledges-chinas-response-on-countrys-economic-situation/>

The Express Tribune

Chinese, local experts to work on new varieties of seed

Agriculture Research Sindh (ARS) Director General informed that they have introduced 13 new varieties of wheat seed

HYDERABAD: The agricultural experts have called for joint research by the local and Chinese private sector with the academia to come up with certified seeds of new varieties. At an event organized by Seed Production and Development Center (SPDC) of Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) on Sunday, the speakers also requested the Sindh government to increase the agriculture research budget by 20%.

The Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Fateh Marri said though the agriculture sector has supported the country in many periods of crisis since the independence in 1947, the crop productivity in Pakistan is far behind the per acre yield in the developed world.

Marri told that the SAU in collaboration with the provincial agriculture department is producing varieties of the seeds of wheat and other crops to enhance the crop yield. The Agriculture Research Sindh (ARS) Director General Noor Muhammad Baloch informed that they have introduced 13 new varieties of wheat seed.

“At present we are suffering from more than 40% seed deficiency of the wheat crop alone.” The progressive farmer Muhammad Nawaz Nizamani offered his agricultural lands in Hyderabad, Tando Muhammad Khan, Badin or at Sujawal districts to the SAU and to a Chinese seed company for research on seed expansion and hybrid seed.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2404642/chinese-local-experts-to-work-on-new-varieties-of-seed>

The Nation

Centre to spend Rs450 million for hiring of consultant for ML-1

Fawad Yousafzai

Islamabad-The federal government will spend Rs450 million for hiring of consultant for the preparation of governance-HR structures, development of business and cash flow models and its implementation for upgradation of Karachi to Peshawar Main Line-1 (ML-1) under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) has approved the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Support Project (2nd Revised) at the cost of Rs909.285 million – the main component of which is the hiring of consultancy firm and salaries of the employees, a source told The Nation. For hiring of consultancy firm—an allocation of Rs450 million, for the payment of salaries and allowances—Rs383.373 million, while the remaining allocation will go to other components of the project, the source said. The Original PC-I of the project was approved by the Central Development Working Party (CDWP), in 2015, at the total cost of Rs252.0 million without FEC. The project envisages establishing a China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Support Secretariat at Ministry of Railways. The 1st Revised PC-

1 of the project was approved by the DDWP, in 2020 at the total cost of Rs910.347 million with FEC of Rs198.0 million. Now the CDWP once again revised the PC-I at the cost of Rs909.285 million.

According to the source, the main reason for the revision of PC-1 was hiring of consultants for the preparation of Governance and HR Structures and Development of Business and Cash Flow Models for upgrading ML-1 and their implementation. Revision of pay packages according to new Project Pay Scales (PPS) issued by the Finance Division and rationalisation of human resource as per requirement of the project.

The 2nd Revised Project envisages establishing Project Management Unit (PMU) at the Ministry of Railways and a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in Lahore, for efficient and effective implementation of the CPEC activities on ML-1 of Pakistan Railways. These activities primarily comprise supervision and monitoring of the project activities like preliminary design, cost estimation, preparation of PC-1, monitoring and processing of tenders for EPC contract(s), and monitoring and liaison during the execution of the project, and for this purpose, a specific provision was made in the PC-1 for hiring of human resource.

Main objective of the project is to establish/strengthen Project Management Unit (PMU) in the Ministry of Railways, Islamabad and Project Implementation Unit (PIU) at Pakistan Railways, Lahore for overall coordination and implementation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects/activities. The project will facilitate, coordinate, monitor and evaluate the programme and projects related to ML-I; provide a much-needed platform for multi-sector coordination and a consultative, 'informed' approach to trade and transport reforms and policy formulation; enhance capacity and provide policy and governance advice to support GoP's transport and energy infrastructure modernisation agenda in the context of regional connectivity. Moreover, it will enable Pakistan Railways to use innovative modes of implementing and financing projects and tap modern sources of financing; provide secretarial services for procurement of sector specialists; supervise preparation and implementation of governance/managerial reforms to get the desired benefits of upgraded ML-1; hiring services of advisory/consultancy firms/individual consultant/consultants for preparation and scrutiny of bidding documents/RFPs, designing/survey, evaluation of tenders/RFPs and for third party appraisal/validation of feasibilities, design/survey, project estimates, other documents and to assist PIU in any matter related to project, etc.

The technical section of the Planning Commission asked the sponsor of the project to clarify that an amount of Rs239.5 million has been utilised till June 2022 by the sponsors since the inception of the project in 2015. This infers that in the period of 6.5 years i.e. Jan 2016 to Jun 2022 only Rs239.5 have been utilised which is 26.32 percent of the 1st revised approved cost. It was also asked that sponsors may inform about the performance of the Project Management Unit/PIU till now as justification for revision of the project. The cost of hiring of consultancy services provided as Rs450.0 million needs to be rationalised and it should be based on actual— since the consultants have already been hired by MoR/PIU.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-06/page-1/detail-9>

Pak-China coop to upgrade Pakistan's steel industry: experts

BEIJING-China can transfer its technology and equipment to Pakistan to upgrade Pakistan's steel industry, highlighted Li Sheng, General Manager of the Pakistani Branch of China First Metallurgical Group Co Ltd. "With China's transfer of technology and equipment, Pakistan's steel industry can be more concentrated and more environmentally friendly, because it can make better use of the existing low-quality mineral resources," Li said in an interview. The output of the steel industry in Pakistan is far from enough to meet the needs of its domestic market.

According to Steel Statistical Yearbook, 2020 and data from World Steel Association, Pakistan's domestic demand for steel and iron averages 7.3 million tons per year, while its annual production is only 3.8 million tonnes.

To narrow the demand-supply gap, Pakistan has been importing from different countries, incurring excessive costs. The quality of Pakistan's mineral resources is one of the main reasons for its dependence on steel imports, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday.

"Meanwhile, the mineral resources are relatively concentrated in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where the situation is relatively complicated, making it difficult to well exploit the mineral resources. While on the face of it, Pakistan's steel industry is relatively backward, the overall potential for development is huge."

Li Sheng analysed, "In the upstream, its domestic mineral resources are rich and coal and iron ore reserves are huge; in the downstream, Pakistan's real estate and construction services industry is developing rapidly, and the steel demand is increasing, which is very conducive to the development of the industry."

Pakistan has a mountainous terrain covering more than 60 percent of the country. Historically frequent geological activities have generated a large number of mineral resources.

According to Li's research, Pakistani iron ore is stored across the country, mainly in Punjab and Balochistan, with proven mining reserves of about 950 million tonnes.

Highlighting that the steel industry is the backbone of Pakistan's development and contributes 5 percent to the national economy, Wajid Bukhari, Secretary General of Pakistan Association of Large Steel Producers (PALSP) told that over 20 major steel industrial units were struggling towards diversification. It is essential to improve the steel competitiveness of Pakistan at the root level.

Hassan Duad Butt, senior advisor of FF Steel highlighted that the Belt and Road Initiative and the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor have driven the robust development of Pakistan's construction market and industrial adjustment.

The development of industry brings greater demand for steel, which requires Pakistan's steel industry to expand its production capacity. The cooperation with China will address the existing problems of backward technology and low efficiency in Pakistan's steel industry, which is a direction for the complementary development of both countries, concluded Hassan.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-06/page-8/detail-3>

March 07, 2023

Daily Times

Pakistan should adopt Chinese water purification system: PCJCCI

Pakistan-China Joint Chambers of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) President Moazzam Ghurki said on Monday that Pakistan should adopt Chinese model of water purification to control waterborne diseases due to the devastating flood in 2022.

These diseases were causing a loss of up to US\$1.3 billion every year, and the unclean water was the biggest source of gastrointestinal infections. Chairing a meeting here at PCJCCI Secretariat, he said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss Chinese water management system and purification technology so that Pakistan could benefit from the Chinese experience. The replication of this system could overcome water diseases in Pakistan, particularly in backward cities of Sindh and Balochistan that were not getting access to clean water.

Ghurki suggested, “We should install water filtration plants based on solar power permanently and manual mechanism based on the area needs and population capacity to handle the equipment. The solar based filter could purify 1,500 litres of floodwater per hour. However, the manual filter as compared to the solar based only had a PLP wheel and a handle attached to it for drawing water into the filters whereas the rest of the technology was the same.” PCJCCI Senior Vice President Fang Yulong said that China’s global freshwater sources were merely six per cent whereas they had to provide clean drinking water to 20 per cent of the world’s population. However, with years of research and exploration, China had devised a water purification system that not only enabled it to meet its water needs but also provided people with medically approved healthy water. Vice President Hamza Khalid said that the water crisis was a global issue and now China wanted to benefit the world, since Pakistan faced such a crisis particularly in Sindh and Northern Punjab it was important to introduce such plants to Pakistan. Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General PCJCCI, appreciated the opportunities and agreed that the country was in dire need of such a system.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1069878/pakistan-should-adopt-chinese-water-purification-system-pcjcci/>

Pakistan Observer

China keen to facilitate investors to boost economy

BEIJING/ China – The participants of a conference have stressed the need to further improve the ease of doing business to enable the private sector to play its due role in the growth of Chinese economy. They suggested taking steps for improving confidence of entrepreneurs and providing them conducive atmosphere for their individual growth and the overall betterment of the national economy.

The political advisers from the China National Democratic Construction Association, one of the eight non-CPC political parties of the country and the office bearers of All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, an organization with over 5 million corporate

members attended the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Beijing.

President Xi Jinping, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission was also part of this important gathering. Political advisers highlighted nation's hard-won achievements in 2022 and over the past five years.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chinese President promised taking measures for enhancing confidence of businesses and minimizing burdens of private enterprises. He reiterated the government resolve of extending every possible help to the private sector so that the enterprises could achieve high-quality sustainable growth. He called for steps to improve the ease of doing business, remove institutional barriers to provide level playing field and protect rights and interests of the private sector.

He highlighted the importance of maintaining composure and strategic resolve, pursuing progress while ensuring stability, work proactively and in unity, and have the courage to carry on the fight in the face of profound and complex changes in the domestic and international landscapes.

He said that unity was key for the nation's strength. He said that the country has managed to overcome various risks and challenges only due to unity, hard work and fighting spirit of the great nation. He urged people to continue hard work with zeal and zest as more risks and challenges were ahead.

"Only by all the people sticking together, standing in solidarity and staying courageous can help the nation secure new and greater victories during the days to come", he said, adding that the private sector was a key for achieving the desired goals.

China is a strategic partner of Pakistan which has already achieved unprecedented and sustainable economic growth by providing a conducive atmosphere to private sector enterprises. Pakistan can replicate the policies adopted by China especially for strengthening of small and medium-sized enterprises to boost business activities.

The neighboring country has launched projects worth billions of dollars under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. Further concessions in China will encourage Pakistani enterprises to initiate joint ventures with their Chinese counterparts. Such initiatives will not only help improving the national economy but also facilitate transfer of modern technology.

<https://pakobserver.net/china-keen-to-facilitate-investors-to-boost-economy/>

Pakistan-China friendship getting stronger: Ammad

Honorary Consul General of Tunisia for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ammad Rasheed has said that Pakistan-China friendship is getting stronger with each passing day and CPEC project will prove to be very important for the strengthening of Pakistan's economy. He expressed these views on the occasion of his visit to China Window, a Chinese cultural center established in Peshawar.

Ammad Rasheed, who has also been the senior vice-president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Peshawar, visited the various galleries of the Chinese Cultural Center, signed the friendship wall and recorded his comments in the guest book.

On this occasion, he said that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have seen a very difficult time during terrorism and now they believe that the economy of the province will develop after the investment by the brotherly neighboring country China in Pakistan, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Ammad Rasheed said that Pakistan is facing economic challenges in the present era, which we have to learn from China's economic development.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistan-china-friendship-getting-stronger-ammad/>

The News

China requested to roll over \$2bn deposits, Pakistan tells IMF

Mehtab Haider

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has informed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that Islamabad had made a request to China for rollover of \$2 billion SAFE (State Administration of Foreign Exchange) deposits for another one-year period.

“We have already made the request to the Chinese side for granting rollover of \$2 billion SAFE deposits, which is going to mature by end of the ongoing month,” top official sources confirmed to The News on Monday.

Pakistan and the IMF held virtual parleys on Monday night for moving towards striking a staff-level agreement as the Ministry of Finance and State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) tabled the external financing plan before the IMF with the desired aim of jacking up the dwindling foreign exchange reserves, held by the SBP up to \$10 billion mark till end of June 30, 2023.

“Under the planned schemes of things, the revival of the IMF programme will enable Islamabad to muster up the required dollar funding from all possible avenues including multilateral, bilateral and commercial financing as well as getting rollover of upcoming China's SAFE deposits to the tune of \$2 billion,” top official sources told The News. The total Chinese SAFE deposits stood at \$4 billion and the remaining maturity would become due in the coming few months period.

Another top official said that China granted assurances verbally for granting rollover of SAFE deposits of \$2 billion, but it would be preferred that it should be done by Beijing and then announce accordingly in the coming weeks.

Pakistani side informed the IMF that Islamabad implemented all tough measures and now both sides should move towards the signing of the staff level agreement without wasting any further time.

However, the IMF's Resident Chief Esther Perez Ruiz was quoted by Reuters news agency in its story saying “All IMF programme reviews require firm and credible assurances that there is sufficient financing to ensure that the borrowing member's balance of payment is fully financed, over the remainder of the programme”.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar had told reporters last week that external financing confirmation was not part of prior action of the IMF for signing of staff level agreement and it was agreed between the two sides that the Fund would help Islamabad secure its confirmation on external financing needs.

However, sources said that there were nine tables under the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) that require to be fulfilled with the official figures, and one of the tables was related to envisaging the Net International Reserves (NIR) as an indicative target which could not be fulfilled without incorporating the external financing needs of the programme period.

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=182066>

March 08, 2023

Daily Times

China's enterprises encouraged to invest in Pakistan in shoe industry

Recently, Wenzhou Council for the Promotion of International Trade (WCPIT) organized a video conference on shoe leather industry, aiming to encourage Wenzhou's export-oriented enterprises to invest in Pakistan and promote in-depth and effective cooperation between China and Pakistan.

Hussain Haider, Consul General of the Consulate General of Pakistan in Shanghai, addressed the event, believing that the seminar provides a good opportunity for China-Pakistan exchange of shoe leather industry.

"Pakistan is rich in leather raw materials, synthetic leather materials, machinery and other related products. I hope that Chinese entrepreneurs can see the development potential and invest in our shoe leather industry," Haider said.

Ahmed Fawad Farooq, Secretary General of Pakistan Footwear Manufacturer Association, introduced quality leather products made in Pakistan. Farooq said the Pakistani Government is guiding and supporting its leather industry by providing policies such as exemption of import duties, reduction of regulatory duties and encouragement of automation.

On behalf of the Chinese side, WCPIT vice president Zhu Qianji said that the conference provides a new platform and new opportunities for the development of leather industry, and further broadens the overseas trade channels of Wenzhou footwear and leather enterprises.

"WCPIT welcomes and is willing to work with the Pakistani Consulate General in Shanghai to connect enterprises from Pakistan and Wenzhou," Zhu said.

According to Wenzhou Shoe Leather Industry Association, Wenzhou is in a critical period from the shoe capital of China to the shoe capital of the world. This seminar will add new development momentum for the city's international trade of such industry.

During the seminar, enterprise representative introduced the development situation of Wenzhou shoe leather industry. He said that Wenzhou is accelerating the innovation of industrial and supply chains.

A number of well-known enterprises at home and abroad have emerged, gradually forming a development pattern of regional brands cluster and complete industrial chain.

“In the future, with the support of big data and other digital technology, the industry will achieve rapid development and iterative upgrading,” he added.

The two sides also had an in-depth discussion on how to de-intermediate Pakistani footwear raw materials into China and how to build a cooperation platform.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1070358/chinas-enterprises-encouraged-to-invest-in-pakistan-in-shoe-industry/>

Pakistan Observer

BRI' and 14th NPC & CPPCC

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

During different media sessions in the ongoing 14th National people's Congress (NPC) and National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) One Belt One Road Initiative (BRI) remained one of the main topics which vividly reflected its global importance, strategic scope and utility for achieving the desired goals of world class infrastructure development, construction of economic corridors, seaports and last but not least immense socio-economic integration.

According to the Chinese policy makers, more than 151 countries, 35 international organizations and 220 cooperation documents have already joined and signed under the flagship project of the BRI which is still on increasing by each passing day. It covers two-thirds of the world's population and 40 percent of global GDP which is further getting momentum with the passage of time. It will impact 0.7 percent to global real income till 2030 which may be further enhanced up to 1 percent.

According to estimates from the World Bank, transportation infrastructure projects under the BRI, if fully implemented, are expected to generate \$1.6 trillion in benefits annually by 2030 accounting for 1.3 percent of global GDP. Of these benefits, 90 percent will go to partner countries, with low-income and lower-middle-income countries being the biggest beneficiaries.

Moreover, the BRI mega projects of regional as well as trans-regional projects will reduce shipment time between 1.2 and 2.5 percent, leading to reduction of aggregate trade costs between 1.1 and 2.2 percent. For Belt and Road economies, the change in shipment times and trade costs will range between 1.7 and 3.2 percent and 1.5 and 2.8 percent, respectively.

It is estimated that BRI related investments can contribute to lifting 8.7 million people from extreme poverty and 34 million from moderate poverty at the global level. In this regard, under baseline conditions the percentage of people living in extreme poverty, with less than PPP\$1.90 a day, is projected to decline from 10.1 percent in 2015 to 5.2 percent by 2030.

Hopefully, with immense infrastructure investments the BRI can additionally lift from extreme poverty up to 8.7 million people. These benefits extend to both BRI and non BRI countries: 5.1 million from BRI area and 3.7 million from non BRI countries.

To promote high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, China has carried out a number of projects to boost connectivity and industrial capacity cooperation.

The Government Work Report 2022-2023 reveals that trade between China and countries along the BRI has reached an annual increase of 13.4 percent. Moreover, with the six free trade agreements that were newly concluded or upgraded, China's trade share with its BRI member countries its trade has increased to 35 percent of its total trade volume from 26 percent.

During these media interactive sessions the western journalists have internationally raised questions about the alleged role of so-called BRI debt trap diplomacy. In this context, the policy makers of China strongly rejected accusations about the "debt-trap diplomacy" and has insisted that on the contrary, African nations have reaped a great deal of benefits from the infrastructure projects as part of its BRI.

Actually, African economies were weighed down by a whooping external debt owed to multilateral financial institutions and commercial creditors, and not China. Citing statistics from a World Bank (WB) report, the Chinese spokesman Wao Wang cleared the air around the hyped claims and maintained that nearly three-quarters of Africa's external debt was actually owed to the multilateral institutions and commercial creditors, whereas Beijing was working to ease Africa's debt burden.

Moreover, China never attaches any political strings or seeks any self-seeking political gains Wang asserted and added that the country has actively participated in the debt service suspension initiative under the G20.

He added that the debt deferral amount China has contributed is larger than that of any other G20 member.

According to Debt Justice, a UK-based campaigning organisation, just 12 percent of African governments' external debt is owed to Chinese lenders compared to 35 percent owed to Western private lenders, according to the calculations based on World Bank data.

It has burst the false, fake and fictional propaganda of the western mass media about so-called debt trap diplomacy associated with the BRI. Rather it has been an ideal platform of diplomacy, dialogue and development. It has been icon of positivity, productivity, participation, progress and prosperity since its beginning in 2013 in the world.

To conclude, the famous China's Two Sessions are going on in its capital. During the 14th National people's Congress (NPC) Premier Li Keqiang presented Government's Work Report and set GDP target as 5 percent during 2023 which higher than all the regional countries, US and the EU alike. Inflation and CPI set at 5.5 percent. China also exceeded its 2022 target of creating over 11 million new urban jobs, adding 12.06 million last year.

Moreover, China's annual foreign trade value increased by 7.7 percent from 2021, reaching 42.07 trillion yuan (\$6.09 trillion) despite headwinds in demand, supply, and expectations. The Chinese president while attending the 14th NPC and CPPCC sessions declared private economy as an important force for the Communist Party of China (CPC) to maintain long-

term governance, and unite and lead the Chinese people in realizing the two centenary goals and great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

China has developed new forms of foreign trade, building 152 new integrated pilot zones for cross-border e-commerce and supporting the establishment of overseas warehouses which has already increased its exports. The China International Import Expo and the China Import and Export Fair, have delivered positive results. It has established 21 pilot free trade zones and made strides in the development of the Hainan Free Trade Port.

China has been pioneer of good governance and superior human values for the last 5000 years. Interestingly, China has been pursuing socio-economic development, human respect, environment and nature friendly policies to maintain qualitative life since long.

China's Two Sessions have become icon of modern model of smart/good governance during which all major policies of macro-economy, strategic priorities of national politics, fund allocations of social development, debate on structural reforms, distribution of ministerial slots, approval of projects and last but not the least, critical review of the last years economic achievement and performance have been thoroughly discussed.

Expectations are very high that China's economy will further pick up after the lifting of pandemic restrictions, providing a boost to the global economy which would be a good omen for the BRI development.

It is good news for China and the world as the Chinese economy is now expected to contribute a third of global growth this year and the coming years too.

Increase in GNP means more people's funds for consumption. China's growing economy is also an important source of global demand. Its economic rebalancing will create new opportunities for manufacturing exporters. China is a growing contribution in other developing economies through trade, investment, and ideas.

The success of ongoing Two Sessions and setting of high targets of GDP, GNP, LSM, exports, investments and social development have further brightened the scope and utility of the BRI.

<https://pakobserver.net/bri-and-14th-npc-cppcc-by-dr-mehmood-ul-hassan-khan/>

CPEC: Can Pakistan emerge competitively

Shahnoor Waqas Malik

CHINA-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a project between China and Pakistan to create a 3000km infrastructure network within the country – allowing the reduction of passage time, creating a more dominant trade route which stretches not only from Gwadar's port around the Arabian sea all the way till Karachi, but also to the mountains of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). This unites all provinces of Pakistan with the access to travel all over Pakistan – allowing China at the same time a better trade route to link them towards South Asia, Europe and the Middle East through Pakistan.

The project was established on 20th April 2015, and as of 2022 it is worth an estimated \$65 billion with its roots stretching back to the 1950's between both Governments with the

development of the Karakoram Highway, which connected GB and KP to China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. With the vision that it will create upwards of 2 million jobs, an infrastructural network connecting the entire country, and the monetary investment pouring in to the country, the potential that Pakistan holds in its strategic value in the world is limitless.

<https://pakobserver.net/cpec-can-pakistan-emerge-competitively-by-shahnoor-waqas-malik/>

The Express Tribune

Pakistan, China sign agri-cooperation DoU

Will focus on agricultural industry chain, deep processing of products

ISLAMABAD: In a move to promote strategic cooperation between China and Pakistan in industry-university research on modern agriculture, documents of understanding (DoU) were signed by the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Weifang Engineering Vocational College, Qingzhou Municipal Government and Weifang National Comprehensive Pilot Agriculture Zone at Weifang last week.

The four sides agreed to work together for promoting agricultural technology cooperation under the framework of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), with focus on construction of the entire agricultural industry chain, deep processing of agricultural products and related industrialisation.

“Agriculture sector in the South Asian region is struggling with low productivity, supply shortfalls, low returns to farmers, lack of advanced technology and lack of trained professionals, and thus threatening our food security,” NUST Pro Rector Academics Dr Osman Hassan noted in his speech on the occasion.

“These problems are closely related to people's livelihood and well-being, particularly in Pakistan, as it is an agro-economic country with immense potential for crop production and research in agricultural sciences.”

“Currently NUST was actively conducting research including precision agriculture, multispectral sensing of crop fields, agricultural 3D printing and scanning applications, early detection of pathogens and plant disease management,” he said.

“Nevertheless, research on sustainable agricultural resource management systems remains a major challenge for us, and I sincerely believe that the agreements will certainly play an indispensable role in filling these gaps,” he stated.

Dr Hussain Ahmad Janjua, Principal Atta-ur-Rahman School of Applied Biosciences, NUST, while highlighting the practical measures, said “food processing and preservation is a key area for both countries.”

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2404934/pakistan-china-sign-agri-cooperation-dou>

The Nation

Chinese, Pakistani officials discuss luggage industry cooperation

ISLAMABAD - Representatives from Zhejiang Ruian Municipal Government and the Consulate General of Pakistan in Shanghai held an online trade and investment matchmaking meeting.

According to China Economic Net (CEN) on Tuesday, the two sides conducted in-depth discussions on trade and investment cooperation in luggage and other key industries in Ruian City, and reached consensus on accelerating bilateral cooperation.

At the meeting, Hussain Haider, Consul General of the Consulate, stressed Pakistan's demand for middle and high-end luggage and bags and explained the trade and investment policies of Pakistan. He pointed out that Pakistan's overall policy on foreign investment is lenient, and foreign investors are free to invest in Pakistan except in a few prohibited sectors, with no shareholding limit.

“Under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Pakistan is introducing more favourable reform measures to attract Chinese investment, which will also create better conditions for Ruian enterprises to do business in Pakistan,” Haider said. Ruian, a major manufacturing hub for bags, leather shoes, auto parts and electrical equipment in east China's Zhejiang province, is rapidly developing an export-oriented economy. In these areas, both China and Pakistan have complementary industrial structures and strong demand for cooperation, which has laid a solid foundation for bilateral industrial cooperation. Chen Peng, Vice Mayor of Ruian, proposed to promote China-Pakistan cooperation on a regular and systematic basis.

He also sent an official invitation to Haider, hoping he would lead a delegation to Ruian for a field visit and looked forward to early results of bilateral cooperation. Haider hoped to hold an online “B2B” matchmaking meeting for business representatives of both sides to achieve direct dialogue between trade and investment circles, and hold an offline investment conference to accelerate the implementation of cooperation projects. Representatives from Ruian Bureau of Commerce, Municipal Council for the Promotion of International Trade, and Ruian Luggage Industry Association attended the meeting.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-08/page-10/detail-3>

March 09, 2023

Daily Times

RSEZ – Game changer project for economic growth of KPK

Rashakai Special Economic Zone (RSEZ) is a game-changer project for the economic growth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular and Pakistan in general location”. This was stated by Javed Iqbal Khattak CEO Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development & Management Company while talking with Pakistan Economic Net (CEN). “He said that because of RSEZ industrialisation is getting momentum in the province and investors are being attracted. The company has established nine other zones too but RSEZ has special importance and significance due to its location and the facilities provided here. CEO briefed

about the second phase of the zone that big industrial units from China have started establishing their units, Century steel mills and Electric Vehicle plant are good examples. “RSEZ is being established following Chinese state of the art patron of establishing industrial zones, which contains all facilities in one place. The master plan of RSEZ includes a hospital, three-star hotel and petrol pumps. Javed Khattak said that Chinese industries and plants will not only create economic activities but also provide huge job opportunities to the locals which will help to minimise joblessness in the country. He said that China is taking interest in the shifting of his technology to Pakistan and the local industrialists will have the opportunity to learn from it technically as well as by an investment point of view. While answering the question about the other economic zones of the province Khattak said that the Mohmand economic zone is one of the art zone located in a beautiful area in which about one dozen industrial units have been established so far. While Jalozaian and Gadoon Amanzai attracted industries of the country and some renowned industrial groups of Pakistan are investing in these zones. He added that these efforts will increase job opportunity directly as well as indirectly which will produce a positive impact on the economy.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1070743/rsez-game-changer-project-for-economic-growth-of-kpk/>

CPEC recognized by WB as offering enormous opportunities to Pakistan

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is recognized by WB as offering enormous opportunities to Pakistan.

It has proved itself as a vital economic tonic to Pakistan by administrating those development booster shots that are revamping its infrastructure, energy, export, trade, transportation, agriculture, employment, medicine, IT, mobile technology and many more, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Wednesday.

With these booster shots, during the last 10 years, more than 30 projects generating direct and indirect 200,000 jobs have been completed and more are in different phases of development, setting a tone for sustainable economic progress. Besides, more than 6,000 MW of electricity has been injected into the national grid, 809 kilometers of highway have been built and 886 kilometers of transmission lines have been installed first time in the history of Pakistan.

CPEC has also earned recognition from the World Bank Report entitled “The Web of Transport Corridors in South Asia”.

“With investments in road, railways and ports, the \$60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) offers enormous potential for Pakistan to boost its economy, reduce poverty, spread benefits widely and help those likely to be affected by the new trade route, the World Bank Report says.

CPEC has to be analyzed as per its impacts and performance setting aside traditional prejudices. One thing that must be kept in mind by doomsayers is that CPEC is not a remedy for governance weaknesses, system hiccups, political instability, bureaucratic red-tapism, and corruption. Such hideous dynamics are the creeping root cause behind Pakistan’s limping economy.

Since its inception ten years ago, CPEC has transformed Pakistan's infrastructural landscape. According to the Ministry of Energy, by October 2022, 11 projects with a total capacity of over 6,370 MW have been completed, and an HVDC Transmission Line of 880 km has been constructed.

Three more projects with a capacity of around 1,200 MW are expected to be completed within 2023-24. Most recently, the 1,320 MW Thar Coal Block-I has started commercial operations.

In addition to the completed projects under CPEC, several other projects are under process, which will further boost Pakistan's energy infrastructure. The 884MW Suki Kinari Hydropower Project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has already completed 70% of the work.

The Kohala Hydropower Project in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, with a capacity of 1,124 MW, the Azad Pattan Hydropower Project with a capacity of 700.7 MW, and the Cacho Wind Power Project with a capacity of 50 MW are also under process.

The Western Energy (Pvt.) Ltd. Wind Power Project is another project in process, with a capacity of 50 MW. These projects will help increase the country's renewable energy capacity, providing clean and cheap energy to the people.

Once completed, these projects will add a significant amount of electricity to the national grid, reducing the country's dependence on imported fuel.

Moreover, CPEC has also helped Pakistan upgrade its transportation infrastructure. The Peshawar-Karachi Motorway (Multan-Sukkur Section), Hakla – D.I Khan Motorway, and the Orange Line Metro Train in Lahore are some of the infrastructure projects completed under CPEC. The KKH Phase II (Havelian – Thakot Section) has also been completed, which has received international recognition.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1070738/cpec-recognized-by-wb-as-offering-enormous-opportunities-to-pakistan/>

Pakistan Observer

Pakistani pine nuts exports to China hit nearly USD 53m

Pakistani Pine nuts exports to China from January-December of 2022 touched nearly USD 53 million, official data released by the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) said.

Pakistani sources told China Economic Net that data from GACC showed in 2022, China imported 4666.48 tons of pine nuts from Pakistan worth USD 52.85 million. Overall, China has imported 25481. 66 tons of pine nuts around the world valued more than USD 187 million, and out of that, more than 28% has been imported from Pakistan.

<https://pakobserver.net/pakistani-pine-nuts-exports-to-china-hit-nearly-usd-53m/>

Express News

چین سے 50 کروڑ ڈالر ملنے کے بعد زر مبادلہ کے سرکاری ذخائر میں اضافہ

چین سے 50 کروڑ ڈالر کا کمرشل قرضہ ملنے سے زر مبادلہ کے سرکاری ذخائر میں اضافہ ہو گیا۔: کراچی

زر مبادلہ کے سرکاری ذخائر میں گزشتہ ہفتہ 48 کروڑ 70 لاکھ ڈالر کا اضافہ ریکارڈ کیا گیا، سرکاری ذخائر 4 ارب 30 کروڑ ڈالر کی سطح پر آگئے۔

مارچ کو زر مبادلہ کے مجموعی ذخائر کی مالیت 19 ارب 75 کروڑ ڈالر ریکارڈ کی گئی تھی۔ 3

اسٹیٹ بینک آف پاکستان کا کہنا ہے کہ کمرشل بینکوں کے پاس 5 ارب 45 کروڑ 30 لاکھ ڈالر کے زر مبادلہ کے ذخائر موجود ہیں۔

واضح رہے کہ چائینیز بینک آئی سی بی سی نے پاکستان کیلئے ایک ارب 30 کروڑ ڈالر کی فنانشنگ فسیلٹی کی منظوری دی ہے جس کی پہلی پیمائش کروڑ ڈالر کی قسط 3 مارچ کو اسٹیٹ بینک کو موصول ہوئی تھی۔ پاکستان کو چائینیز بینک سے یہ رقم تین قسطوں میں ملے گی۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2452814/6/>

سی پیک پاکستان کیلئے اہم اقتصادی محرک ہے، ورلڈ بینک

ورلڈ بینک نے کہا ہے کہ سی پیک میں پاکستان کیلئے بے پناہ مواقع ہیں، سی پیک نے ترقیاتی کاموں کو بڑھاوا دیکر خود کو پاکستان کیلئے ایک اہم اقتصادی محرک کے: اسلام آباد

طور پر ثابت کیا۔

گواہی دے کے مطابق چائینا پاکستان اکنامک کوریڈور (سی پیک) نے ان ترقیاتی کاموں کو بڑھاوا دیکر خود کو پاکستان کے لیے ایک اہم اقتصادی محرک کے طور پر ثابت کیا ہے جو اس کے بنیادی ڈھانچے، توانائی، برآمدات، تجارت، نقل و حمل، زراعت، روزگار، ادویات، آئی ٹی، موبائل ٹیکنالوجی اور بہت کچھ کو بہتر بنا رہے ہیں۔

اس کے ساتھ گزشتہ 10 برس کے دوران، 200,000 براہ راست اور بالواسطہ ملازمتیں پیدا کرنے والے 30 سے زائد منصوبے مکمل ہو چکے ہیں اور مزید ترقی کے مختلف مراحل میں ہیں، جو پائیدار اقتصادی ترقی کے لیے ایک آواز قائم کر رہے ہیں۔ اس کے علاوہ 6000 میگا واٹ سے زائد بجلی نیشنل گرڈ میں ڈالی جا چکی ہے۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2452545/6/>

March 10, 2023

Daily Times

China's steady economic recovery opening new avenues for Pakistan

“China's economy is staging a steady recovery, with marked improvement in consumer demand, market distribution, industrial production and business expectations, and this momentum can help partner countries like Pakistan to explore new avenues of cooperation for further growth, especially in the manufacturing sector,” said Prof. Dr. Hassan Duad Butt, former project director of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). In an interview with China Economic Net, Dr. Hassan stated that China's rapid economic recovery after a decisive victory against Covid-19 is of immense importance for the world in general.

Therefore, China's emphasis on economic stability, high-quality growth and sustainable development is a ray of hope for many countries, including Pakistan and other BRI countries, in this time of geopolitical uncertainty. In 2022, while overcoming major difficulties and challenges, the Chinese economy maintained stable performance on the whole, with GDP

reaching more than RMB 121 trillion (USD 18 trillion) and achieving 3% growth, a sign of strong resilience.

Dr. Hassan maintained that, “while the set GDP growth target of 5% in 2023 is the lowest in dozens of years, it still means sufficient economic activity to mitigate some of the economic risks and challenges.” The GDP growth target, along with other economic development goals set by the Chinese government, promises sufficient economic activity and stability through the continuity of policies. Hassan quoted the words of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang that “should be carried out in a more coordinated way to create synergy for high-quality development,” which is an indication of the government’s confidence in the strong growth momentum by remaining the factory of the world setting higher economic indicators compared with last year.

The Chinese government has set a higher target for employment, aiming for 12 million new urban jobs in 2023, which is also significant. Hassan underlined that the Chinese government’s confidence would soon be reflected in other markets of China’s trading partners, and could act as a stimulus to global economic recovery.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1070923/chinas-steady-economic-recovery-opening-new-avenues-for-pakistan/>

Zhejiang becomes top destination of Pakistan’s exports to China

Zhejiang Province has become the top destination of Pakistani exports to China in the past three years, said Ghulam Qadir, Commercial Counsellor at the Pakistani Embassy in China. In 2022, Zhejiang Province imported \$954.59 million Pakistani products and exported \$5.80 billion to Pakistan, adding that in 2021, Zhejiang Province imported \$968.77 million Pakistani products, up from \$436.47 million in 2020, he told CEN. Zhejiang’s imports from Pakistan in 2022 are mainly Refined Copper products (\$456.97 million), billets and copper unwrought (\$127.13 million), Copper anodes for electrolytic refining (\$123.43 million), Pine nuts (\$20.29 million) and frozen shrimps and prawns (\$11.14 million), he added. He further said that Beijing was the second destination in China to import Pakistan products (worth \$603.55 million) and the top destination for Pakistani rice. Last year, Beijing imported \$114.62 million semi or wholly-mulled Pakistani rice. “Pakistan would like to increase its export to China and the solution lies in producing higher value-added and therefore more expensive products so that even a small increase in exports can lead to a large increase in value. This year we will focus on enhancing our value-added products in China, therefore we are organizing two big expos on textile and food in Pakistan in May 2023 to bring Chinese investors to build factories in Pakistan”, Ghulam Qadir said. It is to be noted that in 2022, Pakistan’s exports to China were \$3.41 billion while China’s exports to Pakistan were \$23.089 billion and overall trade between the two counties sustained at \$26.50 billion in 2022.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1071166/zhejiang-becomes-top-destination-of-pakistans-exports-to-china/>

Pakistan Observer

Three Chinese books launched in Urdu

Three books authored by Chinese writers and translated by Pakistani translators were launched here by China-Pakistan Study Center (CPSC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI). According to Gwadar Pro, the books are “Beyond the Karakoram: A Photographic Dialogue Between a Chinese and a Pakistani Scholar”, “How the Chinese Communist Party Manages the Development Issue”, and “Mao Zedong and Contemporary China”.

China’s Charge d’ Affaires to Pakistan Ms. Pang Chunxue said on the occasion that literature exchanges between China and Pakistan would play a constructive role in expanding people-to-people exchanges. “These books translated into Urdu depict the commitments of both countries to understand each other,” she said.

Director General ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood in his remarks underlined that Pakistan’s relations with China were the “cornerstone” of its foreign policy. He highlighted the key features and growth trajectory of the Pakistan-China All-weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, the role of CPC in China’s socio-economic development.—INP

<https://pakobserver.net/three-chinese-books-launched-in-urdu/>

March 11, 2023

Business Recorder

Are we allowing CPEC to wither away?

Farhat Ali

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was launched in 2015 when 51 agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) worth USD 46 billion were signed between China and Pakistan. This bilateral project, rated as a flagship constituent of China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), started with the goal of modernising Pakistan’s infrastructure, connectivity within Pakistan and with China vide a road network and rail transportation and the energy sector. Over the years establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in all parts of the country and cooperation between the two partner countries to develop Pakistan’s industry was added to the CPEC portfolio.

Many, within the corridors of power, had foreseen that CPEC will result in the creation of over 2.3 million jobs between 2015 and 2030, and add 2 to 2.5 percentage points to the country’s annual economic growth. All stake-holders rated CPEC as a “game-changer” for Pakistan in terms of its economic growth, revenue generation enhancement and the country’s sustainable fiscal consolidation and growth. CPEC promised massive industrialization. It was also considered a prime mover to lift people out of poverty on the lines of China’s anti-poverty model.

However, none of this happened in the last 8 years or since the birth of CPEC. As of today, the youth of the country are bee-lining to move overseas for better opportunities and more

people have fallen below the poverty line. Many of the mega projects, randomly brought on ground, were ill planned, badly executed and irrational as the cost of investment incurred based on commercial lending from China and the potential to thereby generate healthy revenues did not make any economic sense, notably the imported coal and LNG- based power plants for which the government now lacks financing to import fuel.

As of today, according to the IMF data, China holds roughly \$30 billion of Pakistan's \$126 billion total external foreign debt. This is thrice its IMF debt (\$7.8 billion) and exceeds its borrowings from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank combined. Pakistan, under pressure from the USA and IMF, has urged China to reschedule it but without success. CPEC's potential impact on Pakistan is perhaps akin to that of the Marshall Plan undertaken by the US in post-war Europe. However, there is a marked difference between the two plans. Europe and Japan focused on loans to develop their infrastructure and industry. Their policies were aimed at achieving revenue generation targets, creating new job opportunities. They strove for rapid industrialization which was geared towards helping their economies increase exports to meet the growing global market demand after the war. Also, the loans from lenders were soft loans on easy repayment terms. Consequently, within a period of 10 years, Germany and Japan emerged among the leading world economies as exporters of technology-driven systems and goods.

None of this happened in Pakistan. The \$30 billion loan standing on the books of Pakistan with rising interests could not be turned into revenue in support of the ailing economy of the country and payback to lenders on account of wrong priorities of loan, widespread misgovernance and lack of ownership by successive governments.

There cannot be a more horrid example of bad governance that has resulted in mounting circular debt and bleeding public sector enterprises with successive governments doing nothing meaningful other than sustaining them on expensive loans.

In this regard the lenders like the IMF, World Bank, Asian Development Bank and China Eximp Bank also carry some responsibility. While the IMF protects its lending by enforcement of fiscal controls for fiscal discipline like advocating increased taxation, raising energy tariffs and petroleum prices to fund full cost and eliminate subsidy, a market-based exchange rate, exports and import surveillance. The Fund, unfortunately and conveniently, ignores the governance model of the programme country (in the hands of the elites), which is the root cause of seeking one IMF loan after another. The silence of lenders is questionable while the performance of loan users is pathetic. Bilateral loans should only be made available to the countries that are armed by fiscal and governance strength and seeking loan as a stopgap and not as a perpetual bailout on account of misgovernance and incompetence.

(The writer is former President of Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry)

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2023/03/11/4-page/957042-news.html>

Daily Times

Pakistan greets President Xi on his 3rd term in office

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday felicitated China's President Xi Jinping on being elected for the position for a third term. "The confidence of the Chinese people and parliament in President Xi Jinping is a recognition of his extraordinary leadership skills," the Prime Minister said in a message of greetings on behalf of the government and people of Pakistan. President Xi Jinping was voted unanimously by the People National People's Congress (NPC), as the President of China for the next five years. Shehbaz Sharif said, "President Xi Jinping has become a symbol of China's development and people's prosperity. Under his leadership, China has become the world's top economic power and this journey continues." The prime minister said under the visionary leadership of President Xi Jinping, China was making remarkable achievements in every sphere, including education, health, agriculture, innovation, and technology. Shehbaz Sharif expressed the hope that the tried and tested evergreen strategic cooperation between the two countries would be further strengthened during the next five-year term of President Xi Jinping. The prime minister extended extends his best wishes to President Xi Jinping, and the government and people of China.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1071410/pakistan-greets-president-xi-on-his-3rd-term-in-office/>

Pak-Sino collaboration in PV sector to jointly combat the energy crisis

Pak-Sino collaboration in Photovoltaic (PV) sector will jointly combat the energy crisis, according to Gwadar Pro on Friday.

"In the past five years, the average concentration of PM2.5 in China's prefecture-level and above cities has dropped by 27.5%, and the number of days with heavy pollution has dropped by more than 50%," and "the installed capacity of renewable energy has increased from 650 million kilowatts to more than 1.2 billion kilowatts," cited the government work report released by the ongoing Two Sessions. Beyond doubt, China's energy conservation and carbon reduction have reached a new level.

In 2022, the total export value of Chinese PV products (silicon wafers, cells, modules) was approximately USD 51.25 billion, a year-on-year increase of 80.3%. Such dramatic growth means, being a responsible major power, China is promoting green causes around the world as approaching its own carbon neutrality goal. As Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to the adverse impact of increasingly severe climate change, China's leading solar solutions provider LONGi has long been committed to developing the PV field with local partners to optimizing energy structure in Pakistan.

"We signed an MoU with the Government of Pakistan in July 2019 to invest in the construction of a 50 MW solar power plant in the Bahawalpur, Punjab, as our first step," Ali Majid, General Manager, Pakistan, LONGi Solar, told Gwadar pro in an interview. "As for the current overall production capacity of LONGi's green energy projects invested in Pakistan, total shipments to Pakistan market would reach about 1GW this year. The experience of developing the market in the past few years tells me that in order to boost PV

and new energy field, investment and awareness, none can be dispensed with,” Majid added. Pakistan should encourage more investments in renewable energy infrastructure to the greatest extent, including government and private investment in large-scale solar farms, as well as smaller rooftop solar installations. “As for awareness, strengthen education around the benefits of green energy, such as public education campaigns and outreach to businesses, communities, and schools,” Majid noted.

“Beyond that, we can increase investment in research and development of new PV technologies, such as improving the efficiency and performance of solar panels, as well as developing new materials and manufacturing processes.” “Nowadays, contradictions between global energy supply and demand caused by geopolitical conflicts to a great extent, which is called “the first real global energy crisis” by the International Energy Agency (IEA), is increasing prominent. In order to alleviate the contradiction, the global photovoltaic market is booming. As a major demand market, China has a year-on-year growth rate of about 59%. According to the demand forecast of major consulting agencies, it is estimated that the new installed capacity of photovoltaics in the world is expected to exceed 350GW in 2023,” emphasized Alex Li, General Manager of Central Asia branch LONGi.

It is learned that high cost has brought great challenges to global joint response to the energy crisis. “For example, in the vast desertification areas in the Middle East, the main issue is the lack of fresh water. The increase in costs brought about by desalination of seawater is the main obstacle. If the fresh water is sufficient, large-scale greening will not be difficult,” Alex Li believes that this is why PV has epoch-making significance. “Photovoltaics can indeed change the ecology of our earth because solar energy does not depend on any resources, and the sun shines on everyone fairly,” Alex Li looked forward to the future. “How to turn fair sunlight into energy that benefits everyone is the goal we have always strive for.”

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as the 10th anniversary of the launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Majid stated that the CPEC Phase II is expected to focus on the development of new technologies, such as energy storage and smart grid systems, to improve the efficiency and reliability of the energy sector. “New energy enterprises, including LONGi, are likely to play a key role in promoting the adoption of renewable energy in Pakistan, even the whole South Asia region.”

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1071524/pak-sino-collaboration-in-pv-sector-to-jointly-combat-the-energy-crisis/>

Pak-China hybrid rice, serves as model of agricultural cooperation

“Unquestionably hybrid rice is a model of China-Pakistan agricultural cooperation in Sindh province,” said Zhou Xusheng, Director of Pakistan Business Department, Wuhan Qingfa Hesheng Seed Co., Ltd., a Chinese developer and provider of hybrid seeds.

Qingfa Hesheng has been providing hybrid seeds of rice, canola and vegetables to Pakistan for nearly twenty years, as well as training more than 300 local agricultural personnel. In particular, it registered the first hybrid rice variety -QY0413 in the history of Pakistan.

“It may take three years for the rice export, which is an important means for Pakistan to earn foreign exchange, to recover,” Zhou told China Economic Net (CEN) on Friday. “However,

we have preparation for such situations. First, the stress resistance of crop varieties should be improved. Second, seed production can be carried out separately in Pakistan and China, spreading risk in the face of extreme weather. Currently, our test fields are located in Lahore, Chiniot, Shikarpur, Golarchi.”

“Except for floods, extreme high temperatures brought about by climate change are also difficulties that must be overcome in the upgrading of Pakistan’s rice industry. The annual average temperature here is much higher than that in China’s main rice climate zone. Therefore, in our selection of rice varieties, it is imperative to guarantee the seed setting rate and quality under high temperature. Nevertheless, a coin has two sides. It is precisely because of the hot and dry climate in Pakistan that hybrid rice diseases are much less than those in China, such as bacterial blight, but far less hazardous.”?

Despite a sharp drop in exports, rice prices have seen unprecedented increases in the domestic market due to inflation and rising international rice prices. In this regard, Zhou put forward his viewpoint. “Affected by currency depreciation and inflation, the cancellation of natural gas subsidies means that fertilizer prices have risen, and even supply shortages. Various expenses have pushed up the purchase price of basmati rice. On the other hand, the main purpose of non-basmati rice is to export foreign exchange, and the three leading rice enterprises account for more than 50 percent of non-basmati exports. Rising costs have led to a decline in the competitiveness of non-basmati rice in the international market, so orders have dropped significantly.”

Soaring price of rice has greatly stimulated the enthusiasm of local farmers to plant hybrid rice, but expensive fertilizers and gasoline and diesel has pushed up the cost simultaneously. “For us, in order to make the hybrid rice business go further in Pakistan, ensure local food security, and further increase Pakistan’s foreign exchange, help the local establish relevant downstream industrial chains, lower the cost to improve the competitiveness and added value of its agricultural products, and further expand employment is our top priority.”

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1071543/pak-china-hybrid-rice-serves-as-model-of-agricultural-cooperation/>

Pakistan Observer

Pak-China collaboration in PV sector to combat energy shortage

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Pakistan should encourage more investments in renewable energy infrastructure to the greatest extent, including government and private investment in large-scale solar farms, as well as smaller rooftop solar installations, CEN reported on Friday.

“As for awareness, strengthen education around the benefits of green energy, such as public education campaigns and outreach to businesses, communities, and schools,” Majid noted.

<https://pakobserver.net/pak-china-collaboration-in-pv-sector-to-combat-energy-shortage>

The Nation

Zardari extends felicitations to Xi Jinping on election as China’s president

ISLAMABAD - Former President of Pakistan and President Pakistan People’s Party Parliamentarians Asif Ali Zardari yesterday congratulated Xi Jinping on being elected as the President of the People’s Republic of China for the third time.

The election of President Xi Jinping for the third term is a testament to his popularity and ability to lead, Zardari said. Zardari said that it is hoped that under the capable leadership of President Xi, Pakistan and China’s historic friendship will further strengthen. He said that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto laid the foundations of the brotherly relations between the two countries. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor is a practical manifestation of the fraternal relations between the two nations, he added.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-11/page-2/detail-3>

The News

Governor seeks Chinese investment in various sectors

LAHORE: A delegation led by Allen Geng, General Manager Sales of Chinese company Yingli Solar, called on Punjab Governor, Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman, at Governor’s House here, Friday.

Speaking on this occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman said that China is a time tested and trusted friend of Pakistan who had supported Pakistan in every difficult time. He said that China played a key role in bringing Pakistan out of the worst energy crisis in 2013.

The governor appreciated the Chinese company for shifting the President's House on solar energy in 2013. He also invited the Chinese company to work on the plan of installing solar system at Governor's House.

He said that there were vast opportunities for investment in various sectors in Pakistan. He said that the use of solar energy was the need of the hour to tackle energy crisis, and environmental pollution.

The governor said that Pakistan-China Economic Corridor is a game changer for the economic and social development of the region. He said that it was unfortunate that work on this important project of economic and social development was stalled during the previous government. However, that the government is determined to take forward the CPEC project again in an effective manner.

Minister, Iranian envoy discuss bilateral trade: On the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab, Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce and Energy SM Tanveer visited the Iranian Consulate along with a delegation.

The delegation included Secretary Industry and Commerce Ehsan Bhutta, Secretary Agriculture, Special Secretary Agriculture, Commissioner Lahore and CEO Punjab Board of Investment & Trade Jalal Hasan.

Provincial Minister of Industry, Commerce and Energy SM Tanveer and the delegation met Iranian Consul General Mehran Movahed Far. During the meeting, bilateral trade relations and provision of relief in Ramazan was discussed.

The minister said that the Punjab government had prepared a comprehensive plan to provide relief to the people during the month of Ramazan. The Punjab government want to import essential items from Iran to provide people on proper prices, the minister added. Iranian Consul General Mehran Movahed Far said that they were ready for all kinds of support to provide relief to their Muslim brothers during Ramazan. “We are keen to import meat from Punjab and for this purpose the support of the Punjab government is required,” he said. PBIT CEO Jalal Hasan said that Punjab Investment Board would play its effective role in trade with Iran.

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=183217>

Iran, Saudi Arabia to restore ties in China-brokered deal

Muhammad Saleh Zaafir

ISLAMABAD: As a result of talks between top security officials of Iran and Saudi Arabia in Beijing, the two countries agreed on Friday to re-establish relations after years of hostility.

The deal was announced after four days of previously undisclosed talks in Beijing between top security officials from the two rival Middle Eastern powers.

Tehran and Riyadh agreed to resume diplomatic relations and re-open embassies within two months, according to a statement issued by Iran, Saudi Arabia and China. “The agreement includes their affirmation of the respect for the sovereignty of states and the non-interference in internal affairs,” it said.

Pakistan warmly welcomed the normalisation of diplomatic relations between the two Islamic countries, which will have far-reaching impact on the geo-strategic relations of the regional countries and help address the thorny disputes of the region.

The formal official reaction was issued by the Foreign Office, followed by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in New York, where he spoke high of the three countries which were part of the deal.

The FO said Pakistan firmly believed that the important diplomatic breakthrough would contribute to peace and stability in the region and beyond. “We commend the role played by China’s visionary leadership in coordinating this historic agreement which reflects the power of constructive engagement and meaningful dialogue.

“We laud sagacious leadership of Saudi Arabia and Iran for this very positive development,” said the statement.

“With a history of consistently supporting and coordinating efforts for bridging gaps between the two brotherly countries, Pakistan will continue to play a constructive role in the Middle East and the region. We hope this positive step would define a template for regional cooperation and harmony,” the Foreign Office said.

Riyadh snapped ties with Tehran after Iranian protesters attacked Saudi diplomatic missions in Iran in 2016, following the Saudi execution of revered Shiite cleric Nimr al-Nimr.

Iran and Saudi Arabia support rival sides in several conflict zones across the Middle East, including in Yemen where the Houthi rebels are backed by Tehran, and Riyadh leads a military coalition supporting the government.

Ali Shamkhani, the secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, had travelled to Beijing on Monday for “intensive negotiations with his Saudi counterpart” in China in order to finally resolve the problems between Tehran and Riyadh. Iraq, a neighbour to both countries, had hosted several rounds of talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia since April 2021.

“Removing misunderstandings and the future-oriented views in relations between Tehran and Riyadh will definitely lead to improving regional stability and security as well as increasing cooperation among Persian Gulf nations and the world of Islam for managing current challenges,” Shamkhani was quoted as saying.

“After implementing the decision, the foreign ministers of both nations will meet to prepare for an exchange of ambassadors,” Iranian state television said. In the footage aired by Iranian media, Wang offered “whole-hearted congratulations” on the two countries’ wisdom. “Both sides have displayed sincerity,” he said. “China fully supports this agreement.”

The statement also said Riyadh and Tehran had agreed to activate a security cooperation agreement signed in 2001. In Friday’s statement, Iran and Saudi Arabia said they “thank Iraq and Oman for hosting the talks held between the two sides in 2021 and 2022 as well as the leaders and government of the People’s Republic of China for hosting and supporting the talks held in that country.

“The three countries expressed their keenness to exert all efforts towards enhancing regional and international peace and security,” they said. Other Gulf states had also scaled back their ties with Iran after the 2016 incident. But in September, Tehran welcomed a UAE ambassador back after a six-year absence. A month earlier, Iran said Kuwait had sent its first ambassador to Iran since 2016.

A White House National Security Council spokesperson said the US is aware of reports that Iran and Saudi Arabia have resumed diplomatic relations, but referred further details to the Saudis.

“Generally speaking, we welcome any efforts to help end the war in Yemen and de-escalate tensions in the Middle East region,” the spokesperson told a news agency. “De-escalation and diplomacy together with deterrence are key pillars of the policy President [Joe] Biden outlined during his visit to the region last year.”

The United Nations have welcomed the Saudi-Iranian rapprochement and thanked China for its role. “Good neighbourly relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia are essential for the stability of the Gulf region,” UN spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric told reporters at UN headquarters.

Israel’s former prime minister Naftali Bennett called the renewal of Iran-Saudi ties a “serious and dangerous development for Israel” and a “political victory for Iran”.

“This delivers a fatal blow to efforts to build a regional coalition against Iran,” said Bennett. He used the moment to attack Netanyahu charging the Iran-Saudi ties reflected the “resounding failure of the Netanyahu government and stems from a combination of political neglect with the country’s general weakness and internal conflict.”

Netanyahu’s government offered no immediate comment Friday to the news. Iranian expert Danny (Dennis) Citrinowicz from the Institute of National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University tweeted that the new alliance was a message to Israel that its dream of a regional alliance was not feasible and never had been.

Analyst and former MK Ksenia Svetlova of the Mitvim, the Israeli Regional Institute for Foreign Policy, noted on Twitter that “Saudi Arabia is normalising relations.

No, not with Israel but rather with Iran”, while it has rebuked Israel publicly for its treatment of the Palestinians. “Only two months ago, Netanyahu promised to bring peace with Saudi Arabia. We seem to be moving in the opposite direction,” she wrote.

Adnan Tabatabai – CEO of the Centre for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient, a Germany-based think tank – told Al Jazeera that China has a big interest in not seeing the regional security situation “descend into chaos”, such as “in 2019, when the waterways of Hormuz were the sites of different explosions and attacks”.

“There are inherent interests for the Chinese to try and use the leverage that they have towards both Tehran and Riyadh to make some efforts to balance these relations and finalise what the Iraqis and Omanis had in fact started,” Tabatabai said.

The leader of the Iranian-backed Lebanese militia and political group Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah, praised the agreement as “an important development” that could “open new horizons” in Lebanon, Syria and Yemen. Iraq, Oman and the United Arab Emirates also praised the accord. Yemeni rebel spokesman Mohamed Abdulsalam appeared to welcome the deal in a statement that also slammed the US and Israel.

“The region needs the return of normal relations between its countries, through which the Islamic society can regain its lost security as a result of the foreign interventions, led by the Zionists and Americans,” he wrote online.

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=183258>

Express News

چین رواں مالی سال سب سے بڑے تجارتی شراکت دار کے طور پر برقرار

چین مالی سال 2022-23 میں پاکستان کے سب سے بڑے تجارتی شراکت دار کے طور پر برقرار ہے۔ اسلام آباد

سرکاری ذرائع کے مطابق رواں مالی سال 2022-23 کی پہلی سہ ماہی کے دوران چین پاکستان کا سب سے بڑا تجارتی شراکت دار اور سرفہرست سرمایہ کار رہا جس نے مالی سال کے پہلے پانچ مہینوں میں 102.5 ملین ڈالر پاکستان کے ایف ڈی آئی میں 23.83 فیصد حصہ ڈالا۔

چین پاکستان اقتصادی راہداری (سی پیک) کے تحت خصوصی اقتصادی زونز (ایس ای زیز) کے قیام سے یہ توقع کی جا رہی ہے کہ مستقبل میں نہ صرف چین بلکہ دیگر ممالک سے بھی پاکستان میں مزید ایف ڈی آئی آئے گی۔

<https://www.express.pk/story/2453564/6/>

Nawaiwaqt News

قونصل جنرل ژانگ ہاؤ سے پاک چائنہ فاؤنڈیشن وفد کی ملاقات، باہمی امور پر گفتگو

لاہور (سپیشل کارسپانڈنٹ) قونصل خانہ کراچی کے قائم مقام قونصل جنرل ژانگ ہاؤ سے پاکستان چائنہ فاؤنڈیشن وفد نے ملاقات کی۔ فاؤنڈیشن کے چیئرمین ندیم اے شیخ، وائس چیئرمین سید اسرار علی، سیکرٹری جنرل محمد قاسم اور ڈائریکٹر حارث امین نے چین اور پاکستان کے مابین عوام سے عوام تک دوستی کو مضبوط بنانے پر تبادلہ خیال کیا۔ ندیم اے شیخ نے 25 سال قبل فاؤنڈیشن کے قیام سے لے کر اب تک کیے گئے کاموں کی تفصیلات سے آگاہ کیا اور کہا کہ فاؤنڈیشن ہمیشہ پاکستان اور چین کے عوام کے درمیان متعدد سطحوں اور متعدد شعبوں میں تبادلوں اور تعاون کو فروغ دینے کیلئے پر عزم رہی ہے اور اس کے خاطر خواہ نتائج برآمد ہوئے ہیں۔ انہوں نے رواں سال فاؤنڈیشن کے تحت ہونے والے مختلف پروگراموں کے بارے میں بتایا اور امید ظاہر کی کہ فاؤنڈیشن کی کوششوں سے دونوں ممالک کے عوام کے درمیان دوستی کو مزید فروغ ملے گا۔ قائم مقام قونصل جنرل ژانگ ہاؤ نے وفد کا تہہ دل سے شکریہ ادا کیا اور گزشتہ 25 سالوں میں چین پاکستان تبادلوں کو فروغ دینے اور چین پاکستان دوستی کو مستحکم کرنے میں پاک چائنہ فاؤنڈیشن کے تعاون کو سراہا۔ کراچی میں چینی قونصلیٹ جنرل فاؤنڈیشن کے کاموں میں فعال طور پر تعاون کرنے اور چین پاکستان ثقافتی تبادلوں کو مزید مضبوط بنانے اور دوستی کو مستحکم کرنے کیلئے فاؤنڈیشن کے ساتھ ہاتھ ملانے کیلئے تیار ہے۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-03-11/page-2/detail-25>

چین قابل اعتماد دوست، ہر مشکل میں پاکستان کا ساتھ دیا: گورنر پنجاب

لاہور (نیوز رپورٹر) گورنر پنجاب بلق الرحمن سے گورنر ہائوس لاہور میں چائینیز کمپنی بیگ لی سولر کے جنرل منیجر سیلز ایبلن چیگ کی قیادت میں وفد نے ملاقات کی۔ ملاقات کے دوران یونیورسٹی آف لاہور کے ڈائریکٹر ابوذر غفاری بھی وہمراہ تھے۔ اس موقع پر گفتگو کرتے ہوئے گورنر پنجاب نے کہا کہ چائنہ پاکستان کا قابل اعتماد دوست ہے جس نے ہر مشکل وقت میں ساتھ دیا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ پاکستان کو 2013 میں بدترین انرجی بحران سے نکلنے میں چائنہ کا کلیدی کردار تھا۔ پاک چائنہ اقتصادی راہداری خطے کی معاشی اور سماجی ترقی کے لیے گیم چینجر ہے۔ چائینیز کمپنی کی طرف سے 2013 میں ایوان صدر کو شمسی توانائی پر منتقل کرنے کے منصوبے کو سراہا۔ انہوں نے چائینیز کمپنی کو گورنر ہائوس کو شمسی توانائی پر منتقل کرنے کے منصوبہ پر کام کرنے کی دعوت بھی دی۔ گورنر پنجاب نے کہا کہ پنجاب میں شمسی توانائی کے منصوبوں پر کام کرنے کے لیے سازگار ماحول میسر ہے۔

<https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/E-Paper/lahore/2023-03-11/page-10/detail-6>

March 12, 2023

Daily Times

Chinese enterprises to expand green energy blueprint in Pakistan

Last week, POWERCHINA and the Pakistan-China Institute (PCI), in collaboration with All Pakistan Chinese Enterprises Association (APCEA) and China Society for Hydropower Engineering (CSHE), launched a groundbreaking report titled “Development Prospects of Chinese Enterprises in Green Energy Industry in Pakistan”. Guided by President Xi Jinping’s vision of “lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets,” the latest government work report issued during the Two Sessions showed in the past five years, China’s energy consumption per unit of GDP has dropped by 8.1%, and carbon dioxide emissions have dropped by 14.1%, which means a solid step forward to a “beautiful China”. Meanwhile, the proportion of clean energy consumption rose from 20.8% to over 25%. Achieving these goals are inseparable from the efforts of China’s new energy enterprises, which not only contribute to China’s long-term goal of carbon neutrality, but also contribute to green development worldwide, in which cooperation between China and Pakistan in this regard as a good example, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. “Since we cooperated with local investors to build the Dawood 50MW Wind Power Project under the framework of the CPEC in 2015, as our first new energy project in Pakistan, including the Sachal 50MW Wind Power Project built in cooperation with Arif Habib, and the Tricon Boston 150MW Wind Power Project built in cooperation with Sapphire, the total power generation of our wind power projects in Pakistan has reached 1140MW. In addition, we have also cooperated with Atlas to build a 100MW solar energy project,” Yang, Chief Representative of POWERCHINA in Pakistan and Chairman APCEA, said. He emphasized that all of these efforts are not just business opportunities but a kind of responsibility that they must take on. “We recognize that our actions have a far-reaching impact.” Yang indicated that the development of green energy is a systematic long-term project. “Considering the status quo of Pakistan’s energy structure, the public and factories need to be encouraged to install household solar energy systems in order to reduce electricity costs without increasing the government’s burden. At the same time, corresponding pumped storage power stations and energy storage facilities should be planned and developed gradually to deal with the power instability that occurs with the large-scale development of green energy.” “Regarding other types of green energy, including bioenergy, geothermal energy, tidal energy, green hydrogen energy, taking biogas as an example, there are 13 million biogas facilities in the vast rural areas of China, and the fertilizers brought by agricultural production is undoubtedly an excellent source of biogas. Pakistan and China, both being big agricultural countries, if China’s experience in this regard can play a role, the development of bioenergy in Pakistan will have bright prospects.” All guests agreed that the report is a beacon of hope for the future of sustainable energy in Pakistan. More and more Chinese enterprises are devoting themselves to Pakistan’s new energy field. “The largest hydropower project we are constructing, the Diamer Basha Dam, will become the tallest and largest roller compacted concrete dam (RCCD) in the world, which is expected to provide Pakistan with 18.1 billion kilowatt-hours of clean electricity every year,” Yang added.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1071845/chinese-enterprises-to-expand-green-energy-blueprint-in-pakistan/>

Hybrid rice trade represents bonhomous Pak-China cooperation

“Unquestionably hybrid rice is a model of China-Pakistan agricultural cooperation in Sindh Province,” Zhou Xusheng, Director of Pakistan Business Department, Wuhan Qingfa Hesheng Seed Co., Ltd. a Chinese developer and provider of hybrid seeds, told China Economic Net (CEN).

Qingfa Hesheng has been providing hybrid seeds of rice, canola and vegetables to Pakistan for nearly twenty years, as well as training more than 300 local agricultural personnel. In particular, it registered the first hybrid rice variety -QY0413 in the history of Pakistan.

“It may take three years for the rice export, which is an important means for Pakistan to earn foreign exchange, to recover,” Zhou noted, “however, we have preparation for such situations. First, the stress resistance of crop varieties should be improved. Second, seed production can be carried out separately in Pakistan and China, spreading risk in the face of extreme weather. Currently, our test fields are located in Lahore, Chiniot, Shikarpur, Golarchi.”

“Except for floods, extreme high temperatures brought about by climate change are also difficulties that must be overcome in the upgrading of Pakistan’s rice industry. The annual average temperature here is much higher than that in China’s main rice climate zone.

Therefore, in our selection of rice varieties, it is imperative to guarantee the seed setting rate and quality under high temperature. Nevertheless, a coin has two sides. It is precisely because of the hot and dry climate in Pakistan that hybrid rice diseases are much less than those in China, such as bacterial blight, but far less hazardous.”

Data from PBS showed that exports of basmati rice fell 22.95% to 316,055 tonnes in the first seven months of this year from 410,207 tonnes in the same period last year, while exports of non-basmati rice fell 25% to 1.62 million tons.

Despite a sharp drop in exports, rice prices have seen unprecedented increases in the domestic market due to inflation and rising international rice prices. In this regard, Zhou put forward his viewpoint.

“Affected by currency depreciation and inflation, the cancellation of natural gas subsidies means that fertilizer prices have risen, and even supply shortages. Various expenses have pushed up the purchase price of basmati rice.

On the other hand, the main purpose of non-basmati rice is to export foreign exchange, and the three leading rice enterprises account for more than 50% of non-basmati exports. Rising costs have led to a decline in the competitiveness of non-basmati rice in the international market, so orders have dropped significantly.”

Soaring price of rice has greatly stimulated the enthusiasm of local farmers to plant hybrid rice, but expensive fertilizers and gasoline and diesel has pushed up the cost simultaneously. “For us, in order to make the hybrid rice business go further in Pakistan, ensure local food

security, and further increase Pakistan's foreign exchange, help the local establish relevant downstream industrial chains, lower the cost to improve the competitiveness and added value of its agricultural products, and further expand employment is our top priority.”

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1071806/hybrid-rice-trade-represents-bonhomous-pak-china-cooperation/>

The Nation

Pakistan's garment exports to China register 33pc increase in 2022

BEIJING - Pakistan's garment exports to China have seen a remarkable increase of 33% in the past year which is a significant achievement, as it marks an important milestone in the strengthening of economic ties between the two countries, said Ghulam Qadir, Commercial Counsellor, Pakistan Embassy Beijing.

The growth in exports is attributed to the increasing demand for Pakistani menswear in China, which is driven by rising disposable incomes and changing fashion trends. Chinese manufacturers are increasingly trusting Pakistan as a source of quality textiles and garments at competitive prices, and this trend has also been bolstered by government initiatives such as free trade agreements that have facilitated increased trade between the two countries, he said in an interview. He said that Pakistani men's garments annual exports to China in 2022 were \$28.66 million, up from \$21.62 million in 2021, a nearly 33% increase. Men's or boys' cotton trousers, community code (61034200), worth \$17.94 million, remained the top items, while it was \$12.59 million in 2021. Similarly, men's or boys' trousers and breeches with community code 62034290 are worth \$7.22 million, whereas this item exported from Pakistan was worth \$6.55 million in 2021.”

Muhammad Ameen Nathani, Chairman of Combine Group and a long-time textile industry participant said that Pakistan's textile exports to China have increased dramatically in recent years. This is due to increased production capacity and rising demand for Pakistani garments in the Chinese market. Chinese consumers and businesses, who have come to appreciate the quality of Pakistani products, have driven the increased demand for Pakistani men's garments, he added.

He said that this surge in exports is a testament to the strength of Pakistan's garment industry and its ability to meet global standards. It also highlights how China is becoming an increasingly important trading partner for Pakistan, with bilateral trade between the two countries increasing rapidly over recent years. This trend looks set to continue as more companies discover the benefits of sourcing their garments from Pakistan. This increase in exports is also beneficial for Pakistan's economy, as it will bring more foreign exchange into the country and help boost its GDP. It is also likely to create employment opportunities for locals, further contributing to economic growth, adding that the increased demand has also resulted in more competition among Pakistani manufacturers, resulting in better-quality products at competitive prices, he added.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-12/page-8/detail-4>

PM welcomes KSA-Iran agreement for resumption of diplomatic relations

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday welcomed the signing of the historic agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran for the resumption of diplomatic ties.

On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said, “This China- mediated deal augurs well for peace, stability & economic development in ME & Muslim world.” He further observed that it showed that with collective wisdom, win-win outcomes were possible.

Earlier, on Friday, the foreign office spokesperson, in a press statement, said that Pakistan firmly believed that this important diplomatic breakthrough would contribute to peace and stability in the region and beyond. Pakistan commended the role played by China’s visionary leadership in coordinating this historic agreement which reflects the power of constructive engagement and meaningful dialogue. “We laud sagacious leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran for this very positive development,” it was added.

With a history of consistently supporting and coordinating efforts for bridging gaps between the two brotherly countries, the spokesperson said, “Pakistan will continue to play a constructive role in the Middle East and the region. We hope this positive step would define a template for regional cooperation and harmony.” Also, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday congratulated Li Qiang on his election as new Premier of China. On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said, “I extend my warm congratulations to Li Qiang on his election as new Premier of China.” The prime minister further said that he was looking forward to working closely with him to further advancing Pakistan-China Strategic Cooperative Partnership. “I am confident our bilateral relations will enter a new era of cooperation,” he further added in a tweet.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-12/page-12/detail-5>

Khalil Hashmi appointed Pakistan’s new envoy to China

Islamabad - Pakistan has named senior diplomat and permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva Khalil Hashmi as Pakistan’s new envoy to China. Ambassador Khalil Hashmi would replace Ambassador Moinul Haq who has completed his tenure after reaching superannation last month.

Ambassador Moin Ul Haq was appointed as Pakistan ambassador to China in August 2020. He has served for two and half years as Pakistan Ambassador to China. Prior to his posting in China, he served as Pakistan’s Ambassador to France for three years. Ambassador Khalil Hashmi is expected to take charge of his new diplomatic assignment next month after completion of diplomatic formalities.

Ambassador Khalil Hashmi is a career foreign service officer. Ambassador Khalil Hashmi assumed his position as Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva on 10 November 2019.

Prior to his appointment in Geneva, Ambassador Hashmi served as Director General (United Nations) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Hashmi has previously held

portfolios of Director General for European region, Director General Arms Control and Director for Disarmament Affairs, India and South Asian region.

Ambassador Hashmi's diplomatic career includes bilateral postings at Pakistan Embassies in Copenhagen (1999-2002) and Beijing (2008-2010). He twice served at the Pakistan Mission to the United Nations in New York (2004-2007) and (2012-2016), including as Deputy Permanent Representative. Ambassador Hashmi joined the Foreign Service of Pakistan in 1994, and has worked on a range of policy issues related to arms control, counter-terrorism, human rights and climate change, among others.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-12/page-12/detail-2>

March 13, 2023

The Nation

CPAC to bring socio-economic development for Pak farmers

ISLAMABAD-The China-Pakistan Agricultural Corridor (CPAC) project would bring socio-economic development for farmers in the country and further pave the way for a new era of collaboration between the two all-weather strategic partners.

Director China Study Center of the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) Xiang Yang, in an exclusive talk with APP on Sunday, said that CPAC was a project of highly significance and would serve as a model for other countries in the region to emulate and reinforce the belief that cooperation and partnership could lead to significant achievements and benefits for all. She said NUST had signed three documents of understanding with various Chinese institutions to boost agriculture productivity in Pakistan. The agreements were inked with Weifang Engineering Vocational College, Qingzhou Municipal People's Government and Weifang National Agricultural Open Development Comprehensive Pilot Zone, she maintained.

She said that this collaboration would enable to share resources, expertise and knowledge between China and Pakistan, and work together towards common goals of improving and promoting sustainable methodologies in agriculture sector. She said that the agriculture, in the South Asian countries, was struggling with low productivity, supply shortfalls, low returns to farmers, lack of advanced technology and trained professionals and thus threatening food security in the region. Addressing these issues will have a significant impact on people's lives, particularly in Pakistan, as it is an agro-economic country with immense potential for crop production and research in agricultural sciences, she added. Xiang Yang said that NUST was actively pursuing research on plant biotechnology, environmental sciences, agri-technology and agribusiness with emphasis on precision agriculture, multi-spectral sensing of crop fields, 3D printing and scanning applications, early detection of pathogens and effective plant disease management.

However, contributing to sustainable agriculture resource management systems is still a major challenge at large, she said and expressed the hope that these agreements would play a vital part in filling this gap. As per the agreements, the institutions would carry out research on the construction of whole agricultural industry chain system between China and Pakistan,

research on industrial development strategy, industrial demand analysis and development prospect forecasting. They would help in deep processing and industrialization development of local agricultural products besides research and development and integrated innovation of key technologies for efficient standardized cultivation of crops in Pakistan.

They would arrange a three-year training programme for international students, promote bilateral exchanges between the two sides besides assisting in providing employment opportunities. They would build an agricultural laboratory and test field in Pakistan to experiment with and promote advanced Chinese agricultural technology besides precise fertilization of crops and harvest loss reduction technology exchange and cooperation. They would design joint application for projects in the field of agricultural sciences to work together for the social and economic development of the two countries.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-13/page-9/detail-3>

March 14, 2023

Daily Times

CPEC brought infrastructural development in Pakistan: Zhang

As a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has not only brought infrastructural development in Pakistan, but also paved way for industrialization.

Infrastructural scholar exchanges may also pave a better and further way for CPEC. A brighter future of Pak-China cooperation remains to be seen, said Zhang Shuibo, dean of School of International Project Management of Tianjin University, China, who is also a deputy to the 14th National People's Congress(NPC), according to Gwadar Pro.

“We should establish a scholars’ alliance of Countries of Belt and Road initiative (BRI) on infrastructure construction to deepen and normalize relevant academic exchanges.

It will also make international cooperation on infrastructure construction more efficient and sustainable,” said Zhang Shuibo.

Over the past decade, the Belt and Road Initiative has made remarkable achievements. Constructions of railways, ports, airports and roads in the BRI countries have played a positive role in promoting their economic and social development.

However, due to the differences in technical standards, legislation and religious culture between China and the host countries, China sometimes faces challenges in the implementation of the programs.

“Conflicts and misunderstandings occur occasionally, which increases the cost and elongates construction.” Zhang Shuibo pointed out. He suggests that academic exchanges among scholars from China and other BRI countries in the field of infrastructure construction can improve the situation.

On the first session of the 14th National People's Congress, Zhang Shuibo suggested that relevant departments in China, including the National Natural Science Foundation and the Ministry of Education, can introduce policies to encourage academic exchanges.

Exchange visits and joint research should also be encouraged. In addition, high-level academic forums on how to better build BRI infrastructure need to be funded to publish and promote joint research results.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1072617/cpec-brought-infrastructural-development-in-pakistan-zhang/>

Pakistani officials learn poverty alleviation experience from China

For the first time in the past three years, China's Ministry of Commerce welcomed the first batch of informational officials who came in-person for training seminars, according to China Economic Net (CEN) on Monday.

Ms. Pizwak Imtiaz, Section Officer (F&A), Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (PA&SS), has just concluded a 14-day Seminar on China's Poverty Alleviation Practices under the Global Development Initiative.

The seminar, hosted by the Academy for International Business Officials (AIBO), Ministry of Commerce, China, is one of the 5 seminars that took place from 22nd February to 7th March for a total of nearly 200 officials from 27 countries across the globe.

"Another colleague from the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Government of Pakistan attended the seminar on International Cooperation and Trade", she told China Economic Net (CEN) reporter.

"The Seminar included a 4-day trip to the coastal city of Fuzhou, Fujian, during which we visited the Juncao Technology Research Center in Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University", she said, adding, "Juncao Technology uses wild-grass for cultivation of medicinal mushrooms that has transformed the production of high-yield mushrooms since 1989 and helped ecological protection by preventing soil erosion and desertification. The technology is currently under experiment in Gwadar Port in Pakistan."

In addition, the visit included a trip to the Fuyao Glass factory which produces world quality automobile glass to key manufacturers across the globe, creating jobs, infrastructure and employment opportunities to locals since 1987.

"I was impressed by the village businesses that are modern, digitized and profit-based. Whether agro-based or industry-reliant, there has been a targeted shift towards digital systems empowered by locals who are effectively trained in marketing, media, and enterprise development.

Additionally, the online and infrastructural value chains created across struggling regions in the northern and western provinces of China have allowed these regions to be part of the country's growth rather than hurdles", she recalled.

"All tiers of government local institutions and businesses are synergized to work towards the common goal. This system of centralized planning but decentralized and coordinated

implementation provided an excellent opportunity for locals to have specialized solutions to their problems.

This is something that developing nations struggle with, owing to there being different institutions working often with lack of coordination”, she observed.

She told CEN reporter that the poverty rate in Pakistan has declined from 57.9% in 1998 to 24.3% in 2015, but it remains unacceptably high as of today. A much higher percentage of the population faces non-monetary deprivations.

Prevalence of multidimensional poverty is 38.4% (including education, health and living standards). Rural multidimensional poverty headcount is as high as 55%, in contrast to urban areas where only 9% of urban population is multidimensionally poor.

Furthermore, Pakistan faces challenges of food insecurity amid various climatic challenges; 36 percent of the population is currently food insecure.

In a joint effort, PA&SS Pakistan and the Ministry of Commerce, China signed an MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Poverty Alleviation in December, 2021. In August, 2022, the two Ministries jointly organised the China-Pakistan Forum on Commerce-Driven Poverty Reduction and Social Development.

“The Seminar on China’s Poverty Alleviation Practices under the GDI is the first in-person event conducted, and hopefully will lead to many other meaningful areas of collaboration”, she said.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1072628/pakistani-officials-learn-poverty-alleviation-experience-from-china/>

March 15, 2023

Business Recorder

Chinese Group intends to invest \$2bn in telecom sector

TAHIR AMIN

ISLAMABAD: The Sunwalk Group intended to invest \$ 2 billion in the telecom sector for the deployment of an optical fiber network, encompassing an area of 100,000 km over a period of time in Pakistan.

A high-level delegation of the Sunwalk Group led by Chairman HOU called on Federal Minister for IT and Telecom Syed Aminul Haque, here on Tuesday.

The meeting discussed about investment in telecom infrastructure, optical fiber cable (OFC) and right of way (RoW).

The Sunwalk (Pvt) Ltd, is a telecom and technology-based multinational private Chinese enterprise that has developed multiple telecom, communication infrastructure projects in China and has acquired the TIP License in Pakistan.

The company already started deployment and invested about \$ 5 million and has a plan to deploy 5,000 km OFC as the next step.

Minister IT and Telecom Syed Aminul Haque briefed the delegation that consultation with the Ministry of Railways and Highways Authority is ongoing regarding Right of Way to laying OFC. He assured all obstacles in this regard will be removed soon.

HOU said that they have a longstanding relationship with Pakistan and also providing services to different sectors.

The chairman Sunwalk Group expressed his gratitude to Federal Minister IT Syed Aminul Haque and his team for their full support and cooperation.

The meeting was attended by Member Telecom Muhammad Omar Malik, DG Wireless Jahanzeb Rahim while the Sunwalk delegation comprises; LOU Vice President of Sunwalk Group, Tony Li (Assistant to Chairman), Chen Dianbo (COO of Sunwalk Pakistan), and Afshaan Malik (CBO of Sunwalk Pakistan).

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2023/03/15/12-page/957399-news.html>

Daily Times

Saudi-Iran breakthrough under China

Imtiaz Rafi Butt

The vision of regional connectivity was far-fetched in the face of conflict in the Gulf which has been bridged by the Chinese Government. The resumption of diplomatic ties and co-operation agreement signed between Iranian and Saudi diplomats is an achievement that has put the whole region into a dynamic motion. A six year old cut off has been bridged. Two nations on the brink of war have been brought to the table. All under the leadership of China. The United Nations stands in thankfulness as the World watches in amusement. The politics of Middle East has changed overnight because of China. It has opened up new avenues of progress, growth and co-operation. There are so many doors of trade, commercial activity and connectivity that have been initiated. All this is perhaps the most important event of this year.

For six years, there has been no contact between Saudi Arabia and Iranian Government. The tension between these two powerful nations is spread across the Gulf. They have locked horns over ideology and sectarian differences for decades, casting a shadow over the Muslim World and the O.I.C. In Yemen, Lebanon and many other countries, proxy wars are being waged which have resulted in loss of countless lives. Experts are of the view that the West has fanned these flames, with the strategy of 'Divide and Rule', the West and the United States in particular, have retained a firm hold on oil supply. The Saudis are the largest buyers of Western arms and munitions and sell oil at reduced rates to the same. All this was being done in the garb of conflict with Iran. At last, the breakthrough has been achieved under the leadership of China. Any doubts about Beijing being a Super Power are now removed. The two Muslim nations agreed to peace and opening of diplomatic ties. A call of peace and harmony in the Middle East and the larger Asian continent. What could not be achieved through numerous Muslim nations has been done by China. Now, Saudi Arabia and Iran will be working under the fold of Chinese projects and leadership, much like Pakistan. And without their animosity, the region of Middle East will thrive and Pakistan will greatly benefit from it. The Saudis and Iranians have already shown interest in CPEC and OBOR

projects and now will be formally investing in the CPEC and OBOR regime. The United Nations issued a statement thanking the leadership of China in achieving this remarkable success. On the other hand, there were no comments from the Prime Minister of Israel and United States who were stunned by a development that they were not expecting.

Hand-in-hand with the signing of peace deal between Saudi and Iran, there was another gigantic milestone, the re-election of Xi Jinping for another five-year term. This is an unprecedented event in the history of China. Global Strategists have referred to Xi as the most powerful man in the World but he is bent on propagating his vision that he wants to see China the greatest power in the World. Xi Jinping I now the longest ruling Chairman and the most influential President. And China stands together with its allies. Pakistan is one great example. China has helped out Pakistan through decades. Recently, millions of Dollars have been sent to Pakistan to improve the liquidity crisis and this is a signal to the world that China does not abandon its allies. Not like the United States did after the Afghan War and the War on Terror. China stands by its commitment and when it says that the vision for the future is connectivity, commerce and trade, it means to implement it through practical means. This development also brings back Pakistan back in the limelight. And it will continue to play its part.

General Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff visited Gwadar in March and gave assurance and hope to the prospects of Gwadar and Baluchistan as a whole. This visit is of key importance. It was a strategic visit that is a signal to the world and to China with special emphasis that Pakistan is committed to realizing the vision of CPEC and regional connectivity of Asia with China. All this becomes even more paramount when it is combined with the notion that Gwadar is a major stepping stone in the realization of One Belt One Road Project. It is the focal point of China energy imports and exports to the Middle East. There is unimaginable potential in Pakistan. Now that Iran and China are on the same page, there are lesser hurdles for Pakistan in entering into agreements. In the previous week, a 100MW Energy project has been launched with Iran. This will lessen the burden of reliance on importer fuel for Pakistan.

Under CPEC, multiple projects have been completed and the roadblocks for OBOR are being removed one by one. The American hegemony is in decay. On the other hand, Russian Oil Tankers are on their way. This will reduce Pakistan's reliance on import of fuel in American Dollars, which is the main crisis for the current Government.

The advent of Iranian-Saudi coalition will also open new avenues for Pakistan as the shared border and coastline is the most attractive and closest trading point for Saudia Arabia and other Gulf countries. Also, Qatar has been moving closer to Iran which has annoyed the Saudis which will also be removed as a hindrance in the long term. There is hope for genuine peace and harmony in the region.

It is safe to conclude that we live in a world that is undergoing rapid change. Geo-politics are at the center of everything and behind geo-politics is the foundation of sound economic independence and dominance through regional connectivity. The United States has been a failure when it comes to becoming a world leader and its power within its allies is dwindling. American foreign policy has been marked with wars, violence and destruction, at the same time, China is offering an alternate version of progress and dominance, i.e dominance and

influence through mutual gains, growth and peace. No one can affirm what the future holds, Iran and Saudis are the most critical countries when it comes to the Middle East, the peace between may or may not last, but for now, ice has melted and it has been managed by the new world leader, beyond considerations of religion, sect or values, the goal, the aim here is progress, trade and growth through peaceful means and that is what everyone should be hoping for.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1072937/saudi-iran-breakthrough-under-china/>

China can help Pakistani farmers to increase added value of agricultural crops

China and Pakistan through cooperation projects can increase the added value and utilization rate of Pakistan's agricultural products, helping local farmers increase their income, Chen Wei, Vice Mayor of Qingzhou City said on Tuesday. The transformation and output of our agricultural technology can generate profits, which is undoubtedly a win-win situation, he said in an exclusive interview with China Economic Net. A Documents of Understanding (DoU) was signed lately between the National University of Sciences and Technology, Pakistan (NUST), Weifang Engineering Vocational College, Qingzhou Municipal Government and Weifang National Comprehensive Pilot Agriculture Zone, through which four sides will carry out a series of high-level agricultural industrialization construction. "Transform our current agricultural infrastructure should be a priority among priorities," Dr Hussain Ahmad Janjua, Principal, Atta-ur-Rahman School of Applied Biosciences (ASAB), NUST, highlighted. "Different initiatives such as the development of high-yielding varieties, seed hybridization projects, plant molecular biology and automation of farms are on our list." In answer to Dr Janjua, Chen Wei said that the four sides have agreed to work together in promoting technology cooperation under the framework of CPEC, with the focus on the construction of the entire agricultural industry chain system, deep processing of agricultural products and related industrialization development. As for the future, we will begin with three aspects: standardized cultivation first, especially facility agriculture due to systematic agricultural facilities is one of the keys of agricultural modernization." At present, the first demonstration park has started construction in Qingzhou, which can increase the utilization rate of idle wasteland in low hills by 5%-10%, release 40,000-80,000 mu (2667-5333 hectares) of land, and drive more than 10,000 people to achieve reemployment. "Secondly, precise crop fertilization and harvest loss reduction are also our focus. Based on soil composition tests and fertilizer field experiments, we'll scientifically guide local farmers to improve fertilizer utilization efficiency and crop yield through formula fertilization. In addition, advanced agricultural machinery equipment and technology can also help Pakistani farmers to reduce the loss of machine harvest," Pan added. "Last but not least, improving the level of the entire industrial chain of agricultural products needs to be resolved urgently in Pakistan. I hope to recommend our three characteristic industries of fruits, vegetables and flowers. We are expecting to share all technologies and experiences with Pakistani friends."

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1073109/china-can-help-pakistani-farmers-to-increase-added-value-of-agricultural-crops/>

Pakistani farmers trained for hybrid canola cultivation

A serial field training for Pakistani canola farmers was inaugurated in Gujranwala, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

On Nasir Cheema's dairy farm, farmers, seed distributors, and agricultural technicians gathered to learn about the cultivation and harvesting technology of hybrid canola.

The Field Day in Gujranwala is the first field training to Pakistan farmers that the company organizes. In the following weeks, about 50 such training sessions would be held for about five to ten thousand households in Pakistan.

The hybrid canola, with seeds provided by China's Wuhan Qingfa Hesheng Seed Company, is being planted on 80,000 hectares of land in Pakistan this year, particularly in Punjab and Sindh.

At the beginning of next month, a bumper harvest is expected that will translate into tens of thousand of tons of edible oil, and a demonstration mechanized harvest will be staged with harvesters from China.

"We enjoy higher yield from this hybrid variety HC-021C. It has much more branches as compared to other mustard or canola plants. I hope it will provide an average of 35 mounds per acre", canola farmer Nasir Cheema told CEN. "Its fertility period is 8-10 days shorter than others, and its lower heights make it more unlikely to be beaten down by strong wind", he added.

Director Zhou Xusheng of the Chinese seed company told CEN, "this event is part of our efforts to help local farmers increase production and reduce costs. In the next step, we'll develop the canola industrial chain through make-to-order (MTO) partnership with local refineries and farmers and by introducing China's advanced harvesting and pressing technologies".

From 2021 to 2022, Pakistan imported around \$3.6 billion edible oil, accounting for 89% of nation's total supply. In the next year, the company aims for 130,000 tons of canola seeds, which will produce 49,000 tons of edible oil worth \$80 million.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/1073087/pakistani-farmers-trained-for-hybrid-canola-cultivation/>

Pakistan Observer

BRI's Future and Saudi Arabia-Iran Peace Agreement

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

Most recently, Chinese track-II diplomacy has succeeded to achieve a "diplomatic miracle" by brokering a peace deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran which has even further brightened scope, importance and utility of the One Belt & One Road Initiative (BRI) and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It is indeed positive, productive and participatory which create win-win propositions for both the countries.

The two countries inked a holistic and comprehensive agreement which includes mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. It also activates a

2001 previously-signed security cooperation and trade agreement which is indeed a “value addition”. Moreover, it brightens the scope of greater socio-economic integration, regional connectivity, peace, stability and harmony between two countries in and beyond.

It has now further strengthened the Chinese presence in the GCC and MEAN. Hopefully, it would further consolidate the Chinese President Xi Jinping’s Global Security Initiative (GSI) position, scope, importance and utility in the region.

Interestingly, it has certain winners and losers. China, Saudi Arabia, Iran and, of course, people of the GCC and MENA are the immediate winners whereas Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Oman, Syria and Yemen should be treated as secondary beneficiaries of this sustainable diplomatic breakthrough.

Even Chinese BRI may also be included in the list of potential winners which may also be useful in the implementation and completion of the CPEC, being the flagship project of the BRI. Regional as well as international energy and food security sectors are also the real beneficiaries of this peace agreement. Pakistan, being the close neighbouring country and trustworthy friend of China, Saudi Arabia and Iran would be in the queue of “distant winner” in the days to come.

Most recently, Wang Yi, Director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee hosted a dialogue between the two Middle Eastern countries in Beijing. He pledged China to continue to play a constructive role in handling hotspot issues. During the maiden visit of the Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to China, both leaders pledged to develop friendly cooperation to promote China-Iran comprehensive strategic partnership for new development.

Beijing will continue to jointly build the BRI cooperation with Iran, aiming to step up interconnectivity and expand people-to-people and cultural exchanges. According to official data (December 2022), bilateral trade volume between China and Iran has reached \$11.16 billion between January and August 2022, a 19 percent year-on-year increase. China’s exports to Iran stood at \$6.214 billion, up 24 percent year-on-year, while imports were at \$4.946 billion, 14 percent higher year-on-year during the same period.

Last year, the two countries jointly announced the launch of the implementation of the 25-year comprehensive cooperation plan amounting to US\$420 billion agreeing to step up cooperation on energy, infrastructure, production capacity, science and technology, and medical and health care. In this regard, the two leaders vowed to implement the Iran-China Comprehensive Cooperation Plan and called for strengthened cooperation in various fields, such as trade, infrastructure and agriculture.

Raisi also called for Chinese enterprises to visit Iran for investment and business, expecting more Chinese tourists to visit Iran. Supporting and actively participating in the BRI, the Global Development Initiative (GDI), and the Global Security Initiative proposed by China, Raisi said Iran will maintain good cooperation with organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

On the other hand, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the biggest recipients of the BRI investments in the GCC and MENA. Most recently, Saudi Arabia and China agreed on jointly

coordinating investment in the countries of the BRI. For the further strengthening of bilateral relations, on the invitation of King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, President Xi Jinping attended the first China-Arab States Summit and the China-GCC Summit in Riyadh and paid a state visit to Saudi Arabia from December 7 to 10 2022.

During his visit to Saudi Arabia both countries agreed to extend their mutual win-win cooperation in the diverse sectors of economy, energy, green initiatives, infrastructure development, joint ventures, ICT, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and education and culture in which BRI would play a vital role in the days to come. China has always considered Saudi Arabia as a strategic partner and both countries strive for further alignment between the Saudi and China visions of the future, especially in the energy sphere, Xi added.

Moreover, both countries agreed to further strengthen their relationship such as oil and petrochemicals, de-carbonization technologies, electricity and renewables, hydrogen, energy efficiency, civil nuclear energy and supply chain security, in addition to industrial cooperation, the fourth industrial revolution, mining and logistics, civil aviation and aviation security and digital economy.

One of the largest deals between China and Saudi Arabia on the BRI is signed between Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) and China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation (Sinopec). According to the MoU, the companies will jointly assess refining and petrochemical integration opportunities; engineering, procurement and construction; oilfield services, upstream and downstream technologies and in the areas of carbon capture and hydrogen processes.

China is Saudi Arabia's largest trade partner. Bilateral trade reached a total of US\$87.31 billion, according to China's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). This was a year-on-year growth rate of 30.1 percent. Of this, Chinese exports to Saudi Arabia reached US\$30.32 billion, up 7.9 percent year-on-year, while Chinese imports from Saudi Arabia reached US\$56.99 billion, up 46 percent year-on-year.

To conclude, China, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran have common interests of joint regional connectivity, immense socio-economic prosperity, infrastructure development, cooperation in hydropower, green energy, agriculture, health and industrialization and last but not least, further integration and coordination about the development of BRI and CPEC and this peace agreement hopefully would further enhance mutual cooperation.

It seems that rapidly changing socio-economic, geopolitical and geostrategic conflicting realities have encouraged regional rivals Saudi Arabia and Iran to stop belligerence and start best spirits of cooperation and coordination to achieve common goals of socio-economic prosperity, regional peace and stability.

Economics is the new dawn of the new globalization era and most recently inked peace agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran would facilitate flourishing of immense economic activities in the region in the days to come.

The policy makers of Pakistan should chalk out a comprehensive roadmap to reap fruits of this regional, trans-regional and global peace agreement which should be used for the further

strengthening of CPEC onward march towards west connecting South Asia with Central Asia and the Middle East.

<https://pakobserver.net/bris-future-and-saudi-arabia-iran-peace-agreement-by-dr-mehmood-ul-hassan-khan/>

The Express Tribune

Beijing asks for \$1.5b payment

Chinese power plants facing restrictions on coal import

ISLAMABAD: China has expressed serious reservations about overdue payments of \$1.5 billion to the Chinese independent power plants (IPPs), installed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as well as currency exchange restrictions imposed by the State Bank of Pakistan, which hamper coal import.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) (Coordination) Syed Tariq Fatemi, in a letter to the Planning Commission on March 13, 2023, conveyed that China's Charge d' Affaires Pang Chunxue met him on Monday where she voiced concern over the CPEC power projects.

"Overdue payments to the Chinese IPPs currently stand at \$1.5 billion. This is causing huge concern among Chinese businesses," Fatemi stressed, adding that Pang also complained that Chinese power plants at Hub, Sahiwal and Port Qasim were facing currency exchange restrictions, which was causing difficulty in coal import.

"These power plants require a specific-grade coal for electricity production. If the same is purchased from the local spot market, then Nepra requires that the price should not be higher than the price of imported coal, which is not feasible due to exchange rate fluctuation/ rupee devaluation," said the SAPM.

"Capacity payment deduction still exists despite assurances given in the past; as a result these power plants are being penalised for not operating at full capacity."

Pang clarified that the power plants were running below full capacity owing to the difficulty in purchasing the requisite amount of coal for power production.

She pointed out that there were still gaps between the revolving fund established by the Pakistan side and the revolving account agreement signed by the two countries.

Due to import curbs, many Chinese companies were encountering difficulties in customs clearance at Karachi Port, the letter quoted Pang as saying.

She suggested that their concerns could have been discussed in meetings of a joint committee, a forum specifically established by the prime minister to resolve the issues facing the Chinese IPPs.

However, the committee, which was to meet every two weeks, has not had any meeting since the inaugural huddle in December last year.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2406105/beijing-asks-for-15b-payment>

Chinese to invest \$2b in telecom sector

Aim to deploy optical fibre cable over an area of 100,000 km in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Chinese multinational enterprise, Sunwalk Group, has announced plans to invest \$2 billion in Pakistan's telecom sector, with a focus on deploying optical fibre cable (OFC). The company has already invested \$5 million and plans to deploy 5000 km of OFC as the next step.

The announcement was made during a meeting between a high-level delegation from Sunwalk Group, led by its Chairman Hou Xingwang, and Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Syed Aminul Haque, in Islamabad on Tuesday. During the meeting, the delegation informed the federal minister that Sunwalk Group aims to deploy OFC over an area of 100,000 km in Pakistan over time. Sunwalk (Pvt) Ltd, a Chinese telecom and technology-based company, has already acquired a Telecommunication Infrastructure Provider (TIP) license in Pakistan and has developed multiple communication infrastructure projects in China.

The delegation discussed the matter of the Right of Way (RoW) for OFC laying with the minister, who informed them that consultations with the Ministry of Railways and Highways Authority were ongoing. He assured the delegation that all obstacles to OFC laying would be removed soon..

The announcement of this investment is significant for Pakistan's telecom sector, which is currently undergoing rapid development. The ITT minister's consultation with the Ministry of Railways and Highways Authority is expected to pave the way for further investment.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2406095/chinese-to-invest-2b-in-telecom-sector>

The Nation

Prime Minister Office intervenes to resolve issues faced by Chinese IPPs

Fawad Yousafzai

ISLAMABAD-The Prime Minister Office has intervened to resolve the issues faced by the Chinese IPPs, installed under China Pakistan Economic Corridor(CPEC), following the Chinese government expressed concern over overdue payments of Rs420 billion (\$1.5 billion), import restrictions and revolving funds issues.

Chinese businesses are very concerned due to overdue payments to Chinese IPPs, currently standing at \$1.5 billion, said Chinese charge d'affaires Pang Chunxue in a meeting with Tariq Fatimi, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Coordination, official source told The Nation. Following the meeting, Tariq Fatimi, in a letter addressed to Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, said that the Chinese Charges d' Affaires, Ms Pang Chunxue raised concerns regarding power projects, established under CPEC, said the source. The first concern was related to overdue payments to Chinese IPPs, currently standing at \$1.5 billion and causing huge concerns to the Chinese businesses. Chinese power plants at Hubco, Sahiwal and Port Qasim are facing currency exchange

restrictions, which is causing difficulty in importing coal, said the letter available with the scribe. These power plants require a specific-grade coal for power production. If the same is purchased on spot from local market, then NEPRA mandates that the price should not be higher than the price of the imported coal, which is not feasible due to exchange rate fluctuation/rupee devaluation, said the letter regarding the Chinese concern. Capacity payment deduction still exists despite assurances given in the past; as a result of which these power plants are being penalized for not operating at full capacity, the letter pointing towards the Chinese concern said. “She clarified that these power plants are not operating at full capacity due to difficulty in purchasing the requisite amount of coal for power production,” the letter maintained. There are still gaps between the Revolving Fund raised by Pakistan side and the Revolving Account Agreement signed between the two countries.

Another concern was related to import restrictions, raised by the Chinese side, due to which many of the Chinese companies are facing difficulties in customs clearance at Karachi Port. Pang Chunxue also suggested that their concerns could have been discussed in meetings of Joint Committee, a forum specifically established by the Prime Minister to resolve issues of the Chinese IPPs, but most regretfully, this committee, which was to meet every two weeks, has not had any meeting since the inaugural meeting in December last year. The SAPM has recommended to the Planning Minister that a meeting of the Committee may kindly be called soon, wherein representatives of the Chinese Embassy, as well as the relevant companies, may please be invited and their concerns addressed meaningfully, so that we are not viewed as less than serious in resolving Chinese concerns.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2023-03-15/page-1/detail-12>

The News

Lessons from China

Atta-ur-Rahman

The process of socio-economic development in developing countries is a challenging task. There is much to learn however from the successes of China; never in human history have the lives of so many been transformed so quickly.

China realized four decades ago that the key to socio-economic development was largely dependent on its ability to manufacture and export high-technology (high value-added) goods. So, research and development in carefully selected fields was given the highest national priority, both in government institutions and through financial support to private-sector enterprises with integrated R&D institutions.

The R&D expenditure increased by a phenomenal 18 per cent annually between 2000 and 2022. As a result, China overtook the US as the world leader in innovation in 2020, and now has a much greater number of international patents filed annually than the US. The figure of international patents filed by China has increased by an astonishing 200-fold during the last 20 years, according to the World Intellectual Property Organisation.

Of particular importance to promote innovation and entrepreneurship was the Spark Programme. It laid the foundations of China’s technological development and economic

growth. The Spark Programme provided funding and support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to encourage entrepreneurship. It helped create new businesses in China and led to the growth of the private sector, which became a powerful driving force behind China's economic development.

The Spark Programme also provided funding for research and development, which led to the development of new technologies and products and helped improve productivity and competitiveness in various industries. The programme focused on key technologies that were important for China's development, such as information technology, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, nanotechnology, energy and space engineering.

This helped build China's technological capabilities in these emerging areas and laid the foundations for future growth. The Spark Programme also encouraged international cooperation by providing funding for joint research projects with foreign universities and companies. This helped build bridges between China and the rest of the world and facilitated technology transfer and knowledge sharing.

China has established many innovation centres including the Zhongguancun Science Park in Beijing and the Zhangjiang Hi-Tech Park in Shanghai. These innovation centres are providing liberal funding and technical support to startups and entrepreneurs with particular emphasis on cutting-edge technologies in important emerging disruptive fields. This programme is part of a national innovation policy under which tax incentives are provided to startups and liberal funding is provided to SMEs.

The National Science and Technology Major Project Management Measures were first enacted in 1997 and were updated in 2019. They establish a framework for managing major science and technology projects, including intellectual property protection and technology transfer. The Patent Law as well as the Copyright Law of the People's Republic of China were first enacted in 1984 and 1990 respectively, and they have been updated several times since then.

Several other initiatives were also launched by China for strengthening science, technology and higher education. The 973 Program, also known as the National Basic Research Program, launched in 1997 provided funding for basic research in key areas such as biotechnology, information technology, and environmental science. The 863 Program, also known as the National High-Tech Research and Development Program, launched in 1986, provided funding for research and development in high-tech areas such as aerospace engineering, energy and telecommunications.

The National Innovation System launched in 2006 was aimed to promote innovation by improving the links between universities, research institutions and industry. The Changjiang Scholars Program was launched in 1998 and aimed to attract top scholars from across the world to work in Chinese universities and research institutions.

These developments have been supported by massive investments in science and technology education, with the result that some 600,000 students are sent abroad to top Western universities for PhD or postdoctoral training annually, and over 500,000 trained professionals are returning annually after the training and joining the Chinese scientific and industrial work

force in fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, robotics, industrial biotechnology, energy storage systems and others.

This massive induction of highly qualified, technologically competent manpower into Chinese R&D institutions is having a hugely transformative impact on China's ability to manufacture and export high-technology goods, giving it the muscle to acquire the latest defence technologies to protect itself from any adventurous incursions by enemies.

To strengthen higher education, China established a number of important programmes. Project 211 launched in 1995 was aimed to improve the quality of education and research in Chinese universities. Project 985 launched in 1998 helped build world-class universities in China. The project provided funding and support to selected universities to help them develop research centres of excellence and attract top talent. Another similar programme launched in 2015, the Double First-Class Initiative, also supported major national universities to achieve top international status.

The development of colleges in China was supported through the National College Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program launched in 2012. It is aimed to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship among college students and provides funding and support to student-led startups and innovation projects.

As a result of these and other initiatives, China has succeeded in a rapid transition from a weak agricultural economy to a strong technology-driven knowledge economy. However, this could not have been achieved without rooting out massive corruption from China. The National Supervisory Commission (NSC) was established in 2018 as an independent anti-corruption agency that was tasked with investigating, supervising and enforcing discipline on government officials, including those at the highest levels of power.

In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the 'Four Comprehensives,' which included a comprehensive anti-corruption strategy that was aimed to enhance the integrity of the government, curb corruption, and promote rule of law. Since the launch of the anti-corruption campaign in 2012, thousands of officials at all levels of government have been punished for corruption offenses. High-profile cases include the conviction of former Communist Party Politburo member Bo Xilai for corruption and the conviction of former security czar Zhou Yongkang for bribery and abuse of power.

For Pakistan to move forward and emulate the rapid socio-economic development of China, it must have a two-pincer strategy. The first pincer should be focused on measures to make science, technology, education and entrepreneurship the key pillars for sustainable and equitable socio-economic development. The second pincer should be to enact laws and implement an aggressive national strategy to punish the corrupt. Pakistan can only then embark on the road to rapid progress.

The writer is the former federal minister for science and technology and former founding chairman of the HEC. He can be reached at: ibne_sina@hotmail.com

<https://e.thenews.com.pk/detail?id=184187>

Chinese Newspapers

March 01, 2023

People's Daily

CPEC plays pivotal role in promoting green development in Pakistan, say experts

(Xinhua)

ISLAMABAD, Feb. 28 (Xinhua) -- The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has been playing a pivotal role in promoting green development in Pakistan, highlighting China's commitment to harmonious coexistence of human beings and nature, Pakistani officials and experts said.

Talking to Xinhua, Convener of National Parliamentary Task Force on Sustainable Development Goals, Romina Khurshid Alam, said the cooperation between Pakistan and China under the CPEC in the fields of energy, transport, agriculture and industrial production has helped Pakistan boost green, low-carbon sustainable development.

Besides assisting Pakistan in overcoming energy crisis and infrastructure upgrading through the CPEC, Chinese companies in Pakistan have been strictly following international and local standards on safety and environmental protection, Alam said.

In implementing infrastructure projects, ecological factors have been fully considered and a number of green and clean energy projects including solar, wind and hydropower have been completed across the Asian country over the past several years, reducing carbon emissions and contributing to economic development, environment protection and improvement of living standards of the locals, said the official.

Citing the example of recently completed 720-megawatt Karot hydropower project, Alam said that a comprehensive biodiversity management plan was developed for construction and operation stages of the project to protect environment and wildlife around the project site.

Pakistan and China have further stepped up their cooperation in green energy for the benefit of the region under the CPEC, helping Pakistan mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change, said Hassan Daud Butt, senior advisor at the China Study Center of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, an Islamabad-based think tank.

"Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, with the country facing the worst climate-induced catastrophic floods recently. As the CPEC is making progress, it can help the country to tackle the climate change issue by increasing investment in renewable energy, green building construction, decreasing energy loss, and innovative practices such as green finance and other measures," Butt told Xinhua.

Calling the CPEC a game changer and a green corridor, Shakeel Ahmad Ramay, chief executive officer of the Asian Institute of Eco-civilization Research and Development, said that the flagship project of the BRI is people-centric, environmentally friendly, inclusive and green and sustainable initiative.

China has been utilizing new technologies and making investments in BRI partner countries to support green development. Pakistan can learn from the Chinese experience and technology to realize its vision of high-quality green and sustainable development, Ramay told Xinhua.

"The CPEC has changed the landscape of Pakistan and has accelerated growth while bringing about socio-economic benefits for the people of Pakistan ... China's commitment to promoting carbon-free global economy is commendable," he said.

(Web editor: Zhang Kaiwei, Liang Jun)

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2023/0301/c90000-10214306.html>

South China Morning Post

Embattled Pakistan gets US\$700 million China surprise, but threat of 'lost decade' remains

China's unexpected loan buoys Pakistan's central bank forex reserves up to nearly US\$4 billion, which is less than a month's worth of imports

But Islamabad isn't likely to enact the structural reforms needed to rescue it from a potential Sri Lanka-like default, observers say

China has thrown financially floundering Pakistan a US\$700 million lifeline amid critical negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), with a further US\$1.3 billion in new loans potentially on the horizon to boost the foreign exchange reserves of Beijing's close strategic ally.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the unexpected funding by China Development Bank on Friday, saying it had not been anticipated until the IMF released a delayed US\$1.2 billion tranche, possibly sometime this month.

An "allied nation a few days ago conveyed to us that 'we are giving you this straight away', and these things can never be forgotten", Sharif said. The US\$700 million loan buoyed Pakistan's central bank forex reserves up to nearly US\$4 billion, which is just shy of a month's worth of imports.

Delays in an agreement with the IMF prompted Moody's rating agency to downgrade Pakistan's long-term foreign debt rating by two notches to a historic low of Caa3 on Monday. It also matched the February 14 decision of Fitch Ratings by cutting Pakistan's credit rating to CCC- from CCC+. Both those ratings are just above what would be considered default status.

The hoped-for resumption of IMF funding in March is expected to trigger other billion-dollar inflows of financial help from allies Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, as well as project funding from multilateral lenders like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

But with the nation of 230 million people long subject to poor leadership by elites, former officials and analysts do not expect Pakistan's government to enact the structural reforms needed to rescue it from a potential Sri Lanka-like default.

“Pakistan’s economic crisis is of its own making – the inescapable consequence of successive governments living beyond their means and failing to mobilise adequate domestic resources,” said Maleeha Lodhi, a former Pakistani ambassador to Britain, the United Nations and the United States.

“History attests to the fact that a narrow oligarchic elite dominates Pakistan’s politics and economy, and has long been averse to structural reforms, which is the only way Pakistan can extricate itself from regular financial crises,” she said.

Michael Kugelman, director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Centre, a Washington-based think tank, said Pakistan’s elite often rule out structural reforms “because it is inherently invested in the status quo, and all the benefits that entails for vested interests”.

Up to this point, those leaders “haven’t had the political spine” to impose changes, he said, which suggests that it “all comes down to the leadership factor”.

Ex-ambassador Lodhi said Pakistan needed “a different kind of political leadership to put the country on a path to sustainable economic growth”.

Islamabad has in recent weeks bowed to the IMF’s demands to reduce its budgetary deficit by increasing taxes on consumption and eliminating subsidies, so as to secure the final tranche of a programme agreed in 2019.

But with Pakistan needing US\$35 billion in external financing for each of the next three financial years, starting this July, to cover debt repayments and imports, former officials said more loans would be needed to avoid a default.

“When this programme ends in June, we will probably not have much more than US\$10 billion in reserves, if that. That would be about a month-and-a-half of import cover,” said former finance minister Miftah Ismail, in a recent television interview.

“Because of the debt repayment we have to do now – about US\$20 billion for the foreseeable future – I am pretty sure we will have to have back-to-back IMF programmes,” he said, adding that IMF approval for resumed funding would be needed to secure needed loans from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

Islamabad opened talks with financial advisory firm Rothschild & Co on February 20, in a move widely seen as a precursor to the restructuring of Pakistan’s foreign debts of some US\$100 billion, about 30 per cent of which is held by China. The IMF, however, remains opposed to any debt restructuring.

“Pakistan needs to be able to function as a country and not to get into a dangerous place where its debt needs to be restructured,” IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said, in a February 18 interview with German state broadcaster Deutsche Welle.

She said the Fund is pressing Pakistan to increase revenues by taxing the rich and “moving subsidies only towards the people who really need it”.

However, former State Bank of Pakistan deputy governor Murtaza Syed said the country needed immediate debt relief if it was to service its foreign debts and make the fiscal adjustments required by the IMF.

Speaking to Bloomberg TV, he said Pakistan's population would be intolerably burdened by inflation if debt relief was not forthcoming.

About 40 per cent of Pakistan's population live under the World Bank's lower middle-income poverty line of US\$3.20 per day in 2021. The percentage rose an estimated 2.5-4 per cent last year due to the combined impact of August's super floods and rampant inflation, which thrust as many as 9 million more people into poverty. "If this issue is not resolved, then there will be a lost decade for Pakistan," Syed said. Consumer price inflation hit an all-time high of 31.6 per cent year-on-year in February, according to figures released on Wednesday by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

It said the recent enactment of IMF conditions last week more than doubled natural gas rates and hiked cigarette prices by more than 75 per cent.

International ratings agencies expect Pakistan's inflation rate to average more than 30 per cent in the first half of 2023.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/economics/article/3211960/embattled-pakistan-gets-us700-million-china-surprise-threat-lost-decade-remains>

Xinhuanet News

CPEC plays pivotal role in promoting green development in Pakistan, say experts

Pakistan and China have further stepped up their cooperation in green energy for the benefit of the region under the CPEC, helping Pakistan mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change.

ISLAMABAD, March 1 (Xinhua) -- The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has been playing a pivotal role in promoting green development in Pakistan, highlighting China's commitment to harmonious coexistence of human beings and nature, Pakistani officials and experts said.

Talking to Xinhua, Convener of National Parliamentary Task Force on Sustainable Development Goals, Romina Khurshid Alam, said the cooperation between Pakistan and China under the CPEC in the fields of energy, transport, agriculture and industrial production has helped Pakistan boost green, low-carbon sustainable development.

Besides assisting Pakistan in overcoming energy crisis and infrastructure upgrading through the CPEC, Chinese companies in Pakistan have been strictly following international and local standards on safety and environmental protection, Alam said.

In implementing infrastructure projects, ecological factors have been fully considered and a number of green and clean energy projects including solar, wind and hydropower have been completed across the Asian country over the past several years, reducing carbon emissions and contributing to economic development, environment protection and improvement of living standards of the locals, said the official.

Citing the example of recently completed 720-megawatt Karot hydropower project, Alam said that a comprehensive biodiversity management plan was developed for construction and operation stages of the project to protect environment and wildlife around the project site.

Pakistan and China have further stepped up their cooperation in green energy for the benefit of the region under the CPEC, helping Pakistan mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change, said Hassan Daud Butt, senior advisor at the China Study Center of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, an Islamabad-based think tank.

"Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, with the country facing the worst climate-induced catastrophic floods recently. As the CPEC is making progress, it can help the country to tackle the climate change issue by increasing investment in renewable energy, green building construction, decreasing energy loss, and innovative practices such as green finance and other measures," Butt told Xinhua.

Calling the CPEC a game changer and a green corridor, Shakeel Ahmad Ramay, chief executive officer of the Asian Institute of Eco-civilization Research and Development, said that the flagship project of the BRI is people-centric, environmentally friendly, inclusive and green and sustainable initiative.

China has been utilizing new technologies and making investments in BRI partner countries to support green development. Pakistan can learn from the Chinese experience and technology to realize its vision of high-quality green and sustainable development, Ramay told Xinhua.

"The CPEC has changed the landscape of Pakistan and has accelerated growth while bringing about socio-economic benefits for the people of Pakistan ... China's commitment to promoting carbon-free global economy is commendable," he said.

<https://english.news.cn/20230301/4fc4753f5cf54da6b1f212cda5a1b9d8/c.html>

March 02, 2023

Global Times

Foreign envoys hail China's BRI projects, confident in future cooperation

China plays a vital role in international infrastructure buildup, especially under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Foreign envoys have hailed China's overseas infrastructure projects, saying they have brought tangible socioeconomic benefits to local communities by promoting connectivity and creating jobs.

Diplomats in China told the Global Times that people in their countries have spoken highly of China-built projects.

The interviews were conducted during a group visit to China Communications Construction Co (CCCC), one of the major Chinese companies that participates in the BRI. The group visit on Monday gathered 111 diplomats from 110 embassies and international organizations based in Beijing.

After having seen the presentation of benchmark projects and the innovative technologies of CCCC, some of the envoys gave a thumbs-up, while others exclaimed that China's progress is, by all metrics, remarkable.

Landmark projects

CCCC participated in the planning and construction of the China-Malaysia Friendship Bridge and the Peljesac Bridge in Croatia, which have become new local landmarks.

The Mombasa-Nairobi Railway has created up to 50,000 local jobs and become a major artery of local economic development. Nigeria's Laiki Deepwater Port, Pakistan's Gwadar Port and Cameroon's Kribi Deepwater Port have become engines for local economic and trade prosperity.

Apart from infrastructure development, training local people to improve their skills will help increase employment, which is conducive to social and economic development and reflects the social responsibility of enterprises, Chen Zhong, vice general manager of CCCC, told the Global Times on Monday.

"The BRI is a practical project. It's transformative for Pakistan's economic growth and has contributed to upgrading our infrastructure, and addressing our energy needs and employment generation. The BRI has contributed to overall economic growth in Pakistan," Moin ul Haque, Ambassador of Pakistan to China, told the Global Times on Monday during the group visit.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has greatly contributed to changing the economic landscape in Pakistan in terms of infrastructure development and industrialization, said Haque.

"In the second phase, we are focusing on special economic zones, industry, agriculture and high-tech. Everything is in line with Pakistan's own policy of making itself an economic hub of business activity," Haque added.

China has been involved in the construction of many landmark projects in Pakistan. CCCC, for example, participated in the construction of a 118-kilometer highway linking Havelian and Takot in Pakistan, among other projects in Pakistan.

Win-win cooperation

The BRI led to win-win cooperation for China and Africa, and actually for the entire world, because it promotes the movement of people and goods. There are investment opportunities, particularly for China in Africa, Njie Sulayman Omar, deputy head of the Gambian Embassy in China, told the Global Times.

"We are very interested in the BRI. We are also interested in having Chinese companies undertake various infrastructure projects in Africa," said Omar.

K. K. Yoganaadan, deputy chief of mission of the Sri Lankan Embassy in China, said that these infrastructure projects have improved the living standards of the people and also provided mobility and connectivity.

They play a key role in Sri Lanka. The Colombo port city, which is being built by CCCC, is a landmark project of the BRI.

"We are confident and hopeful that these BRI projects will help improve foreign exchange income for Sri Lanka and also attract more foreign investors," Yoganaadan told the Global Times on Monday.

"Infrastructure is very important in South Africa as one of the key elements of our post-COVID economic reconstruction and recovery plan.

"CCCC has done great projects here in China and elsewhere in the world. These projects will have a huge impact on our economy in South Africa," Siyabonga C. Cwele, South African Ambassador to China, told the Global Times.

Cwele said that he is happy that CCCC won a contract from the South African National Roads Agency in November 2022 to build the Mtentu Bridge project on the N2 Wild Coast Road, one of the most important links in the country, which will "scale up development in the whole area and improve the economic environment of the poor areas."

The agency said that the Mtentu Bridge project is "technically highly complex and challenging," requiring mega-bridge construction expertise and experience. China's construction industry is one of the world leaders in bridge building, local media reported.

Jaime Adriano FlorCruz, the Philippines' ambassador to China, told the Global Times that China's infrastructure has been quite amazing in the past few years.

"I know China's infrastructure 30 years ago was very poor and very backward, and China has made a lot of admirable progress. I hope that China can share its experience, technology and funding overseas so that other countries can benefit from China's experience and capability," said FlorCruz.

FlorCruz said that the Philippines hopes to benefit from some of the projects aligned with the BRI and can get more such projects.

Further cooperation

The year 2023 coincides with the 10th anniversary of the launch of the BRI. Many envoys have expressed their willingness to cooperate with China in transportation infrastructure to enhance connectivity, saying that the construction projects of their home countries are very much in line with China's BRI, which has brought huge development opportunities.

According to Haque, in the coming years, the focus of China-Pakistan cooperation will be on industrialization, mostly in export-oriented sectors such as automobiles, engineering, mining and oil, as well as agricultural modernization.

"There is a very promising future that I can see in terms of China-Pakistan cooperation and the BRI," said Haque.

FlorCruz also described future bilateral cooperation in infrastructure as "very promising."

"We have very high expectations that China can offer investments and technology transfers to the Philippines. I think China and the Philippines have complementary economies. So, we are

looking forward to more cooperation that will benefit our country and our people," said FlorCruz.

For cooperation between China and South Africa, Cwele said that South Africa puts infrastructure at the top of its priorities and also emphasizes green development and transition of energy. Cooperating with Chinese entities in green energy will be good.

"We hope cooperation with China and its companies will produce win-win results for the common development of our people," said Cwele.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202303/1286510.shtml>

March 07, 2023

Global Times

BRI builds broad path for common development: Chinese FM Qin Gang

By Ma Jingjing and Zhao Juecheng

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a high-quality public good initiated by China and jointly built by all partners, whose benefits are shared by the world. It has attracted the participation of more than three-fourths of the countries in the world and 32 international organizations, Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang stressed on Tuesday at a press conference during the ongoing two sessions.

Since it was proposed in 2013, the BRI has brought material benefits to the countries and regions involved, building a broad path for common development. During the past decade, the BRI has galvanized nearly \$1 trillion of investment and established more than 3,000 new cooperative projects, creating 420,000 jobs for the countries and regions involved and lifting approximately 40 million people out of poverty, Qin said.

The China-Laos railway has transformed Laos into a land-linked country from a land-locked one. The Norochcholai power plant contributes to Sri Lanka's electricity supply. The Mombasa-Nairobi railway has driven local economic growth up by over 2 percentage points.

The Luban Workshop, a China-supported skill and vocational training project, has helped young people from more than 20 countries obtain vocational skills. A total of 65,000 China-Europe freight train trips have formed a steel camel caravan linking Asia and Europe that transported anti-pandemic supplies, according to Qin.

China will hold the third BRI Forum for International Cooperation in 2023, and it hopes to take this opportunity to work with all relevant parties to forge ahead with more new achievements, Qin said.

Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang attends a press conference on China's foreign policy and foreign relations on the sidelines of the first session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing, capital of China, March 7, 2023. Photo: Xinhua

Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang attends a press conference on China's foreign policy and foreign relations on the sidelines of the first session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing, capital of China, March 7, 2023. Photo: Xinhua

"Holding the forum on the 10th anniversary of the BRI is of great importance. It's expected that the countries and regions involved will summarize their experience and build a consensus to promote the long-term, stable development of the initiative," Qian Feng, director of the research department at the National Strategy Institute at Tsinghua University, told the Global Times on Tuesday.

Over the past 10 years, the building of the BRI has achieved notable outcomes, but it needs to seize new opportunities while dealing with new challenges as the international environment changes, so as to promote higher-quality development of the "BRI 2.0," Qian said, noting that the world has wide expectations for the development directions of the initiative.

"The BRI brings hope for the world to step out of economic doldrums, and will become the greatest contributor to a new round of economic globalization and global governance reform," Wei Jianguo, vice chairman of the China Center for International Economic Exchange and former vice minister of the Ministry of Commerce, told the Global Times on Tuesday.

In order to build the BRI into a globally high-quality cooperation platform, a five-year roadmap and timetable should be formed to make the top-down design more suitable for operation and more popular, with efforts to boost the link between Chinese modernization and the BRI, Wei said.

It should also reduce wealth and regional gaps to promote economic globalization toward opening-up, inclusiveness, balance and win-win outcomes, he said.

Despite the complicated international situation, the building of the BRI continues to demonstrate strong resilience and vitality. In the first two months of 2023, China's imports and exports with countries involved in the BRI reached 2.12 trillion yuan (\$305.55 billion), up 10.1 percent year-on-year, data released by the General Administration of Customs showed on Tuesday.

Dismissing the fruitful achievements of the BRI, Western media keep hyping that the BRI has pushed relevant countries into debt traps.

"It is never China that should be accused of creating so-called debt traps," Qin stressed on Tuesday.

"Statistics showed that multilateral institutions and commercial creditors account for over 80 percent of their debt, which is the biggest source of their debt burdens. The US' unprecedented interest rate hikes last year caused massive capital outflows and negatively impacted their debt levels," Qin said.

China has been continually making an effort to reduce these countries' debt burdens and has made the greatest contribution to the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative, Qin said.

China will continue to participate in the settlement of international debt problems with a constructive attitude, and it calls for other parties to take action and fairly share the burden, he said.

Foreign diplomats also refuted the so-called debt trap hyped by some Western media on Chinese overseas projects in recent interviews with the Global Times.

The Western media's reports are "fake news," Moin ul Haque, Ambassador of Pakistan to China, told the Global Times. He said the BRI and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects have greatly contributed to changing the economic landscape in Pakistan in infrastructure development and industrialization.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202303/1286789.shtml>

March 15, 2023

China Daily

Pakistan ambassador refutes 'debt trap' smearing

In Western media reports, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor or CPEC has led Pakistan to "debt trap". Such misconceptions are "all rubbish and all incorrect", said Moin ul Haque, Pakistan's ambassador to China.

The "debt trap" projection is just a propaganda and smear campaign by those who are envious of our friendship or those who don't want BRI or CPEC to succeed, he said.

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202303/13/WS640ed117a31057c47ebb42a1.html>